No. Y.382.22

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No. 38. "¶Hereafter followeth the Book of Troilus and Crescide. In this excellent booke is showed the fervent love of Troylus to Creiseid whom hee enjoyed for a time: and her great virtruth to him againe in giving herself to Diomedes, who in the end did so cast her of, that she came to great misierie (Before 1400) contained in | The Workes of ovr | Ancient and learned English | Poet Geffrey Chaucer | newly printed (within ruled lines read) To that which was done in the former Impression this much is now added. 1 In the life of Chaucer many things inserted. 2 The whole worke by old copies reformed. 3 Sentances & Proverbes, noted. 4 The signification of the old and obscure words proued. Also characters shewing from what Tongue or Dialect they may be derived. 5 Latin and French not Englished by Chaucer, translated. 6 The treatise called Iacke Vpland against Friere and Chaucer, A,B,C, called La Priere de Nostre Dame, at this impression added Londor., printed by Adam Islip, An. Dom 1602." Within engraved woodcut border. 1 Vol Folio. Whole calf, gilt back. Opposite the title is the engraved plate of the Progenie, of Geffrey Chaucer. Thomas Speght's address to Sir Robert Cecil, 1 page; to the reader, 2 pages. Francis Beaumont's address to Thomas Speght, 4 pages, the reader to Geffrey Chaucer, signed H. B., 1 page upon the picture of Chaucer by Friar Thynn, and of the animadversions upon Chaucer 1 leaf. Table of, The Life of our Learned English Poet Geffrey Chaucer, 1 page. The life of Geffrey Chaucer, 8 leaves. The works etc. with the siege and destruction of the Citie of Thebes with fine wood cut under title of Chaucers Arms, 1 leaf. To the King's Highness, The Prologue, The Table 2 leaves. Eight goodly questions with their answers, and to the King's most noble grace, 1 leaf. The arguments to the Prologues 5 leaves, then follows folio 1 to folio 376, after which follows "The old and obscure words in Chaucer explained, whereof either by nature ;or derivation (headed the hard words of Chaucer explained) 12 leaves. The Authors cited by G. Chaucer in his workes by name declared 1 leaf, a Table of Errat and Correction 1 leaf, (which for clearness might commend itself to future correctors), the side of this last leaf is blank.

Godwin in his life of Chaucer says "Shakespeare has taken the story of Chaucer with all its imperfections and defects, and has copied the series of its incidents with his customary fidelity; and exactness seldom to be found in any other dramatic writer."

Howard Staunton observes "we may be satisfied, the plot of the drama is immediately founded upon the Poem of Troylus and Cryseyde, upon this point there can be no reasonable doubt, Troilus and Creiseid is contained in folios 143 to 185 in black letter type as in the volume throughout." At folio 188 commences the "Legende of Cleopatrias Queene of Egipt"—at folio 193 is the "The Legende of Lucrece of Rome"—in every way an interesting portion for the Shakesperian Student as well as the Admirers of Dan Chaucer's well of English undefiled.

THE PROGENIE OF GEFFREY CHAUCER

Payne Roet Knight

Blanch daughter to Henry. D of Lanca

John of Gaunt D. of Lancaster

Cathren Sminford Duches of lancast

The Daughter of Payne Roet

Geffrey Chaucer

Sir John Burnast Knight

Henry + Kinge of Englan

Mary Daughter to Humfry Bohun Earl of Hereford

Imania Daughter to Simon Hannap

Sir John Burnast Knight

John Duke of Bedford

Humfrey Duke of Gloscester

John Beaufort Earl of Somerset

Thomas Chaucer of Lord of Ewelme

Maude Daughter & coheir to S. I. B

Margaret maried to Iohn Arundal of Lanc

Marga D. of Sr Iohn Beauchamp of Bletso

John the first Duk of Somerset

Alce Counter of Sal. & Duche of Suf

William De La Pole Duke of Suffolk

Margaret Countesse of Richmond

John De La Pole Duke of Suffolk

Henry + Kinge of England

Edmund De La Pole Duke of Suffolk

The true portraiture of GEFFREY CHAUCER the famous English poet, as by THOMAS OCCLEUE is described who liued in his time, and was his Scholar.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Hic iacent Thomas Chaucer armiger quondam dominus istius uillæ, et patronus istius ecclesiæ qui obiit Decem. 13. A. Dñi. 1434. cui[us] animæ ppiet[ur] deus. Amen.

THE
WORKES OF OVR
Ancient and learned Engliſh
Poet, GEFFREY CHAVCER,
newly Printed.

*g. 38222

To that which was done in the former Impreſſion, thus much is now added.

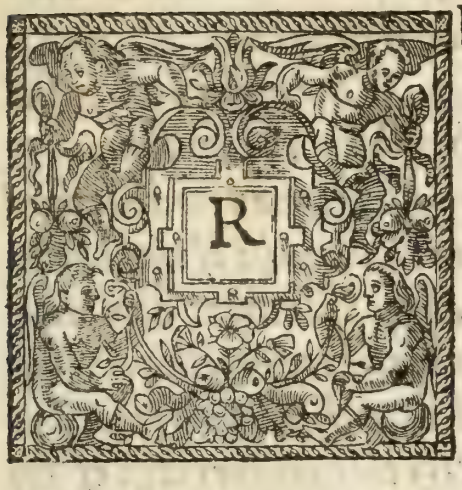
1 In the life of Chaucer many things inſerted.
2 The whole worke by old Copies reformed.
3 Sentences and Prouerbes noted.
4 The Signification of the old and obſcure words prooued: alſo Caracters ſhewing from what Tongue or Dialect they be deriued.
5 The Latine and French, not Engliſhed by Chaucer, tranſlated.
6 The Treatiſe called *Iacke Vpland*, againſt Friers: and Chaucers A. B. C. called *La Priere de noſtre Dame*, at this Impreſsion added.

LONDON,
Printed by Adam Iſlip.
An. Dom. 1602.

Ch. Harris
Nov. 24, 1922
H

PUBLIC LIBRARY
OF THE
CITY OF BOSTON

TO THE RIGHT HONOVRABLE SIR *ROBERT CECIL.* KNIGHT, PRINCIPAL SECRETARIE TO THE QVEENS MOST EXcellent MAIESTIE, Master of the Court of Wards and Liueries, one of her Highnes most Honorable priuie Counsell, and right worthy Chancellor *of the Vniversitie of Cambridge.*



IGht Honourable, at the last Impression of this worke, in way of humble dutie and thankfulnesse, I presented to your H. certaine collections and obseruations vpon Chaucer: as namely, his Life, Picture, and Pedigree: the Arguments of euery Booke and Tale: the Explanation of old words, with declaration of Authors by him cited: And also two treatises, the death of Blanch, called his Dreame: and the Flower and the Leafe neuer before printed. But as these things then through want of time were not fully perfected, so were there som other things omitted, at the next Impression to be performed.

Now therefore, that both by old written Copies, and by Ma. William Thynns praise-worthy labours, I haue reformed the whole Worke, whereby Chaucer for the most part is restored to his owne Antiquitie; and noted withall most of his Sentences and Prouerbes; hauing also with some Additions reduced into due place those former Notes and Collections; as likewise proued the significations of most of the old and obscure vvords, by the tongues and dialects, from vvhence they are deriued; translated also into English all the Latine and French by him vsed; and lastly, added to his Workes some things of his own doing, as the treatise of Iacke Vpland against Friers, and his A. B. C. commonly called, *La Priere de nostre Dame*: I am bold to present the whole to your Honourable fauour and patronage, alwaies mindfull of my bounden dutie to your H. house, which with heartie prayer I commend to the grace of the Almightie.

Your Honors in all dutie at commaundement,

Tho. Speght

To the Readers.

After this booke was last printed, I vnderstood, that M. Francis Thynn *had a purpose, as indeed he hath when time shall serue, to set out* Chaucer *with a Coment in our tongue, as the Italians haue* Petrarke *and others in their language. Whereupon I purposed not to meddle any further in this work, although some promise made to the contrarie, but to referre all to him; being a Gentleman for that purpose inferior to none, both in regard of his own skill, as also of those helps left to him by his father. Yet notwithstanding,* Chaucer *now being printed againe, I was willing not only to helpe some imperfections, but also to adde some things: whereunto he did not only persuade me, but most kindly lent me his helpe and direction. By this meanes most of his old words are restored: Prouerbes and Sentences marked: Such Notes as were collected, drawne into better order: And the text by old Copies corrected.*

But of some things I must aduertise the Readers; as first, that in Chaucer *they shall find the proper names oftentimes much differing from the Latin and Greeke, from whence they are drawne: which they must not condemne in him as a fault. For both he, and other Poets, in translating such words from one language into another, doe vse, as the Latins and Greeks do, the sundry Species of* Metaplasmus: *as* Campaneus *for* Capaneus: Atheon *for* Acteon: Adriane *for* Ariadne. *Which* Chaucer *doth in other words also: as* gon *for* begon: leue *for* beleue: peraunter *for* peraduenture: loueden *for* did loue: woneden *for* did won, *&c.*

It is his manner likewise, imitating the Greekes, by two negatiues to cause a greater negation: as, I ne said none ill.

Also many times to vnderstand his verbe: as, I not what men him call, *for,* I know not, &c.

And, for the Author, to name some part of his worke: as, Argonauticon *for* Apollonius Rhodius. *And that sometime in the genitiue case a former substantiue being vnderstood: as,* read Æneidos: Metamorphoseos: *for the Authors of those workes.*

And

And for his verſes, although in diuers places they may ſeeme to vs to ſtand of vnequall meaſures: yet a skilfull Reader, that can ſcan them in their nature, ſhall find it otherwiſe. And if a verſe here and there fal out a ſillable ſhorter or longer than another, I rather aret it to the negligence and rape of Adam Scriuener, *that I may ſpeake as* Chaucer *doth, than to any vnconning or ouerſight in the Author: For how fearfull he was to haue his works miſwritten, or his verſe miſmeaſured, may appeare in the end of his fift booke of* Troylus and Creſeide, *where he writeth thus:*

And for there is ſo great diuerſitie
In Engliſh, and in writing of our tongue,
So pray I God, that none miſwrite thee,
Ne thee miſmetre for defaut of tongue, &c.

Moreouer, whereas in the explanation of the old words, ſundry of their ſignifications by me giuen, may to ſome ſeeme coniectural; yet ſuch as vnderſtand the Dialects of our tongue, eſpecially in the North, and haue knowledge in ſome other languages, will iudge otherwiſe: and for the ſatisfying of others, which want ſuch skill, I haue by theſe Caracters a. g. l. i. f. d. b. *notified to them from what tong or Dialect ſuch words are deriued.*

It were a labor worth commendation, if ſome ſcholler, that hath skil and leiſure, would confer Chaucer *with thoſe learned Authors, both in Greek and Latin, from whom he hath drawn many excellent things; and at large report ſuch Hyſtories, as in his workes are very frequent, and many of them hard to be found: which would ſo grace this auncient Poet, that wheras diuers haue thought him vnlearned, and his writings meere trifles, it ſhould appeare, that beſides the knowledge of ſundrie tongues, he was a man of great reading, & deep iudgement. This courſe I began in the former impreſſion, but here of purpoſe haue left it off; as alſo the deſcription of Perſons and Places, except ſome few of more worthie note; as a labour rather for a Commentor, for that it concerneth matter, than for him, that intendeth only the explaning of words. And thus to conclude, I commit to your wonted fauor this our Poet, and what here is done, for the Poets ſake.*

To his very louing and assured good friend

M. Thomas Speght.

I Am sorie that neither the worthinesse of *Chaucers* one praise, nor the importunate praiers of diuerse your louing friends can yet mooue you to put into print those good obseruations of him and collections that you haue gathered. For as for the obiections agaínst him, that in our priuat talke you are wont to say are commonly alledged, as first, That many of his words are become (as it were) vinewed & hoarie with ouerlong lying; and next, that some of his speeches are somwhat too broad & plaine; and that the vvorke therfore should be the lesse gratious: these are either no causes, or no causes sufficient to vvithhold from *Chaucer* such desert of glory, as you may bestow vpon him at your pleasure.

It is well knowne to wise and learned men, that all languages be either such as are contained in learning, or such as be vsed in daily practise: & for learned tongues, they hauing *Testamentario iure*, their legacies set downe by them that be dead, words must be retained and continued in them in such sorte as they vvere left, vvithout alteration of the Testators vvilles in any thing, although in his choise it be that is to vse them, vvhen to vse, or vvhere to refuse them, at his ovvne discretion. But in vsuall languages of common practise, vvhich in choise of vvords are, and euer vvill be subiect vnto change, neuer standing at one stay, but somtimes casting avvay old words, sometimes renewing of them, and alvvaies framing of new, no man can so vvrite, as that all his words may remaine currant many yeeres. Which thing *Horace* in his booke *De arte poetica*, precisely noteth in these verses:

Vt siluæ foliis pronos mutantur in annos:
Prima cadunt: ita vverborum vetus interit ætas:
Et iuvenum ritu florent modo nata, vigentque.
Debemur morti nos, nostraque &c.

Whereby hee declareth that vvordes in common tongues, like vnto leaues must of necessitie haue their buddings, their blossomings, their ripenings, and their fallings: and *Chaucer* most excellently also himselfe in true foresight hereof in these verses of his:

I know that in fourme of speech is chaunge
Within a hundreth yeere, and wordes tho
That hadden price, now wonder nice and straunge
Thinke we them, and yet they spake them so,
And spedd as well in loue, as men now do,

And therefore impossible it vvas that either *Chaucer* could, or any man liuing can keepe vvords of vnlearned tongues from falling after so long a time. And this hath happened amongst the Latine vvriters themselues vvhen theirs was a spo-

ken

ken tongue, as ours novv is, vvho though they firſt made their ovvne vvords, and gaue them their allovvance, yet diuerſe of *Cecilius*, *Statius*, *Ennius* and *Plautus* vvere by later Latiniſts reiected: and novv againe many of them, by the laſt vvriters of all (though before, as it vvere by Proclamation, put downe for baſeneſſe) are vpon a new touche vvarranted for good, and paſſe abroade as ſterling. But ſo pure vvere *Chaucers* words in his daies, as *Lidgate* that learned man, calleth him The Loadſtarre of the Engliſh language; and ſo good they are in our daies, as Maiſter *Spencer* (following the counſaile of *Tullie* in his third booke *De Oratore*, for reuiuing of auncient vvordes) hath adorned his ſtile with that beautie and grauitie, that *Tullie* there ſpeakes of: and his much frequenting of *Chaucers* auncient vvords, vvith his excellent imitation of diuerſe places in him, is not the leaſt helpe that hath made him reach ſo hie, as many learned men doe thinke, that no Poet either French or Italian deſerues a ſecond place vnder him. And furthermore, by your interpretation of the vnuſuall vvords, that auncient hardneſſe and difficultie is made moſt cleare and eaſie: and in the paines and diligence you haue vſed in collecting his life, mee thinkes you haue beſtowed vpon him as fauourable graces, as *Medea* did vpon *Æſon*: for you haue reſtored vs *Chaucer*, both aliue againe, and young againe; and deliuered many from the erronious coniectures they conceiued of him. And therefore though euery thing be not perfect to your owne mind (for deſires be endleſſe: and nothing can bee at one time both begun and perfected) yet ſince you haue opened the vvay to others, and attempted that vvhich vvas vnattempted before you, your endeuors herein cannot but be well accepted, vnleſſe of ſuch as haue better vvill vvithout iuſt cauſe, to repoue others, than either witt or skill to doe vvell themſelues.

Touching the inciuilitie *Chaucer* is charged vvithall: what Romane Poet hath leſſe offended this vvay than he? *Virgill* in his *Priapus* is worſe by a thouſand degrees, and *Ouid* in his booke *De Arte amandi*, and *Horace* in many places as deepe as the reſt: but *Catullus* and *Tibullus* in vncleane vvantonneſſe beyond meaſure paſſe them all. Neither is *Plautus* nor *Terence* free in this behalfe: But theſe two laſt are excuſed aboue the reſt, for their due obſeruation of *Decorum*, in giuing to their comicall perſons ſuch manner of ſpeeches as did beſt fitt their diſpoſitions. And may not the ſame be ſaid for *Chaucer*? How much had hee ſwarued from *Decorum*, if he had made his Merchant, his Miller, his Cooke, his Carpenter, tell ſuch honeſt and ciuile tales, as were told of his Knight, his Squire, his Lawier and his Scholler? But ſhewing the diſpoſition of the baſer ſort of people, he declareth in their Prologues and Tales, That their chief delight vvas in vndecent ſpeeches of their owne, and in their falſe defamations of others, as in theſe verſes appeareth:

Let be they leud dronken harlotry,
It is a ſinne and eke a great folly
To apairen any man, or him defame,
And eke to bring wiues in ſuch blame.

And in excuſe of himſelfe for vttering thoſe broad ſpeeches of theirs, hee vſeth theſe vvords:

But firſt I pray you of your curteſie
That ye ne arette it not my follie,
Though that I plainly ſpeake in this mattere

To tellen you her wordes, and eke her chere,
Ne though I speake her wordes properly:
For this ye knowen, as well as I,
Who shall tellen a tale after a man,
He mote rehearse, as nye as euer he can,
Euerich worde, if it been in his charge,
All speake he neuer so rudely ne large,
Or elis he mote tellen his tale vntrue,
Or feine things, or find wordes newe.

And in an other place:

Deemeth not for Gods loue, that I say
Of euill entent, but that I mote rehearse,
Her tales all, been they better or werse,
Or elis falsen some of my matere.
The wise Plato saieth, as ye mowe rede,
The worde must needs acord with the dede:
If men should tell properly a thing,
The word must cosin be to the working.

For no man can imagine in his so large compasse, purposing to describe all Englishmens humors liuing in those daies, how it had been possible for him to haue left vntouched their filthy delights; or in discouering their desires, how to haue expresst them without some of their words.

And now to compare him vvith other Poets: his Canterbury tales conteine in them almost the same Argument, that is handled in Comedies: his stile therein for the most part is low and open, and like vnto theirs; but herein they differ: The Comedie vvriters doe all followv and borrowe one from another, as *Terence* from *Plautus* and *Menander*: *Plautus* from *Menander* and *Demophilus*: *Statius* and *Cæcilius* from *Diphilus*, *Apollodorus*, & *Philemon*: and almost all the last Comedians from that, vvhich was called *antiqua Comœdia*. The ring they beat is this, and out of the same tracke they goe not; To shevv the loosenesse of many young men: the lewdnesse of some young vvomen: the craftie schoole points of old bawds: the little regard of honest disposed seruingmen: the miserable vvretchednes of diuerse old fathers, and their folly in countenancing, and committing their sonnes to the charge and gouernment of most impudent and flattering Parasites; such as in *Terence* is prating *Dauus* and *Geta*, and bold bawdie *Phormio*. *Chaucers* deuise of his Canterbury pilgrimage is meerely his owne: His drifte is to touch all sortes of men, and to discouer all vices of that age, vvhich he doth so feelingly, and vvith so true an ayme, as he neuer failes to hit vvhatsoeuer marke he leuels at.

In his fiue bookes of Troylus and Creseid, in the Romaunt of the Rose, in his black Knight, in the merciles Ladie, in some few also of his tales, in his dreame, and in that of Blanch, (which is in your hands and vvas neuer yet imprinted) and in other his discourses he soareth much higher: and is in his Troylus so sententious, as there be few staues in those bokes, which include not some principall sentence; most excellentlie imitating *Homer* and *Virgill*, and borrovving often of them, and of *Horace* also, and other the rarest both Oratours and Poets that haue written. Of whom for the sweetnesse of his Poetrie may be said, that vvhich is reported of *Stesichorus*: and as *Marcus Cethegus* vvas tearmed by *Ennius*, *Suadæ medulla*; so may *Chaucer*

righty

tly be called, The pith and sinowes of Eloquence, and very life it selfe of all mirth pleasant writing: besides, one gift he hath aboue other Authors, and that is, By excellencie of his descriptions, to possesse his Readers with a more forcible imagination of seeing that (as it were) done before their eies, vvhich they read, than any other that euer hath written in any tongue. And here I cannot forget to remember vnto you, those ancient learned men of our time in Cambridge; whose diligence, in reading of his vvorkes themselues, and commending them to others of the younger sort, did first bring you and me in loue vvith him: and one of them at that time, & all his life after, was (as you knovv) one of the rarest men for learning, in the whole world. The same may be said of that worthy learned man your good friend in Oxford, vvho vvith many other of like excellent iudgement haue euer had *Chaucer* in most high reputation.

And now (M. *Speght*) seeing not onely all Greeke and Latine Poets haue had their interpretours, and the most of them translated into our tongue, but the French also and Italian, as *Guillaume de Saluſt*, that most diuine French Poet; *Petrarke* and *Arioſto*, those tvvo excellent Italians, (vvherof the last, instructed by M. *Iohn Harington* doth novv speake as good English, as he did Italian before,) shall onely *Chaucer*, our ancient Poet, nothing inferiour to the best, amongst all the Poets of the world, remaine alvvaies neglected, and neuer be so vvell vnderstood of his ovvne countrie men, as Strangers are? Well, content your selfe, and set your heart at rest, for seeing I vvas one of them vvhich first procured you to take in hand this vvorke, and since you haue giuen me of your copies to vse priuately for mine ovvne pleasure; if you vvill not put them abroad your selfe, they shall abroad ere long, and looke into the vvorld vvithout your consent. Yet least many inconueniences might happen by this attempt of mine, and diuerse things be set foorth contrarie vnto your owne liking, let mee once againe entreat you (as I haue done often heretofore) to yeeld to my iust and reasonable suit: wherin you shall not onely satisfie that conceit, vvhich I haue many yeeres carried of your vnfained loue towards mee; but pleasure many, vvho daily expect your paines herein; and perfourme also vnto *Chaucer* great part of that honour that he most worthily deserueth. So vvith my thrice hartie commendations I bid you farevvell. From Leicester the last of Iune. *Anno* 1597.

Your assured and euer louing friend,

Frauncis Beaumont.

The Reader to Geffrey Chaucer.

Rea. *VVHere haſt thou dwelt, good Geffrey all this while,*
Vnknowne to vs, ſaue only by thy bookes?

Chau. *In haulks, and hernes, God wot, and in exile,*
Where none vouchſaft to yeeld me words or lookes:
Till one which ſaw me there, and knew my friends,
Did bring me forth: ſuch grace ſometime God ſends.

Rea. *But who is he that hath thy bookes repair'd,*
And added moe, whereby thou art more graced?

Chau. *The ſelfe ſame man, who hath no labor ſpar'd,*
To helpe what time, and writers had defaced:
And made old words, which were vnknown of many,
So plaine, that now they may be known of any.

Rea. *Well fare his heart: I loue him for thy ſake,*
Who for thy ſake hath taken all this pains:

Chau. *Would God I knew ſome meanes amends to make,*
That for his toile he might receiue ſome gains.
But wot ye what? I know his kindneſſe ſuch,
That for my good he thinks no pains too much.

H. B.

Vpon the picture of Chaucer.

VVHat *Pallas* citie owes the heauenly mind
Of prudent *Socrates*, vvise Greeces glorie;
What fame *Arpinas* spreadingly doth find
By *Tullies* eloquence and oratorie;
What lasting praise sharpe vvitted Italie
By *Taßo's* and by *Petrarkes* penne obtained;
What fame *Bartas* vnto proud France hath gained,
By seuen daies vvorld Poetically strained:

What high renoune is purchas'd vnto Spaine,
Which fresh *Dianaes* verses do distill;
What praise our neighbour Scotland doth retaine,
By *Gawine Douglas*, in his *Virgill* quill;
Or other motions by sweet Poets skill,
The same, and more, faire England challenge may,
By that rare vvit and art thou doest display,
In verse, vvhich doth *Apolloes* muse bewray.
Then *Chaucer* liue, for still thy verse shall liue,
T'unborne Poëts, vvhich life and light will giue.

Fran. Thynn.

Of the Animadversions vpon Chaucer.

IN reading of the learn'd praise-worthie peine,
The helpefull notes explaining *Chaucers* mind,
The Abstruse skill, the artificiall veine;
By true Annalogie I rightly find,
Speght is the child of *Chaucers* fruitfull breine,
Vernishing his workes with life and grace,
Which enuious age vvould otherwise deface:
Then be he lov'd and thanked for the same,
Since in his love he hath reviv'd his name.

THE LIFE OF OVR LEARNED *Engliſh Poet*, Geffrey Chaucer.

So much as we can find by Herauldes, Chronicles, & Records, of his

- Countrey.
- Parentage.
- Education.
- Mariage.
- Children, With their
  - Mariage.
  - Lands.
  - Seruice.
  - Reward.
  - Iſſue.
  - Death.
- Reuenues.
- Seruice.
- Reward.
- Friends.
- Bookes.
- Death.

Guilielmus Camdenus.

Gaufredus Chaucer ſui ſæculi ornamentum extra omnem ingenij aleam poſitus, & Poetaſtras noſtros longo poſt ſe interuallo relinquens,

——— iam mente potitus
Ridet anhelantem dura ad faſtigia turbam.

The Life of Geffrey Chaucer.

His Countrey.

HIs famous and learned Poet Geffrey Chaucer Eſquire, was ſuppoſed by [a] Leland to haue beene an Oxfordſhire or Barkeſhireman borne: For ſo reporteth Iohn Bale in his Catalogue of Engliſh writers: *Quibuſdam argumentis adducebatur Lelandus, vt crederet, &c.* Some reaſons did moue Leland to thinke, that Oxfordſhire or Barkſhire was his natiue Countrey.

But as it is euident by his owne wordes in the Teſtament of Loue, he was borne [b] in the Citie of London: For thus hee writeth there: **Alſo in the Citie of London that is to me ſo deare and ſweete, in which I was fooſth growen, and moze kindely loue haue I to that place, then to any other in perth (as euery kindly creature hath ful appetite to that place of his kindly ingendure, & to wine reſt and peace in that ſtede to abide) thilke peace ſhould thus there haue been bzoken, which of all wiſe men is commended and deſired.**

In the Records of the Guild Hall in London wee find, that there was one Richard Chaucer [c] Vintener of London in the 23. yeere of Edward the third, who might well be Geffrey Chaucers father.

Alſo there was a Nunne of Saint Hellens in London named Elizabeth Chaucer, in the firſt yeere of Richard the ſecond, as it is in Record, which ſeemeth eyther to haue beene his ſiſter, or of his kindred, and by likelihood a Londoner borne.

Moreouer in the eight yeere of the ſame King, Geffrey Chaucer was Controller of the Cuſtome-houſe in London, as after out of the Recordes ſhall appeare.

Other dealings hee had in the Citie, as we may plainly ſee in the Teſtament of Loue, all the which may mooue vs to thinke, that he was borne in London.

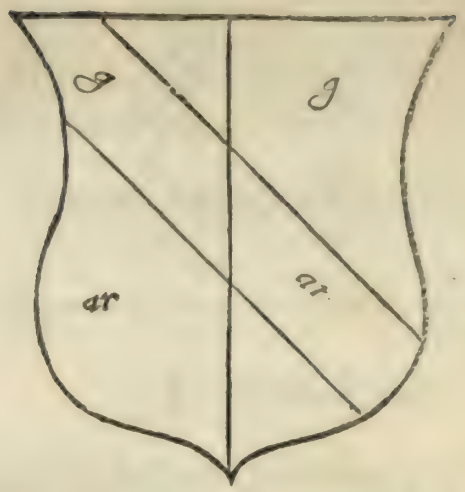
[a] *This Leland had commiſſion from K. Hen. 8. to ſearch all libraries in Englād for matters of Antiquitie: hee died in the daies of Edw. 6.*

[b] *About the ſecond or third yeer of Edward 3. In the firſt booke & the fift Section.*

[c] *Vintner*, quaſi *Wineturner*, *that is, a Merchaunt of the Vintrey, which ſold by whole ſale.*

His Parentage.

FOr his Parentage and place of birth, although Bale termeth him *Galfridus Chaucer nobili loco natus, & ſummæ ſpei iuuenis*, yet in the opinion of ſome Heralds (otherwiſe than his vertues and learning commended him) hee deſcended not of any great houſe, which they gather by his Armes, *De argento & rubeo colore partita per longitudinem ſcuti cum benda ex tranſuerſo, eiſdem coloribus ſed tranſmutatis depicta ſub hac forma.*



But this is but a ſimple coniecture. For honorable houſes & of great antiquitie, haue borne as meane Armes as Chaucer: and yet his armes are not ſo meane, ether for Colour, Charge, or Partition as ſome would make them.

And indeede both in reſpect of the name, which is French, as alſo by other coniectures it may be gathered, that his progenitors were Strangers.

But whereas ſome are of opinion, that the firſt comming of the Chaucers into England was, when Queene Iſabell [a] wife to Edward the ſecond & her ſonne Prince Edward returned out of [b] Henault into England, at which time alſo almoſt three thouſand Straungers came ouer with them, as by Chronicles appeareth; or ſome two yeares after, when Philip daughter to the Earle of Henault came ouer to be maried to Prince Edward: I can by no meanes conſent with them, but rather muſt thinke, that their name and familie was of farre more auncient antiquitie, although by time decayed, as many moe had been of much greater eſtate. For in the daies of Edward the firſt, there was one Iohn Chaucer, as appeared by the Records of the Tower, where it is ſaid that the King did heare the complaint of Iohn Chaucer in the damage of a 1000.li. There was alſo in the time of Henry the third, and Edward the firſt, Elias Chauceſir: of whom the Records in the Exchequer haue thus: *Edwardus dei gratia &c. liberate de Theſauro noſtro Eliæ Chauſecir decem ſolid. &c.* With which Caracters Geffrey Chaucer is written in the Records of Edward the third, and Richard the ſecond. This name was at the firſt a name of Office or occupation, which afterward came to be the name of a familie, as Smith, Baker, Skinner and others haue done. In the time of king Iohn, likewiſe there was one named *le Chaucer*, as appeareth by the Recordes of the Towre. But what need I to ſtand vpon the antiquitie or gentry of Chaucer, when the Role of Battle Abbey affirmeth Chaucer to haue come in with the Conqueror. Moreouer it is more likely that the parents of Geffrey Chaucer were meere Engliſh, and himſelfe an Engliſhman borne, For els how could he haue come to that perfection in our language, as to be called, The firſt illuminer of the Engliſh tongue; had not both he, and his parentes before him, been borne and bred among vs? But what their names were, or what iſſue they had, otherwiſe than by coniecture before giuen, wee can not declare.

[a] *This Queene Iſabell beyng ſent into Fraunce with her yong ſonne Edward by the king of England her husband, to conferre about matters with her brother the French king, would by no meanes returne, hauing conceiued a great hatred againſt the Spenſars, and alſo againſt the King, for ſuffering himſelfe to be miſled by their naughtie counſaile; but by all meanes ſtirred the people to rebellion, and in the end came ouer her ſelfe with almoſt three thouſand Straungers beſides Engliſhmen.*

[b] *Henault, a prouince lyyng betweene Fraunce and Flaunders.*

Now whether they were Merchants as some will haue it, (for that in places where they haue dwelled, the [a] Armes of the Merchants of the Staple haue been seene in the glasse-windowes) or whether they were of other calling, it is not much necessary to search: but wealthy no doubt they were, and of good account in the common wealth, who brought vp their Sonne in such sort, that both he was thought fitte for the Court at home, and to be imployed for matters of state in forraine countreies.

[a] *This coniecture is of small force: for the Merchãts of the Staple had not any Armes graunted to them, as I haue been informed, before the time of Henry the sixt, or much thereabout.*

His Education.

HIs bringing vp, as *Leland* saieth, was in the Vniuersitie of Oxford, as also in Cambridge, as appeareth by his owne words in his booke entituled *The Court of Loue*: and in Oxford (by all likelihood) in Canterburie or in Merton Colledge, with *Iohn Wiclife*, whose opinions in religion he much affected: where besides his priuate studie, hee did with great diligence frequent the publique schooles and disputations: *Hinc acutus Dialecticus, hinc dulcis Rhetor, hinc lepidus Poeta, hinc grauis Philosophus, ac sanctus Theologus euasit. Mathematicus insuper ingeniosus erat à Iohanne Sombo, &c.* Hereupon, saith *Leland*, he became a wittie Logician, a sweete Rhetorician, a pleasant Poet, a graue Philosopher, and a holy Diuine. Moreouer he was a skilful Mathematician, instructed therein by Iohn Some and Nicholas [b] Lynne, friers Carmelites of Linne, and men very skilfull in the Mathematikes, whom he in his booke called *The Astrolabe*, doth greatly commend, and calleth them, Reuerend clerkes.

Cãterbury Colledge in Oxford, founded by Simon Islippe *Archbishop of Canterbury, was suppressed in the reigne of K. Henry the 8. & ioyned vnto Christs Church.*

[b] *Nicolaus de Lynna studiorum præcipuas partes in Matheſi collocauit, quæ quatuor disciplinarum orbem complectitur: videlicet, Arithmeticam, Geometriam, Musicam, & Astrologiam. Bale.*

By his trauaile also in Fraunce and Flaunders, where he spent much time in his young yeeres, but more in the latter end of the reigne of king Richard the third, he attained to great perfection in all kind of learning. For so doe *Bale* and *Leland* also report. *Circa postremos Richardi secundi annos in Gallijs floruit, magnamque illic ex assidua in literis exercitatione gloriam sibi comparauit. Domum reuersus forum Londinense, & Collegia Leguleiorum, qui ibidem patria iura interpretantur, frequentauit, &c.* About the latter end of K. Richard the seconds daies he florished in Fraunce, and got himselfe great commendation there by his diligent exercise in learning. After his returne home, he frequented the Court at London, and the Colledges of the Lawiers, which there interprete the lawes of the land, & among thē he had a familiar friend called [c] Iohn Gower.

[c] Iohn Gower, *a knight, as Bale writeth, studied not onely the common lawes of the land, but all other kind of good literature. Hee lieth buried in Saint Mary Ouories in Southwarke, in a stately tomb erected in the wall, with his image lying ouer him, in a habit of greenish damaske downe to his feete, a collar of Esses gold about his necke, and on his head a chaplet of roses, the ornaments of knighthood. Vnder his head he hath the likenesse of three bookes, which he compiled: the first,* Speculum meditantis *in French: the second,* Vox clamantis *in Latine: the third,* Confessio amantis *in English.*

It ſeemeth that Chaucer was of the inner Temple: for not many years ſince, Maſter Buckley did ſee a Record in the ſame houſe, where Geffrey Chaucer was fined two ſhillings for beating a Franciſcane frier in Fleetſtreet.

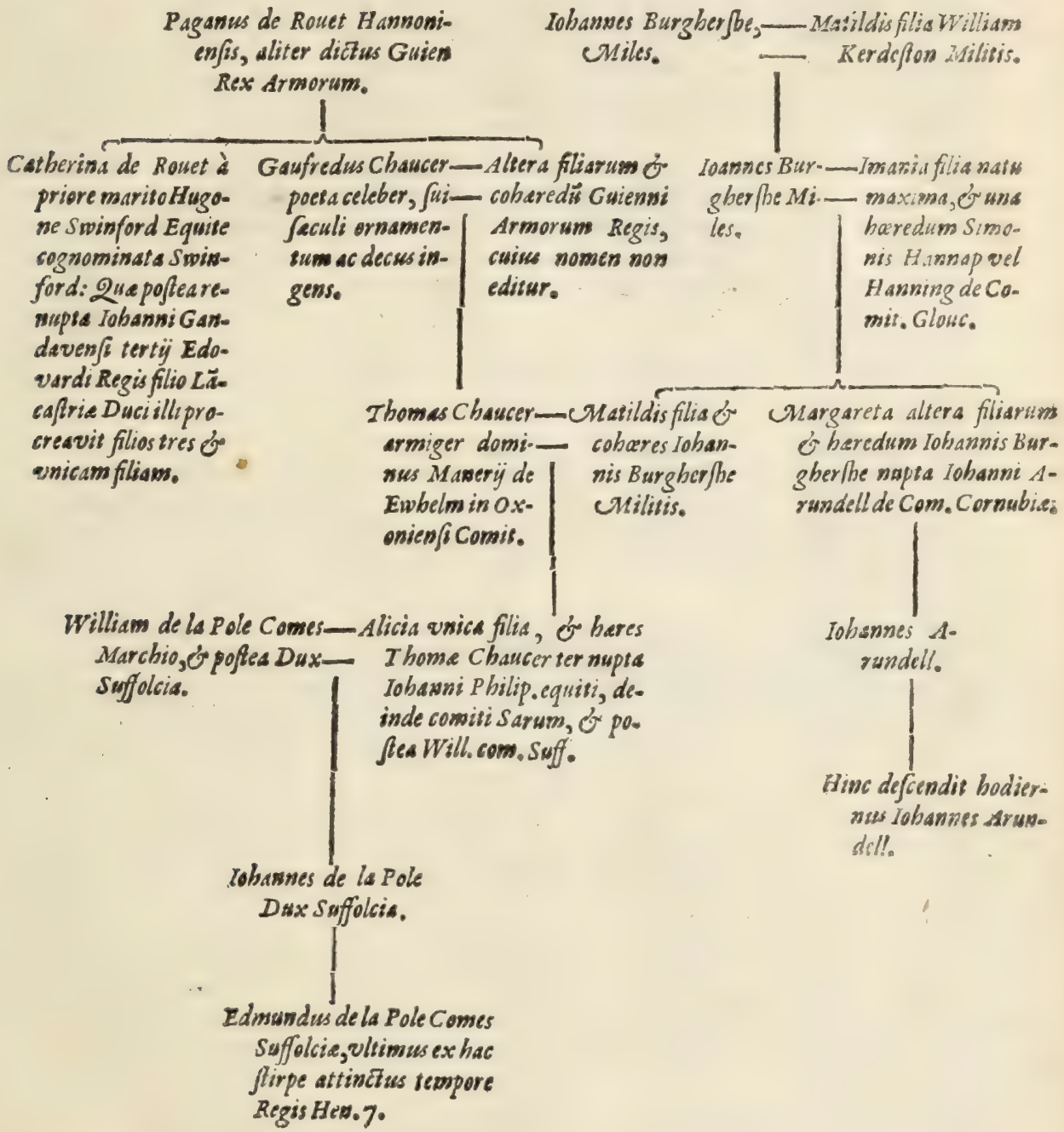
Thus ſpending much time in the Vniuerſities, Fraunce, Flaunders, and Innes of Court, he prooued a ſingular man in all kind of knowledge.

His Mariage.

HE matched in marriage with a Knights daughter of Henault, called *Paon de Ruet*, King of Armes, as by this draught appeareth, taken out of the office of the Heraulds. This gentlewoman, whom hee married (whoſe name we cannot find) as it may be gathered by Chaucers own words in his dream, was attendant on Blanch the Ducheſſe, in the Duke of Lancaſters houſe, as alſo her ſiſter Katherine was: or els waited on the Ducheſſe Maude ſiſter of Blanch, who was married to William Duke of Bauare, Earle of Henault, Zeland, and Holland. But howſoeuer it was, by this marriage hee became brother in law to [c]Iohn of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaſter, as hereafter appeareth.

[c] *Iohn Plantagenet, ſurnamed* Gaunt, *of Gaunt in Flaunders where he was borne, was the fourth ſonne of King Edward the third. Hee was Duke of Lancaſter, Earle of Lincolne, Darby, and Leiceſter, King of Caſtile and Lyons, and ſteward of England. He was alſo Earle of Richmond, and Duke of Aquitaine. Hee had three wiues,* Blanch, Conſtance, *and* Katherine. *He lieth buried in the Quier of Poules.*

Stemma peculiare Gaufredi Chauceri
Poetæ celeberrimi.



His Children, with their aduancement.

IT ſhould ſeeme, that Geffrey Chaucer had another ſonne beſides [a] Thomas: for in the Preface to the [b] Aſtrolabe he writeth to one, whome hee calleth his little ſonne Lewys. Yet ſome hold opinion (but I know not vpon what grounds) that Thomas Chaucer was not the ſonne of Geffrey Chaucer, but rather ſome kinſman of his, whome hee brought vp. But this pedigree by the hands of Maſter Glouer *alias* Somerſet, that learned Antiquarie, as alſo the report of Chronicles ſhew it to be otherwiſe.

[a] *Written Anno domini* 1391. *Richar. ſecundi* 14.

[b] *Thomas Chaucer was borne about the* 38 *or* 39 *yeere of Edward* 3.

Some ſay that in recompence of Geffrey Chaucers ſeruice in Fraunce, being ſent thither Embaſſadour, Edward the third gaue him this Maude daughter and heire of Sir [c] Iohn Burgherſhe Knight, whome he married to Thomas Chaucer his ſonne to the great increaſe of his liuing, and amendment in blood.

[c] *This Iohn Burgherſhe was of the ſame line of Barthelmew Burgherſh one of the firſt Knights of the Garter at the inſtitucion thereof by Edward the* 3: *and of Henry Burgherſhe biſhop of Lincolne and Chancelour and Treaſurer of England.*

This Thomas Chaucer, beſides his owne inheritance of [d] Ewelme and [e] Dunnington Caſtle (which M. Camden, Englands moſt excellent Antiquiographer termeth, *Quondam Chauceri, & poſtea Delapolorum Caſtellum exiguum*) was diuers waies preferred, as out of records in the Tower of London here we may partly ſee.

[d] *Ewelme olim Chauceri & Delapolorũ, nunc Regiæ ædes. Dum enim Iohannes Lincolniæ Comes Gulielmo Delapolo è filio Iohanne nepos res nouas contra Henricum ſeptimum moliretur proſcriptus omnibus honoribus, & his poſſeſſionibus excidit: quæ in patrimonium Regium tranſcriptæ fuerunt.* G.C.

[e] *Donnington Caſtle ſtandeth in a Parke in Barkſhire not far frõ Newbery, where to this day ſtandeth an old oke called Chaucers oke.*

Viceſimo ſecundo Richardi ſecundi viginti Marcæ datæ Thomæ Chaucer per annum durante vita.

Anno primo Henrici quarti idem donum viginti Marcarum confirmatum.

Thomas Chaucer primo anno Henrici ſexti capitalis Pincerna regis Angliæ.

Thomas Chaucer Sheriffe of Oxfordſhire and Barkeſhire, and Conſtable of [f] Wallingford Caſtle and [g] Knaresborow Caſtle, and the forreſt of Knaresborow during life.

[f] *Wallingforde in Barkeſhire: Caſtrũ admirandæ amplitudinis & magnificentiæ duplici murorũ ambitu, duplici item vallo circundatum, in medio, moli in magnam altitudinem ædita arx imponitur, in cuius accliui per gradus aſcenſu fons eſt immenſæ profunditatis. Incolæ conſtructum à Danis credunt, alij a Romanis.* G.Camden.

[g] *Knaresborow in Yorkeſhire. Caſtrum rupi aſperrimæ impoſitum, quod Serlonem de Burgo patruum Euſtacij Veſcij condidiſſe ferunt: nunc patrimonij Lancaſtrenſis cenſetur.* G.Camden.

Queene [h] Iane wife to Henry the fourth, the twelfth yeere of his raigne, gaue to Thomas Chaucer for his good ſeruice, *Manerium de Woodſtocke, Hannebrough, Wotton, & Stuntesfield, cum omnibus membris & Hamlet. ſuis durante vita.*

[h] *This Iane of Nauarr widow to Iohn of Mounford Duke of Britain, was married to Henry the fourth, about the fourth yeere of his raigne.*

Thomas Chaucer, the laſt heire male of the Chaucers, and owner of Ewelme and Donnington Caſtle, the inheritance of the Chaucers lieth buried

in a

in a blacke marble tombe in a faire Chappell in the parish Church of Ewelme, in the south side of the Quier, with this Epitaph: *Hic iacet Thomas Chaucer Armiger, quondam dominus istius villæ, & patronus istius Ecclesiæ, qui obijt* 18. *die mensis Nouemb. anno Do.* 1434 *& Matildis vxor eius, quæ obijt* 28. *die mensis Aprilis anno Dom.* 1436.

Thomas Chaucer had one only daughter named Alice, maried thrice: first to Sir Iohn Phillip knight; then to Thomas Mountacute Earle of Salisbury; and the third time to [a] William de la Pole earle, & after Duke of Suffolke; who for loue of his wife and commodity of her landes, sell much to dwell in Oxfordshire and Barkshire, where his wiues lands lay. Betwene them they had a son called Iohn, as appeareth in the Booke of the foundation of the hospitall of Ewelme, (which is to be seene in Master *Stowes* Librarie) where the Master, Minister, and the poore men are enioined to gather themselues at appointed times about the Tombe of *Thomas Chaucer* and *Maude* his wife, father and mother of the Duchesse, and there to say certaine praiers appointed: which being ended, one of them is to say openly in the English tongue *God saue in body and soule our soueraign Lord the King: my Lord William duke of Suffolk: my Lady Alice Duchesse of Suffolke his wife, our Foundresse: my Lord Iohn their sonne, and all Christian people:* the brethren answering, *Amen.* This is added, because some haue held, that she neuer had childe, but that the Duke had this sonne by another wife: although indeed the descending of the *Chaucers* lands to the *Poles*, and after to the King, might sufficiently confute them. But what is it, wherein some will not cauil?

[a] *The Pooles aduancement grew first by Marchandes: and sir Richard Poole knight, was father to William de la Poole Merchant of Hull, who for that he frankely & freely did lend to king Edward the third, a great summe of mony (at Mortaign in France, when he was greatly distressed) was honored with the girdle Militarie, made Baneret, and endued with* 1000. *Markes by the yeere: and his successors after were aduanced to be Dukes of Suffolke, as in master Stowes Annales appeareth.*

William de la Pole was first secretely maried to the Coũtesse of Henault, by whome hee had a daughter: and after being diuorced frõ her, was publikely maried to T. Chaucers daughter coũtesse of Salisburie, who prooued this daughter being maried to one Barentine a bastard. The which Barentine afterward for a riot made against the Countesse, was condemned, and lost an hundred pounds by the yeere. I. St.

This William and his wife encreased the Manor place of Ewelme, and builded there a parish Church, and an hospitall called Godshouse, for two priests and thirteene poore men to be sustained for euer. One of the priests to be master of the Almes house and Almes-people, them to instruct: the other Priest, a Schoolemaster, freely to teach the children of the Tenants of the said Lordship their Grammar: and either of them to haue ten pounds by the yeere. Also one of the poore men to bee called Minister to present the faults of the other to the Master, and to ring their common Bell to seruice, and to haue sixteene pence the weeke, and the rest fourteene pence. To the which house they gaue the Manours of Ramridge in Hampshire, Conocke in Wiltshire, and Mersh in Buckinghamshire. They also founded an hospitall at Donnington Castle. *I. St.*

In the 28. *of King Hen.* 6. 1450. *this William de la Pole was banished the Realme for* 5. *yeers, to pacifie the harde opinion, which the commons had conceiued against him. In his iourney to his banishment, hee was taken and beheaded, and his body cast vp at Douer sands, and buried in the Charterhouse at Hull.* I. St.

This Alice wife of Duke William surviuing her husband, was after buried in the parish Church of Ewelme, on the South side of the high altar, in a rich tombe of Alabaster, with an image in the habite of a Vowesse, and Duchesse crowned, lying on the same tombe: And another image vnder the tombe, so neare as may bee, like vnto her at the time of her death, with this Epitaph: *Orate pro anima serenissimæ principissæ Aliciæ Suffolchiæ, huius Ecclesiæ patronæ, & primæ fundatricis huius Eleemosynariæ, quæ obijt* 20. *die mensis Maij, anno Do.* 1475. *Litera dominicali,* A.

Among many thing that greatly renowned Geffrey Chaucer, this was

one

one ſaith Bale, That he had a kinſwoman, *Quæ Gulielmo Sudovolgiorũ Duci nupſit, ac magno in ſplendore Aquelmi vitam egit* : that is, which being maried to William Duke of Suffolke, liued in great honour at Ewelme.

His Reuenues.

BVt now to returne to Geffrey Chaucer: although hee had lands and reuenues in diuers places, and that to the yearely value, as ſome ſay, almoſt of a thouſand pounds, yet the place of his moſt abode was at Woodſtock in a faire houſe of ſtone next to the kings place, called to this day Chaucers houſe, and by that name paſſed by the Queene to the tenant which there now dwelleth. Chaucer tooke great pleaſure to lie there, in regard of the Parke, in ſundry of his writings much by him commended: as alſo to be neare the Court, where his beſt friends were, and they who were able to doe him moſt pleaſure: By whoſe meanes he had ſundry rewards beſtowed vpon him, and that worthily, for his good ſeruice which often he performed, and whereof in Chronicles and Records we may read.

His Seruice.

IN the laſt yeare of King Edward the third, he with * Sir Richard Dangle, and Sir Richard Stan, was ſent to Montreuill to mooue a marriage to bee had betweene Richard Prince of Wales, and the Lady Mary daughter to the French King. Some write that he with Petrarke was preſent at the marriage of Lionell Duke of Clarence with Violant daughter of Galeaſius duke of Millaine: Yet Paulus Iouius nameth not Chaucer, but Petrarke he ſaith, was there. And yet it may well be: for it is in record that twice or thrice he was emploied in foraine countries: which if it be true, well might the man be at ſuch charges and expences as he might ſtand in need of king Richard the ſeconds protection (as after ſhall appeare) till he had better recouered himſelfe. But for his ſeruice he was not vnrewarded.

* *This Sir Richard Dangle, a knight of Poictu, came ouer with the Duke of Lancaſter, who for his valiancie and tried truth to the King of England, was made knight of the Garter.*

His Rewardes.

CHaucer is called *Armiger Regis*: for in the patent Rolles of *Part.* 1. *of* 50. *Ed.* 3. *M.* 5: the king maketh a graunt, *Armigero noſtro Galfrido Chaucer.* This *Armiger Regis* was of good woorſhip and reputation about the Prince, being alſo the ſame that *Scutifer Regis* was, to beare the kings Shield and other armour of his, both out and in the warres. By which name of *Scutifer Regis*, the king graunted to him the lands and body of ſir Edmond Staplegat, for the maner of Bilſington in Kent, to whom he payd 104. pounds for the ſame: as appeareth in patent *Part.* 2. *de anno* 49. *Edw.* 3. Againe, the King before that, in 45. Ed. 3. as appeareth *in pellis Exitus* of the Exchequer, had graunted vnto him 20. markes by yeare, by the name of *Galfride Chaucer Valectus Hoſpitij* : which is, Grome of the Pallace, a place of good worſhip. By which name of *Valectus*, alſo king Edw. 3. long before did entitle Laurence Haſtings Lord of Aburganey, calling him *Valectum noſtrũ*, being the kings grome, Page, or ſeruant. For vnto this day, certaine ſeruitors of the Queenes are called Pages and Gromes; beyng of worſhip and reputation, as are the

Gromes

Gromes of the priuy chamber. By which may begathered in what credit G. Chaucer was with king Ed. 3.

Anno 8. *Richardi* 2. *Galfridus Chaucer Contrarotulator Cuſtomariorum & Subſidiorum in portu ciuitatis noſtræ London.*

Anno 17. *Richardi* 2. *Viginti libræ datæ Galfrido Chaucero per annum durante vitæ.*

Vigeſimo ſecundo anno Richardi ſecundi conceſſum Galfrido Chaucer vnum dolium vini per annum durante vita, in portu ciuitatis London per manus capitalis Pincernæ noſtri.

Anno primo Henrici quarti Galfrido Chaucero Armigero literæ patentes confirmatæ pro viginti libris nummorū per annum durante vita & vno dolio vini.

Eodem etiam anno conceſſæ adhuc & datæ eidem Galfrido Chaucero Quadraginta marcæ per annum durante vita.

His Friends.

FRiends he had in the Court, of the beſt ſort: for beſides that he alwaies held in with the Princes, in whoſe daies he liued, hee had of the beſt of the Nobility both Lords and Ladies, which fauoured him greatly. But chiefly Iohn of Gaunt Duke of Lancaſter, at whoſe commandement hee made the Treatiſe [a] *Of the alliance betwixt Mars and Venus*: and alſo the booke of the Ducheſſe. Likewiſe the Lady Iſabel daughter to King Edward the third, and wife to Ingeram De Guynes, Lord De Coucy: alſo the Lady Margaret daughter to the ſame King, maried to Iohn Haſtings Earle of Penbrooke, did greatly loue and fauour Geffrey Chaucer, and hee againe did as much honour them, but ſpecially the Lady Margaret, as it may appeare in diuers Treatiſes by him written: As in the Prologue of the Legend of good women vnder the name of the Dayſie; & likewiſe in a Ballad, beginning, **In the ſeaſon of Feuerier.** Others there were of great account, wherof ſome for ſome cauſes tooke liking of him, and other for his rare gifts and learning did admire him. And thus hee liued in honour many yeares both at home and abroad.

[a] *Some ſay hee did but tranſlate it: and that it was made by ſir* Otes de Grantſome *Knight, in French: of my lady of Yorke daughter to the K. of Spaine, repreſenting Venus; & my Lord of Hũtingdon ſometime Duke of Exceſter. This lady was younger ſiſter to Conſtance Iohn of Gaunts ſecond wife. This Lord of Huntingdon was called Iohn Holland, halfe brother to Richard the ſecond: hee married Elizabeth the daughter of Iohn of Gaunt Duke of Lanceſter.*

Yet it ſeemeth that hee was in ſome trouble in the daies of King Richard the 2. as it may appeare in the Teſtament of Loue: where hee doth greatly complaine of his owne raſhneſſe in following the multitude, and of their hatred againſt him for bewraying their purpoſe. And in that complaint which he maketh to his empty purſe, I doe find a written copy, which I had of Maiſter Stow (whoſe library helped me in many things) wherein ten times more is adioined, than is in print. Where hee maketh great lamentation for his wrongfull impriſonment, wiſhing death to end his daies: which in my iudgment doth greatly accord with that in the Teſtament of Loue. Moreouer we find it thus in Record.

Out of the Records in the Toure.

In the ſecond yeare of Richard the ſecond, The K. tooke Geffrey Chaucer and his lands into his protection. The occaſion whereof no doubt was ſome daunger and trouble wherein hee was fallen by fauouring ſome raſhe attempt of the common people. For liuing in ſuch troubleſome times, wherin few knew what parts to take, no maruel if he came into ſome danger,

nay

nay great maruell that he fell not into greater danger. But as he was learned, ſo was he wiſe, and kept himſelf much out of the way in Holland, Zeland, and France, where he wrote moſt of his bookes.

His Bookes.

CHaucer had alwaies an earneſt deſire to enrich and beautifie our Engliſh tongue, which in thoſe daies was very rude & barren. and this he did, following the example of *Dantes* and *Petrarch*, who had done the ſame for the Italian tongue; *Alanus* for the French; and *Iohannes Mena* for the Spaniſh: neither was Chaucer inferior to any of them in the performance herof: And England in this reſpect is much beholden to him, as *Leland* well noteth:

Anglia Chaucerum veneratur noſtra poetam,
Cui veneres debet patria lingua ſuas.

Our England honoureth Chaucer poet, as principall
To whom her countrey tongue doth owe her beauties all.

Beſides thoſe bookes of his which wee haue in print, he wrote diuers others: as,

De Vulcani veru.
De Leone & eius dignitate.
Comœdias & Tragœdias.
Facetias & Iocos.
Iacke Vpland againſt Freers nowe printed with Chaucers workes.
His A. B. C. neuer before this time printed.

Others I haue ſeene without any Authours name, in the hands of M. Stow that painfull Antiquarie, which for the inuention I would verily iudge to be Chaucers, were it not that words and phraſes carry not euery where Chaucers Antiquitie. M. William Thynn in his firſt printed booke of Chaucers works with one Columbe on a ſide, had a Tale called the Pilgrims tale, which was more odious to the Clergie, than the ſpeach of the Plowman. The tale began thus: **In Lincolneſhire faſt by a fenne: Standeth a religious houſe who doth it kenne.** The argument of which tale, as alſo the occaſion thereof, and the cauſe why it was left out of Chaucers works, ſhall hereafter be ſhewed, if God permit, in M. Fran. Thyns coment vpon Chaucer: & the Tale it ſelfe publiſhed if poſſibly it can be found.

Now, concerning thoſe bookes which wee haue in print: the Canterbury Tales for the moſt part were of his owne inuention, yet ſome of them tranſlated, and penned in King Richards dayes the ſecond, and after the inſurrection of Iacke Strawe, which was in the 4. yeere of the ſame King: for in the Tale of the Nunnes prieſt, he maketh mention thereof.

The Romant of the Roſe was tranſlated out of French.

Troilus and Creſeid called *Throphe* in the Lumbard tongue, was tranſlated out of Latin, as in the Preface to the ſecond booke of Troilus and Creſeid he confeſſeth in theſe wordes:

To euery louer I me excuſe,
That of no ſentement I this endite,
But out of Latin in my tonge it write.

Mary Magdalen tranſlated out of S. Origen.

The balad, *Fly from the preaſe*, made by Chaucer on his death bed.

The Letter of Cupid is none of Chaucers doing, but was compiled by

[a] Thomas Occleue of the office of the priuie Seale, ſometime Chaucers ſcholler. The which Occleue for the loue he bare to his maiſter, cauſed his picture to bee truly drawne in his booke *De Regimine Principis*, dedicated to Henry the fift: the which I haue ſeene, and according to the which this in the beginning of this booke was done by M. Spede, who hath annexed thereto all ſuch cotes of Armes, as any way concerne the Chaucers, as hee found them (trauailing for that purpoſe) at Ewelme and at Wickham.

[a] *Thomas Occleue, vel Ockeleſe, vir tã bonis literis, quam generis proſapia clarus exquiſita quadã Anglici ſermonis eloquẽtia poſt Chaucerum, cuius fuerat diſcipulus, patriam ornauit linguam. Iohannis Wicleui, & ipſius Berengarij in religione doctrinam ſequebatur. Tractatus hos fecit: Planctum proprium. Dialogum ad amicum. De quadam Imperatrice. De arte moriendi. De cœleſti Hieruſalem. De quodam Ionatha. De regimine Principis.*

Occleue in that booke where he ſetteth downe Chaucers picture, addeth theſe verſes:

Although his life be queint, the reſemblaunce
Of him that hath in me ſo freſh liuelines,
That to put other men in remembraunce
Of his perſon, I haue here the liknes
Doe make, to the end in ſtedfaſtnes,
That they that of him haue loſt thought and mind,
By this peinture may againe him find.

His Death.

GEffrey Chaucer departed out of this world the 25 day of October, in the yeare of our Lord 1400. after hee had liued about 72 yeares. Thus writeth Bale out of Leland: *Chaucerus ad canos deuenit, ſenſitque ſenectutem morbum eſſe: & dum cauſas ſuas, Londini curaret, &c.* Chaucer liued till he vvas an old man, and found old age to bee greeuous: and vvhileſt he followed his cauſes at London, he died, and vvas buried at Weſtminſter.

The old verſes which were written on his graue at the firſt, were theſe:

Galfridus Chaucer vates & fama poeſis,
Maternæ hac ſacra ſum tumulatus humo.

But ſince M. Nicholas Brigham did at his owne coſt and charges erect a faire marble monument for him, with his picture, reſembling that done by Occleue, and theſe verſes:

Qui fuit Anglorum vates ter maximus olim
Gaufredus Chaucer conditur hoc tumulo:
Annum ſi quæras domini, ſi tempora vitæ
Ecce notæ ſubſunt, quæ tibi cuncta notant.
Anno Domini 1400. *die menſis Octob.* 25.

About the ledge of which tombe were theſe verſes, now clean worne out.

Si rogites quis eram, forſan te fama docebit:
Quod ſi fama negat, mundi quia gloria tranſit,
Hæc monumenta lege.

Now

Now it ſhall not be amiſſe to theſe Epitaphes, to adde the iudgements & reports of ſome learned men, of this worthy and famous Poet. And firſt of all Thomas Occleue, who liued in his daies, writeth thus of him in his booke *De Regimine Principis*:

But welaway ſo is mine hart woe
That the honour of Engliſh tongue is deed,
Of which I wont was counſaile haue and reed.
O maſter dere and fadre reuerent,
My maſter Chaucer floure of Eloquence,
Mirror of fructuous entendement,
O vniuerſall fadre of Science:
Alas that thou thine excellent prudence
In thy bed mortal mighteſt not bequeath.
What eyld death: Alas why would ſhe thee ſle.
O death that dideſt not harme ſingler in ſlaughter of him
But all the land it ſmerteth.
But natheleſſe yet haſt thou no power his name ſle,
His hie vertue aſterteth
Vnſlaine fro thee, which ay vs likely herteth,
With bookes of his ornat enditing,
That is to all this land enlumining.

The ſame Author againe in the ſame booke.

My deare maiſter, God his ſoule quite,
And fadre Chaucer faine would haue me taught,
But I was young, and leered lite or nought,
Alas my worthy maiſter honorable,
This lands very treaſure, and richeſſe,
Death by thy death hath harme irreparable
Vnto vs done: her vengeable dureſſe,
Diſpoiled hath this lond of the ſweetneſſe
Of Rhetorige: for vnto Tullius
Was neuer man ſo like among vs:
Alſo who was heire in philoſophy,
To Ariſtotle, in our tongue, but thou.
The ſteppes of Virgil in Poeſe
Thou ſuedeſt eken, men know well inough.
That combre world that thee my maiſter ſlough
Would I ſlaine were: Death was too haſtife
To renne on thee, and reue thee thy life,
She might haue tarried her vengeance a while,
To that ſome man had egall to thee be.
Nay let be that: ſhe knew wele that this Ile,
May neuer man forth bring like vnto thee:
And her office needs do muſt ſhe,
God bad her ſo, I truſt all for the beſt,
O maiſter, maiſter, God thy ſoule reſt.

Dan * Iohn Lidgate likewiſe in his prologue of Bocchas of the fall of Princes by him tranſlated, ſaith thus in his commendation.

My maiſter Chaucer with his freſh comedies,
Is dead alas chiefe Poet of Britaine,
That whilome made full pitous Tragedies,
The laule alſo of Princes he did complaine,

* *Iohn Lidgate Monke of Burie an excellent poet: hee traueiled Fraunce and Italy, to learne the languages and ſciences.*

As he that was of making soueraine,
Whom all this land should of right preferre,
Sith of our language he was the Loadsterre.

Afterward in the same place do solow sourescore & three verses in the commendation of Chaucer, and the bookes that he made particularly named.

In a booke of Maister Stowes (but I know not who was the Authour) I find these verses.

O fathers and founders of enornat eloquence,
That clumined haue our great Britaine,
To soone we haue lost our laurlat science,
O lusty licour of that fulsome fountaine,
O cursed death, why hast thou those poets slain,
I meane Gower, Chaucer, and Gaufride,*
Alas the time that euer they fro vs dide.

*That is Geffrey Vinesause: of whom read in the recitall of Authours.

Iohn Lidgate againe in a booke which he writeth of the birth of the Virgine Mary, hath these verses.

And eke maister Chaucer now is in graue,
The notable Rhetore, poet of Britaine,
That worthie was the laurell to haue,
Of poetry, and the palme attaine,
That made first to distill and raine,
The gold dew dropes of speech and eloquence,
Into our tongue through his excellence.

And found the floures first of Rhethoricke,
Our rude speech only to enlumine,
That in our tongue was neuer none him like:
For as the sunne doth in heauen shine,
In midday spere downe to vs by line,
In whose presence no sterre may appeare,
Right so his ditties withouten any peare

Euery making with his light distaine,
In soothfastnesse, who so taketh heed:
Wherefore no wonder though my hart plaine,
Upon his death, and for sorrow bleed,
For want of him now in my great need,
That should (alas) conuay and eke direct,
And with his support, amend and correct

The wrong traces of my rude penne,
There as I erre, and goe not line right.
But that for he ne may me not kenne,
I can no more but with all my might,
With all mine heart, and mine inward sight,
Praieth for him that now lieth in chest,
To God aboue to giue his soule good rest.

The excellent and learned Scottish Poet Gawyne Dowglas, Bishop of Dunkeld in the preface of Virgils Eneados, turned into Scottish verse, doth thus speake of Chaucer:

Venerable

Venerable Chaucer, principall poet without pere,
Heauenly trumpet, orloge, and regulere,
In eloquence, baulme conduct, and dyall,
Milkie founteine cleare strand, and rose ryall
Of fresh endite through Albione Island brayed,
In his legend of notable ladies sayed, &c.

About William Caxtons time, Stephanus Surigonius Poet Laureat of Millaine, did write this Epitaph vpon Geffrey Chaucer, in Latin.

This William Caxton of London Mercer, brought printing out of Germany into England about the latter end of the reign of Henry the sixt, and practised the same in the Abbey of S. Peter at Westminster. It was first found in Germany at Magunce, by one Iohn Cuthembergus a knight: and brought to Rome by Conradus an Almaigne, as some authours say.

Epitaphium Galfridi Chaucer, per poetam laureatum Stephanum Surigonum Mediolanensem in decretis licenciatum.

Pyerides musæ, si possint numina fletus
Fundere, diuinas atque rigare genas:
Galfridi vatis Chaucer crudelia fata
Plangite: sit lachrimis abstinuisse nephas.
Vos coluit viuens: at vos celebrate sepultum,
Reddatur merito gratia digna viro.
Grande decus vobis est docti musa Maronis,
Qua didicit meliùs lingua latina loqui.
Grande, nouumque decus Chaucer, famamq́ parauit:
Heu quantum fuerat prisca Britanna rudis.
Reddidit insignem maternis versibus, vt iam
Aurea splendescat, ferrea facta prius.
Hunc latuisse virum nil, si tot opuscula vertes,
Dixeris, egregijs quæ decorata modis,
Socratis ingenium, vel fontes Philosophiæ,
Quicquid & arcani dogmata sacra ferunt.
Et quascumque velis, tenuit dignissimus artes:
Hic vates paruo conditus hoc tumulo.
Ah laudis quantum, præclara Britannia, perdis,
Dum rapuit tantum mors odiosa virum.
Crudeles Parcæ, crudelia filia sororum:
Non tamen, extincto corpore, fama perit:
Viuet in æternum, viuent dum scripta poëtæ:
Viuent æterno tot monumenta die.
Si qua bonos tangit pietas, si carmine dignus,
Carmina, qui cecinit, tot cumulata modis,
Hæc sibi Marmoreo scribantur verba sepulchro,
Hæc maneat laudis sarcina summa suæ.
Galfridus Chaucer vates, & fama poësis
Maternæ hac sacra sum timulatus humo.

Post obitum Caxton voluit te viuere cura
Guillelmi, Chaucer clare poëta, tui.
Nam tua non solum compressit opuscula formis,
Has quoq́ sed laudes iussit hic esse tuas.

AND as for men of later time, M. William Thynn that learned Gentelman and painfull Collector of Chaucers workes, in his Epiſtle dedicatorie to the kings Maieſtie hath duly ſet forth the commendable qualities of this Poet: whoſe iudgement we are the rather to approue, for that he had further inſight into him than many others. Of whom Iohn Bale in his booke *Deſcriptoribus Britan. Centur.* 12. hath ſome lx. yeeres paſt, deliuered this: *Guilhelmus Thinne, præclari generis homo, & ab ineunte ætate in literis educatus, multo labore, ſedulitate & cura vſus, in perquirendis vetuſtis exemplaribus, Chauceri opera reſtituit, atque in vnum collegit volumen: quod Henrico octauo Anglorum regi dedicauit.* Since whoſe time, two of the pureſt and beſt writers of our daies, the one for Proſe, the other for Verſe, M. *Aſcham*, and M. *Spenſer*, haue deliuered moſt worthy teſtimonies of their approuing of Chaucer. Maſter *Aſcham* in one place calleth him *Engliſh Homer*, and makes no doubt to ſay, that he valueth his authoritie of as high eſtimation, as euer he did either Sophocles or Euripides in Greeke. And in an other place, where he declareth his opinion of Engliſh verſifying, he vſeth theſe wordes: *Chaucer and Petrarke, thoſe two worthy wittes, deſerue iuſt prayſe.* And laſt of all, in his diſcourſe of Germanie, he putteth him nothing behind either *Thucidides* or *Homer* for his liuely deſcriptions of ſite of places, and nature of perſons both in outward ſhape of bodie, and inward diſpoſition of mind; adding this withall, That not the proudeſt, that hath written in any tongue whatſouer, in theſe pointes can carrie away the praiſe from him.

Maſter *Spenſer* in his firſt Eglogue of his Shepheards Kalender, calleth him *Titirus*, the god of Shepheards, comparing him to the worthineſſe of the Romane Titirus Virgil. In his Faerie Queene in his diſcourſe of friendſhip, as thinking himſelfe moſt worthy to be Chaucers friend, for his like natural diſpoſition that Chaucer had, he ſheweth that none that liued with him, nor none that came after him, durſt preſume to reuiue Chaucers loſt labours in that vnperfite tale of the Squire, but onely himſelfe: which he had not done, had he not felt (as he ſaith) the infuſion of Chaucers owne ſweete ſpirite, ſuruiuing within him. And a little before he termeth him, Moſt renowmed and Heroicall Poet: and his writings, The works of heauenly wit: concluding his commendation in this manner:

Dan Chaucer, Well of Engliſh, vndefiled,
On Fames eternall beadrole vvorthy to be filed.
I followv here the footing of thy feet,
That vvith thy meaning ſo I may the rather meet.

And once againe I muſt remember M. *Camdens* authority, who as it were reaching one hand to Maſter *Aſcham*, and the other to Maſter *Spenſer*, and ſo drawing them togither, vttereth of him theſe words. *De Homero noſtro Anglico illud verè aſſeram, quod de Homero eruditus ille Italus dixit:*

——Hic ille eſt, cuius de gurgite ſacro
Combibit arcanos vatum omnis turba furores.

And that wee may conclude his praiſes with the teſtimony of the worthieſt Gentleman that the Court hath offorded in many yeeres: Sir Philip Sidney in his Apologie for Poetry ſaith thus of him: Chaucer vndoubtedly did excellently in his Troylus and Creiſeid; of whom truely I know not, whether to meruaile more, either that hee in that miſtie time could ſee ſo cleerely, or that wee in this cleere age walke ſo ſtumblingly after him. Seeing therefore that both old and new writers haue carried this reuerend conceit of our Poet, and openly declared the ſame by writing, let vs conclude with Horace in the eight Ode of his fourth booke:

Dignum laude virum muſa vetat mori.

FINIS.

THE WORKES OF GEFFREY CHAVCER, newly Printed, with diuers additions.

WITH THE SIEGE AND DESTRVCtion of the worthie Citie of Thebes, compiled by Iohn Lidgate, Monke of Burie.

To the Kings Highneſſe, my moſt gracious ſoueraigne Lord, Henry the eight, by the grace of God, King of England, and of France, defenſor of the faith, and Lord of Ireland, &c.

AMongs all other excellencies, moſt gracious ſouereine lord, wherewith almighty God hath endowed mankind, aboue the reſidue of earthly creatures, as an outward declaration of reaſon or reaſonableneſſe, wherein conſiſteth the ſimilitude of man vnto angels, and the difference betweene the ſame and brute beaſtes, I verayly ſuppoſe, that ſpeech or language is nat to be reputed amonges the ſmalleſt or inferiours. For thereby is expreſſed the conceit of one to another, in open and plaine ſentence, whych in the reſidue of liuely creatures, lacketh and is not ſhewed amongs them, but by certaine couert and derke ſignes, and that in fewe thyngs, hauing courſe and operation onely of nature. This ſpeech or language, after the confuſion of tongues, ſent by Gods punyſhment for pride and arrogancie of people, hath been by a certaine inſtinct and diſpoſition naturall, deuiſed and inuented in ſundry parts of the world, as fellowſhips or companyings of folkes one with another chaunced, much to the outward expreſſing of the thing in word or ſound, according to that whereof it had meaning or ſignification. But in proceſſe of time, by diligence or pollicie of people, after diuers formes, figures, and impreſſions in mettall, barks of trees, and other matter vſed for memorie and knowledge of thyngs, then preſent or paſſed, ſundry letters or caractes were firſt amongs the Phenices deuiſed and found, with ſuch knittings and ioynings of one to another, by a maruellous ſubtiltie and craft, as counterueiled was and is equiualent to the ſame languages. So as the conceit of mans mind, whych at the beginning was vſed to bee declared by mouth onely, came to ſuch point, that it was as ſenſibly and liuely expreſſed in writing. Hereupon enſued a great occaſion and courage vnto them that ſhould write, to compone and adorne the rudeneſſe and barbarietie of ſpeech, and to forme it to an eloquent and ordinate perfection: whereunto many, and many great Poets and Oratours haue highly employed their ſtudies and courages, leauing thereby notable Renoume of themſelues, and example perpetuell to their poſteritie. Amongs other, the Greekes in all kinds of ſciences ſeemed ſo to preuaile, and ſo to ornate their tongue, as yet by other of right noble languages, cannat be perfitely imitated or followed. The Latines by example of the Greekes, haue gotten or wonne to them no ſmall glorie, in the forming, order, and bettering of that tongue. Out of the which two, if it be well ſearched, that is to ſay, Greeke and Latin (thogh by corruption of ſpeech it ſhould ſeeme much otherwiſe) haue been derriued the reſidue of the languages, that be written with the letters or caractes of either of them both: But of all ſpeeches, thoſe whych moſt approch to the Latine, bee the Italian and Spaniſh tongues, of whome the one by corruption of the Gothes and Longobardes had her beginning, as Latine ſpoken by ſtrangers of a barbare vnderſtanding. The other being alſo Latine, was by Vandales, Gothes, Hoores, Sarracenes, and other ſo many times blemiſhed, as maruelle it is to ſee now vnto what perfection theſe two formed out of the Latine and Barbares ſpeeches be reduced. Next vnto thē in ſimilitude to the Latin is the French tongue, which by diligence of people of the ſame, is in few yeares paſſed, ſo amended, as well in pronunciation as in writing, that an Engliſhman by a ſmall time exerciſed in that tongue, hath not lacked ground to make a Grammere, or rule ordinarie thereof. Though of trouth (which ſome ſhall ſcarcely beleeue) the Germanes haue ſo formed the order of their language, that in the ſame is both as much plentie and as nere concordaunce to the phraſe of the Latin, as the French tong hath. And verily, like as all theſe and the reſt haue ben thus vigilant and ſtudious, to meliorate or amend their languages: ſo hath there nat lacked amongs vs Engliſhmen, which haue right well & notably endeuored and employed them-

themselues, to the beautifying and bettering of the English tongue.

Amongs whom most excellent prince, my most redoubted and gracious soueraign lord, I your most humble vassale, subiect and seruaunt, William Thynn, cheefe clerke of your kitchin, mooued by a certaine inclination and zeale, which I haue, to hear of any thing sounding to the laud and honour of this your noble realme, haue taken great delectation, as the times and laisers might suffer, to rede and heare the bookes of that noble and famous clerke Geffrey Chaucer, in whose workes is so manifest comprobation of his excellēt learning, in all kindes of doctrines and sciences, such fruitfulnesse in words, well according to the matter and purpose, so sweet and pleasaunt sentences, such perfection in metre, the composition so adapted, such freshnesse of inuention, compendiousnesse in narration, such sensible and open stile, lacking neither maiestie ne mediocritie, conenable in disposition, & such sharpnesse or quicknes in conclusion, that it is much to be marualled, how in his time, when doutlesse al good letters were laid asleep throughout the world, as the thing, which either by the disposition and influence of the bodies aboue, or by other ordinaunce of God, seemed like (as was in danger) to haue vtterly perished, such an excellent Poet in our tong, should as it were (nature repugning) spring and arise. For though it had beene in Demosthenes or Homerus times, when al learning and excellencie of sciences florished amongs ỹ Greeks, or in the seaſō that Cicero prince of eloquence amongs Latines liued, yet had it ben a thing right rare and straunge, and worthy perpetuall laud, that any clerke by learning or witte, could then haue framed a tongue, before so rude and imperfite, to such a sweet ornature and composition: likely if he had liued in these dayes, being good letters so restored and reuiued as they be, if hee were nat empeached by the enuie of suche as may tollerate nothyng, which to vnderstond, their capacitie doth nat extend, to haue brought it vnto a full & finall perfection. Wherefore gracious soueraigne lord, taking such delight and pleasure in the workes of this noble clerke (as is afore mentioned) I haue of a long season much vsed to rede and visite the same, and as bookes of diuers imprints came vnto my hands, I easily and without great studie might and haue deprehended in them manye errours, falsities, and deprauations, which euidently appeared by the contrarieties and alterations found by collation of the one with the other, whereby I was moued and stirred to make diligent serch where I might find or recouer any true copies or examplaries of the said bookes whereunto in processe of time, nat without cost and pain, I attayned, and nat onely vnto such as seeme to be very true copies of those workes of Geffrey Chaucer, which before had beene put in print, but also to diuers other neuer till nowe imprinted, but remaining almost vnknowne, and in oblition: whereupon lamenting with my selfe the negligence of the people that haue been in this realme, who doubtlesse were very remisse in the setting forth or auauncement either of the hystories thereof, to the great hinderaunce of the renoume of such noble princes and valiant conquerours and captaines, as haue been in the same, or also of the workes of memory of the famous and excellent clerks in all kinds of sciences, that haue flourished therein. Of which both sorts, it hath pleased God as highly to nobilitate this Ile, as any other region of Christendome: I thought it in manere appertenaunt vnto my dutie, and that of very honestie and loue to my country I ought no lesse to doe, than to put my helping hand to the restauration and bringing againe to light of the said workes, after the true copies and examplaries aforesaid. And deuising with my selfe, who of al other were most worthy, to whom a thing so excellent and notable should be dedicat, which to my conceit semeth for the admiration, noueltie, and strangenesse, that it might be reputed to be of in the time of the author, in comparison, as a pure and fine tried precious or polished iewell, out of a rude or indigest masse or matere, none could to my thinking occurre, that since, or in the time of Chaucer, was or is sufficient, but only your maiesty roiall, which by discretion and iudgement, as most absolute in wisedome and all kinds of doctrine, could and of his innate clemencie and goodnesse would adde or giue any authoritie hereunto.

For this cause, most excellent, and in al vertues most prestante prince, I as humbly prostrate before your kingly estate, lowly supplie and beseech the same, that it woll vouchsafe to take in good part my poore studie and desirous minde, in reducing vnto light this so precious and necessarie an ornament of the tongue of this your realme, ouer pitous to haue been in any point lost, falsified, or neglected: So that vnder the shield of your moſt royall protection and defence, it may goe forth in publick, and preuaile ouer those that woul blemish, deface, and in many things clearely abolish the laud, renoume, and glorie heretofore

foze compared, and meritozioully adquired by diuers pzinces, and other of this laid moſt noble Ile, whereunto nat onely ſtraungers vnder pzetext of high learning, and knowiege of their malicious and peruerſe mindes, but alſo ſome of your owne ſubiects, blinded in follie and ignozaunce, doe with great ſtudie contend. Moſt gracious, victozious, and of God moſt elect and wozthie pzince, my moſt dzead ſoucraine lozd, in whom of very merite, dutie, and ſucceſſion, is renued the glozious title of Defenſoz of the Chziſten faith, which by your noble pzogenitour, the Great Conſtantine, ſometime king of this Realme, and Emperour of Rome, was next God and his Apoſtles, cheefly maintained, cozrobozate, and defended: almightie Jeſu ſend to your highneſſe, the continuall and euerlaſting habundaunce of his infinite grace. Amen.

¶ Thus endeth the Pzeface.

¶ In this table ye may find any thing that ye woll haue in this volume by the Folio, as followeth.

☞ The Pzologues of the Canterburie tales.

The Knights tale. Fol.i.
The Millers tale. fol.xi.
The Reues tale. fol.xiiii.
The Cookes tale. fol.xvi.
The man of laws tale. fo.xvii.
The Squires tale. fol.xxii.
The Marchants tale. fol.xxv.
The wife of Bathes Pzologue. fol.xxxi.
The wife of Bathes tale. fol.xxxv.
The Freres tale. fol.xxxvii.
The Sompnours tale. fol.xxxviii.
The Clerke of Oxenfozds tale. fol.xli.
The Frankeleines tale. fol.xlvii.
The ſecond Nonnes tale. fol.lii.
The Pzologue of ỹ Chanons yeoman. fol.liiii.
The Doctour of Phiſickes tale. fol.lviii.
The Pardoners Pzologue. fol.lx.
The Pardoners tale. eodem.
The Shipmans tale. fol.lxiii.
The Pziozes Pzologue. fol.lxv.
The Pzioreſſe tale. eodem.
The rime of ſir Topas. fol.lxvi.
The tale of Chaucer. fol.lxvii.
The Monkes Pzologue. fol.lxxvi.
The Monkes tale. fol.lxxvii.
The tale of the Nonnes Pzieſt. fol.lxxxi.
The Manciples tale. fol.lxxxiiii.
The Plowmans tale. fol.lxxxv.
The Perſons tale. fol.xcii.
The Romaunt of the Roſe. fol.cix.

Troilus and Creſeide is deuided into fiue bookes.

The firſt booke beginneth. fol.cxliii.
The ſecond booke beginneth. fol.cxlviii.
The third booke beginneth. fol.clvii.
The fourth booke beginneth. fol.clxvi.
The fifth booke beginneth. fol.clxxiui.
The Teſtament of Creſeide. fol.clxxxii.

¶ The Legend of good women hath all theſe following.

The Pzologue. fol.clxxxv.
The legend of Cleopatras. fol.lxxxvii.
The legend of Tiſbe of Babilon. fol.clxxxviii.
The legend of Queene Dido. fol.clxxxix.
The legend of Hipſiphile and Medea. fo.cxci.
The legend of Lucrece of Rome. fol.cxcii.
The legend of Ariadne. fol.cxciii.
The legend of Philomene. fol.cxciiii.
The legend of Phillis. fol.cxcv.
The legend of Hypermeſtra. fol.cxcvi.

¶ Boecius de Conſolatione is deuided into fiue bookes.

The firſt booke beginneth. fo.cxcvii.
The ſecond booke beginneth. fol.cci.
The third booke beginneth. fol.ccvii.
The fourth booke beginneth. fol.ccxv.
The fifth booke beginneth. fol.ccxxii.

¶ All theſe wozkes following be wozkes by themſelfe.

The dzeame of Chaucer called the Ducheſſe. fol.ccxxvii.
The Aſſembly of Foules. fol.ccxxxiii.
The Floure of Courteſie. fol.ccxxxvi.
How Pitie is dead, &c. fol.ccxxxviii.
La belle dame ſans mercie. eodem.
Annelida and falſe Arcite. fol.ccxliii.
The Aſſembly of Ladies. fol.ccxlv.
The concluſion of the Aſtrolaby. fol.ccxlix.
The complaint of the black knight. fol.cclvii.
A pzayſe of women. fol.cclxi.

¶ The houſe of Fame is deuided into thzee bookes.

The firſt booke beginneth. fol.cclxii.
The ſecond booke beginneth. fol.cclxiiii.
The third booke beginneth. fol.cclxvii.

¶ The Teſtament of Loue is deuided into thzee bookes.

The firſt booke beginneth. fol.cclxxi.
The ſecond booke beginneth. fol.cclxxxi.
The third booke beginneth. fol.ccxcii.

¶ All

¶ All these works following be works by themselfe.

The lamentation of Mary Mag. fol.cccii.
The remedie of Loue. fol.cccv.
The complaint of Mars & Venus. fol.cccviii.
The complaint of Mars alone. fol.cccix.
The complaint of Venus alone. fol.cccx.
The letter of Cupide. fol.cccx.
A ballade of our Ladie. fol.cccxii.
A ballade to king Henry the iiii. fol.cccxiii.
Three sayings of dan John Lid. fol.cccxvi.
Of the Cuckow and the Night. eodem.
Scrogan vnto the yong Lords and gentilmen of the kings house. fol.cccxviii.
Diuers other ballades of Chaucer, &c.
A ballade of good counsaile, made by John Lidgate. fol.cccxx.
A praise or commendation of Chaucers eloquence. fol.cccxxi.
A ballade, teaching what is gentilnes. eodem.
A prouerbe against couetise and negligence. eodem.
A ballade against vnconstant women. eodem.
How all thing in this world is variable, saue women onely. eodem.
The craft of Louers. fol.cccxxii.
A pleasaunt ballade of women. fol.cccxxiii.
The ten commaundements of loue. eodem.
The nine Ladies worthie. eodem.
Certaine ballades. fol cccxxiiii.
How Mercurie, with three goddesses, appeared to Paris. fol.cccxxv.
A ballade pleasaunt. eodem.
The discriuing of a faire Lady. eodem.
A ballade warning men to beware of deceitfull women. eodem.
Certain verses cõpiled by Chaucer. fo.cccxxvi.
A ballade declaring the worthinesse of womens chastitie. eodem.
The Court of Loue. fol.cccxxvii.
The Duchesse. fol.cccxxxiii.
The Floure and the Leafe. fol.cccxliii.
The A. B. C. called, la priere de nostre dame. fol. cccxlvii.
Jacke Upland. fol. cccxlviii.
Chaucers words to Adam his owne Scriuener. fol.cccl.
The Prologue of the storye of Thebes. ccclii.
The first part of the siege of Thebes. fo. ccclii.
The second part of ỹ siege of Thebes. ccclviii.
The iii. part of the siege of Thebes. ccclxv.

¶ Thus endeth the table of all the works.

Eight goodly Queſtions, with their anſweres.

SOmetime in Greece, that noble region,
There were eight clerkes, of full great ſcience,
Philoſophers of notable diſcretion:
Of whom was aſked, to proue their prudence
Eight queſtions, of derke intelligence:
To which they anſwerd after their entent,
As here doth appeare plaine and euident.

¶ The firſt queſtion was, What earthly thing
Is beſt, and to God moſt commendable?
The firſt clerke anſwerd without tarying,
A mans ſoule, euer ferme and ſtable
In right, from the trouth not variable.
☞ But now alas, full ſore may we weepe:
For couetiſe hath brought trouth aſleepe.

The ſecond, What thing is moſt odious?
A double man, ſaied the Philoſopher,
With a virgine face, and a taile venomous:
With a faire viewe, and a falſe profer:
A corrupt carien in a golden tree.
☞ It is a monſter in natures limage,
One man to haue a double viſage.

The third, What is the beſt dower
That may be to a wife appropriate?
A cleane life, was the clerkes anſwer,
Without ſinne, all chaſt, and inuiolate
From all deceits, and ſpeeches inornate,
Or countenaunce, which ſhall be to diſpiſe.
☞ No fire make, and then no ſmoke woll ariſe.

The fourth queſtion, What maiden may
Be called cleane in chaſtitie?
The fourth clerke anſwered, which alway
Euery creature is aſhamde on to lie:
Of whom men repoꝛten great honeſtie.
☞ Good maidens keepe your chaſtitie forth,
And remẽber, that good name is gold worth.

Who is a poore man euer full of woe?
A couetous man, which is a nigon:
He that in his heart can neuer ſay ho:
The more good, the leſſe diſtribution,
The richer, the worſe of condition,
Men in this coaſt clepen him a niggard,
Sir Guy the bribour, is his ſteward.

Which is a rich man, without fraude?
He that can to his good ſuffiſe:
Whatſoeuer he hath, he peneth God the laud:
And keepeth him cleane from all couetiſe:
He deſires nothing in vngodly wiſe:
His body is here, his mind is aboue:
He is a rich man, for God doth him loue.

Who is a foole is the ſeuenth demaunde?
He that would hurt, and hath no powere?
Might he mikell, much would he command:
His mallice great, his might nought were:
He threteth full faſt, full little may he dere:
He thinketh not how men haue ſaied before,
God ſendeth a ſhreud Cow a ſhort horne.

Who is a wiſe man is the eight queſtion?
He that might nope, and doth no annoiaunce:
Might puniſh, and leaueth puniſſion:
A man mercifull, without vengeaunce.
A wiſe man putteth in remembraunce,
Saying, Had I venged all mine harme,
My cloke had not be furred halfe ſo warme.

Explicit.

¶ To the kings moſt noble grace, and to the Lords and knights of the Garter.

TO you wele of honour and worthineſſe,
Our Chriſten King, the heire and ſucceſſour
Unto Juſtinians deuout tenderneſſe,
In the faith of Jeſu, our redemptour:
And to your lords of the Garter, floure
Of cheualrie, as men you clepe and call,
The lord of vertue, and of grace authour,
Graunt the fruit of your loſe, neuer appall.

O liege lord, that haue the likeneſſe
Of Conſtantine, then ſample and mirrour
To princes all, in humble buxomeneſſe,
To holy church, o veray ſuſtainour
And piller of our faith, and werriour,
Againe of hereſies the bitter Gall:
Doe forth, doe forth, continue your ſuccour,
Hold vp Chriſts banner, let it not fall.

This Ile or this had been but heatheneſſe
Had be of your faith the force and vigour,
And yet this day the fiends crabbedneſſe
Weneth fully to catch a time and houre,
To haue on vs your liges a ſharpe ſhoure,
And to his ſeruitude vs knitte and thrall:
But aye we truſt in you our protectour,
On your conſtaunce we awaiten all.

Commandeth that no wight haue hardinesse
O worthy king, our Christen Emperour,
Of the faith to disputen more or lesse
Openly among people: Her errour
Springeth all day, and engendreth rumour.
Maketh such law, and for ought may befall,
Observe it wele, thereto be ye doctour,
Doeth so, and God in glorie shall you stall.

Ye Lords eke, shining in noble fame,
To which appropred is the maintenaunce
Of Christs cause, in honour of his name,
Shove on, and put his foes to vttraunce,
God would so, so would eke your legiaunce
To tho two, aye pricketh you your dutie:
Who so nat keepeth this double observaunce,
Of merite and honour naked is he.

Your stile saieth, ye be foes to shame:
Now kith of your faith the persecutaunce,
In which an heape of vs be halt and lame:
Our christen king of England and of France,
And ye my lords, with your alliaunce,
And other faithfull people that there be,
Trust I to God, shal quench al this noisance,
And this land set in high prosperitie.

Conquest of high prowesse is for to tame
The wild woodnesse of all these miscreaunce,
Right to the rote daily repe ye that same,
Slepen nat this, but for Gods pleasaunce
And his mother and in significaunce,
That ye been of saint Georges liuere,
Doeth him seruice and knightly obeisaunce,
For Christs cause is his, well knowne ye.
Stiffe stand in that, for ye shall greeue grame
The foe to peace, the norice of distaunce,
That now is earnest, turne it into game,
Now kithe of your beleeue the constaunce,
Lord liege, and lords haue in remembraunce,
Lord of all is the blisfull Trinitie,
Of whose vertue, the mightie habundaunce
Your heart and strength in faithfull vnitie.

Explicit.

When faith fayleth in Prieſtes ſawes,
And lords heſtes are holden for lawes,
And robberie is holden purchace,
And letcherie is holden ſollace:
Then ſhall the lond of Albion
Be brought to great confuſion.

It falleth for a gentleman
To ſay the beſt that he can
Alwaies in manner abſence,
And the ſooth in his preſence.
It commeth by kind of gentill blood
To caſt away all heauineſſe,
And gader togither words good,
The werke of wiſdome beareth witneſſe.

Finis.

The Argument to the Prologues.

THe Authour in theſe Prologues to his Canterburie Tales, dooth deſcribe the reporters thereof for two cauſes: firſt, that the Reader ſeeing the qualitie of the perſon, may judge of his ſpeech accordingly: wherein Chaucer hath moſt excellently kept that *decorum*, which Horace requireth in that behalfe. Secondly to ſhew, how that euen in our language, that may bee performed for deſcriptions, which the Greeke and Latine Poets in their tongues haue done at large. And ſurely this Poet in the iudgement of the beſt learned, is not inferiour to any of them in his deſcriptions, whether they be of perſons, times, or places. Vnder the Pilgrimes, being a certaine number, and all of differing trades, he comprehendeth all the people of the land, and the nature and diſpoſition of them in thoſe dayes; namely, giuen to deuotion rather of cuſtome than of zeale. In the Tales is ſhewed the ſtate of the Church, the Court, and Countrey; with ſuch Art and cunning, that although none could denie himſelfe to be touched, yet none durſt complaine that he was wronged. For the man being of greater learning than the moſt, and backed by the beſt in the land, was rather admired and feared, than any way diſgraced. Who ſo ſhall read theſe his workes without prejudice, ſhall find that hee was a man of rare conceit and of great reading.

WHen that Aprill with his ſhoures ſote,
The drought of March had pierced to the rote,
And bathed euery vaine in ſuche licour,
Of which vertue engendred is the flour:
When Zephirus eke with his ſote breath,
Eſpired hath in euery holt and heath
The tender croppes, and that the yong ſonne
Hath in the Ram halfe his courſe yronne,
And ſmall foules maken melodie,
That ſlepen all night with open eie:
So priketh hem nature in her courage,
Then longen folke to goe on pilgrimage,
And palmers to ſeeken ſtraunge ſtrondes,
To ſerue hallowes couth in ſundry londes:
And ſpecially, fro euery ſhires end
Of Englond, to Canterburie they wend,
The holy bliſſull martir for to ſeeke,
That hem hath holpen, when they were ſeke.

IT befell that ſeaſon on a day,
In Southwarke at the Tabarde as I lay,
Ready to wend in my pilgrimage,
To Canterburie with deuout courage,
That night was come into that hoſtelry,
Well nine and twentie in a company,
Of ſundrie folke by auenture yfall
In fellowſhip, and pilgrimes were they all,
That toward Canterbury would ride:
The chambers and ſtables weren wide,
And well weren they eaſed at the beſt.
And ſhortly, when the ſunne was at reſt,
So had I ſpoken with hem euerychone,
That I was of her fellowſhip anone,
And made forward early for to riſe,
To take our way there as I you deuiſe.
But natheleſſe, while I haue time & ſpace,
Or that I further in this tale pace,
Me thinke it accordaunt to reaſon,
To tell you all the condition
Of each of hem, ſo as it ſeemed me:
And which they were, and of what degree:
And eke in what array that they were in:
And at a knight then will I firſt begin.

¶ The Knight. i.

A Knight there was, & that a worthy man,
That fro the time that he firſt began
To riden out, hee loued chiualrie,
Trouth, honour, freedome, and courteſie:
Full worthy was he in his lords warre,
And thereto had he ridden no man ſo farre,
As well in Chriſtendome as in Heatheneſſe,
And euer had honour for his worthineſſe.

At Alisaundre he was when it was won,
Full often time he had the bourd begon,
Aboue all nations in Pruce:
In Lettowe had he ridden and in Luce,
No Christen man so oft of his degree:
In Garnade at the siege had he be,
Of Algezer, and riden in Belmarie,
At Lyes was he, and also at Satalie,
When they were wonne, and in the great see,
At many a noble armie had he be.
At mortall battailes had he been fifteene,
And foughten for our faith at Tramissene
In listes thries, and aye slaine his foe.
This like worthy knight had been also
Sometime with the lord of Palathie,
Ayenst another Heathen in Turkie:
And euermore he had a soueraigne prise,
And though he was worthy he was wise,
And of his port as meeke as is a maid,
He neuer yet no villanie ne said
In all his life, vnto no manner wight:
He was a very perfite gentill knight.
But for to tell you of his array,
His horse wer good, but he was nothing gay,
Of fustian he weared a gipon,
All besmottred with his Haubergion:
For he was late come fro his voyage,
And went for to done his pilgrimage.

¶ The Squire. ii.

With him there was his son a yong squire,
A louer and a lusty Bachelere,
With his locks crull as they were laid in presse,
Of twenty yeare of age he was as I gesse:
Of his stature he was of euen length,
And wonderly deliuer, and of great strength.
And he had be sometime in chiuauchie,
In Flaunders, in Artois, and Picardie,
And borne him well, as of so little space,
In hope to stand in his ladies grace.
Embrouded was he, as it weren a mede,
All full of fresh floures, both white and rede:
Singing he was, or floiting all the day,
He was fresh, as is the moneth of May.
Short was his gown, with sleues long and wide
Well could he sitte on a horse, and faire ride:
He could songs make, and eke well endite,
Iust and eke daunce, portray and well write.
So hote he loued, that by nightertale,
He slept no more than doth the Nightingale.
Curteis he was lowly, and seruisable,
And kerfte before his fader at the table.

¶ The Squires yeoman. iii.

A Yeoman had he, and seruaunts no mo
All that time, for him list to ride so:
And he was clad in cote and hoode of grene,
A sheefe of Peacocke arrowes bright and shene,
Under his belt he bare full thriftely:
Well could he dresse his tackle yeomanly:
His arrowes drouped not with feathers low,
And in his hand he bare a mighty bow.
A notte head had he, with a browne visage:
Of wood craft well couth he all the vsage:
Upon his arme he bare a gay bracer,
And by his side a sworde and a bokler,
And on that other side a gay daggere,
Harneised well, and sharpe as point of spere:
A Christofer on his brest of siluer shene,
An horne he bare, the baudrike was of grene:
A forster was he soothly as I gesse.

¶ The Prioresse. iiii.

There was also a Nonne a Prioresse,
That of her smiling was simple and coy,
Her greatest oth was by Saint Loye,
And she was cleped dame Eglentine,
Full well she song the seruice deuine,
Entuned in her voice full semely,
And French she spake full fetously,
After the schoole of Stratford at bow,
For French of Paris was to her vnknow.
At meat was she well ytaught withall,
She let no morsell fro her lips fall:
Ne wette her fingers in her sauce deepe:
Well couth she carry a morsell and wel keepe,
That no drop ne fell vpon her brest:
In courtesie was set full much her lest.
Her ouerlip wiped she so cleane,
That in her cup was no ferthing sene
Of grece, when she dronken had her draught,
Full semely after her meat she raught:
And sikerly she was of great disport,
And full pleasaunt and amiable of port,
And pained her to counterfete chere
Of court, and be stateliche of manere,
And to been holden digne of reuerence.
But for to speake of her conscience,
She was so charitable and so pitous,
She would weepe if that she saw a mous
Caught in a trappe, if it were dead or bled,
Of small hounds had she, that she fed

with

With roſt fleſh, milke, and waſtell bread,
But ſore wept ſhe if any of hem were dead,
Or if men ſmote hem with a yard ſmart:
And all was conſcience and tender hart.
Full ſeemely her wimple pinched was:
Her noſe tretes, her eyen gray as glas:
Her mouth ſmale, and thereto ſoft and red:
But ſikerly ſhe had a faire forehead,
It was almoſt a ſpan brode I trow,
For hardely ſhe was not vndergrow.
Full fetiſe was her cloke, as I was ware:
Of ſmall Coral about her arme ſhe bare
A paire of bedes, gauded all with grene,
And thereon hong a broch of gold full ſhene,
On which there was firſt writ a crowned A,
And after (Amor vincit omnia.)
Another Nonne alſo with her had ſhe,
That was her chapleine, and preeſts three.

¶ The Monke. v.

A Monke there was, fair for the maiſtrie,
An out rider, that loued venerie:
A manly man, to ben an abbot able,
Full many a daintie horſe had he in ſtable:
And when he rode, men might his bridle here
Gingeling in a whiſtling wind as clere,
And eke as loud as doth the chappell bell:
There as this lord was keeper of the cell,
The rule of ſaint Maure and of ſaint Benet,
Becauſe it was old and ſomedele ſtreit,
This ilke Monke let old things to paſſe,
And held after the new world the pace:
He yaue not of the text a pulled hen,
That ſaith, that hunters be not holy men,
Ne that a Monke, when he is recheleſſe,
Is like to a fiſh that is waterleſſe:
This to ſay, a Monke out of Cloyſtre:
This ilke text held he not worth an oyſtre.
And I ſay his opinion was good, (wood,
What ſhould he ſtudie, and make himſelfe
Upon a booke alway in Cloyſter to pore,
Or ſwinke with his hands, and labore,
As Auſtin bid, how ſhall the world be ſerued?
Let Auſtin haue his ſwinke to him reſerued.
Therefore he was a prickeſoure aright:
Greihounds he had as ſwift as foule of flight:
Of pricking and of hunting for the hare
Was all his luſt, for no coſt would he ſpare.
I ſaw his ſleeues purfiled at the hand
With grece, and that the fineſt in a land.
And for to faſt his hood vnder the chinne,
He had of gold wrought a curious pinne:
A loue knot in the greater end there was,
His head was bald, and ſhone as any glas,
And eke his face, as he had been anoint,
He was a lord full fat and in good point:
His eyen ſtepe, and rolling in his head,
That ſtemed as a furneis of a lead.
His boots ſouple, his hors in great eſtate,
Now certainely he was a faire prelate:
He was not pale as a forpined ghoſt,
A fat Swan loued he beſt of any roſt:
His palfrey was browne as is a berry.

¶ The Frere. vi.

A Frere there was a wanton and a merry,
A Limytour, a full ſolempne man:
In all the orders foure is none that can
So much of daliaunce and faire language:
He had made full many a mariage
Of yong women, all at his owne coſt:
Unto his order he was a noble poſt,
Full well beloued, and familier was he
With frankeleins ouer all his countre,
And with worthy women of the toun:
For he had power of confeſſion,
As he ſaid himſelfe, more than a curate,
For of his order he was licenciate.
Full ſweetly heard he confeſſion,
And pleaſant was his abſolution.
He was an eaſie man to giue penaunce,
There as he wiſt to haue a good pitaunce:
For vnto a poore order for to giue,
Is a ſigne that a man is well yſhriue:
For if he gaue ought, he durſt make auaunt,
He wiſt well that a man was repentaunt:
For many a man is ſo hard of hert,
That he may not weepe although him ſmert.
Therefore in ſtede of weeping and prayeres,
Men mote giue ſiluer to the poore freres.
His tippet was aye faſed full of knues,
And pinnes, for to giue faire wiues:
And certainely he had a merry note,
Well could he ſing and plaine on a rote:
Of yedding he bare vtterly the pris.
His neckе was white as the flour delice,
Thereto ſtrong he was as a champioun,
And knew the tauernes well in euery toun,
And euery hoſteler and tapſtere,
Better than a lazer or a beggere:
For vnto ſuch a worthy man as he
Accordeth naught, as by his faculte,
To haue with lazers ſuch acquaintaunce,
It is not honeſt, it may not auaunce,
For to deale with ſuch poraile,
But all with rich, and ſellers of vitaile,

And ouer all there as profite should arise:
Courteis he was, and lowly of seruise.
There nas no man no where so vertuous,
He was the best begger in all his hous:
And gaue a certaine ferme for the graunt:
None of his brethren came in his haunt.
For though a widdow had but a shoo,
(So pleasaunce was his In principio)
Yet would he haue a ferthing or he went,
His purchase was better than his rent:
And rage he couth as it were a whelpe,
In louedayes there could he mikell helpe,
For there he was nat like a cloisterere,
With a threedbare cope, as a poore frere,
But he was like a maister or a pope:
Of double worstede was his semy cope,
So rounded as a bell out of presse.
Somewhat he lisped for his wantonnesse,
To make his English sweet vpon his tong,
And in harping, when that he song,
His eyen twinckled in his head aright,
As done the sterres in a frosty night.
This worthy frere was called Huberde.

The Marchaunt. vii.

A Marchãt was there with a forked berde,
In motley, and high on his horse he sat,
Upon his head a Flaunders beuer hat,
His bootes clasped faire and fetously,
His reasons spake he full solemnely,
Shewing alway ỳ encrease of his winning:
He would the see were kept for any thing
Betwixe Middleborough and Orewell:
Well could he in eschaunge sheldes sell,
This worthy man full well his wit beset,
There wist no wight that he was in dette,
So stately was he of his gouernaunce,
With his bargeins, and with his cheuisance.
Forsooth he was a worthy man withall,
But sooth to saine, I not what men him call.

The Clerke of Oxenford. viii.

A Clerke there was of Oxenford also,
That vnto Logicke had long ygo:
As leane was his horse as is a rake,
And he was nothing fat I vndertake,
But looked hollow, and thereto soberly:
Full threedbare was his ouer courtpy,
For he had yet getten him no benefice,
Ne was nought worldly to haue none office:
For him was leuer han at his beds hed
Twentie bookes, clad with blacke or red,
Of Aristotle, and of his Philosophie,
Than robes rich, or fiddle, or gay sautrie.
But all be that he was a Philosopher,
Yet had he but little gold in cofer,
But all that he might of his friends hent,
On bookes and on learning he it spent,
And busily gan for the soules pray
Of hem, that helpen him to scholay.
Of studie tooke he most cure and hede,
Not a word spake he more than was nede,
And that was said in forme and reuerence,
And short and quicke, and of high sentence,
Sowning in morall vertue was his speach,
Gladly would he learne, and gladly teach.

The Sergeant at law. ix.

A Sergeant of law ware and wise,
That often had ben at the paruise,
There was also, full rich of excellence,
Discreete he was, and of great reuerence:
He seemed such, his words were so wise.
Justice he was full often in assise,
By patent, and by plaine commission,
For his science, and his high renoun,
Of fee and robes had he many one:
So great a purchasour was no where none:
All was fee simple to him in effect,
His purchasing might not been in suspect.
No where so busie a man as he there nas,
And yet he seemed busier than he was:
In termes had he case and domes all,
That fro the time of king William was fall,
Thereto he could endite, and maken a thing,
There could no wight pinch at his writing:
And euery statute could he plaine by rote,
He rode but homely in a medley cote,
Girt with a seint of silke, with barres smale,
Of his array tell I no lenger tale.

The Frankelein. x.

A Frankelein there was in his companie:
White was his berd, as is ỳ daisie,
And of his complexion he was sanguine,
Well loued he by the morrow a sop in wine:
To liuen in delite was euer his wonne,
For he was Epicures owne sonne,
That held opinion, that plaine delite
Was very felicitie perfite.

An housholder, and that a great was he,
Saint Julian he was in his countre:
His bread, his ale, was alway after one,
A better viended man was no where none.
Without bake meat, was neuer his house,
Of fish and flesh, and that so plenteouse,
It snewed in his house of meate and drinke,
Of al deintes that men coud of thinke:
After the sondre seasons of the yere,
So chaunged he his meate and his suppere,
Full many a fatte Partriche had he in mew,
And many a Breme, and many a luce in stew,
Wo was his Coke, but his sauce ay were
Poynante and sharpe, and redy all his gere,
His table dormaunt in his hall alway,
Stode redy couered all the long day.
At cessions there was he lord and sire,
Full ofte time he was knight of the shire.
An anelace and gipsere all of silke,
Hing at his girdle, white as morow milke.
A sherife had he ben, and a countour,
Was no where soch a worthy vauesour,

¶ The Haberdasher. xi.

An Haberdasher there was, and a carpenter,
A webbe, a dier, and a tapiser:
All were yclothed in o lyuere,
Of a solempne and a great fraternite,
Full fresh and new her geare ypiked was,
Her kniues ychaped nere not with bras,
But all with siluer, wrought ful clene & wele:
Her girdeles and her pouches euery dele.
Wel semde euerich of hem a faire burgeis,
To sitten at a yeld hal, on the hie deys:
Euerich for the wisedome that he can,
Was shape liche for to ben an alderman,
For cattaile had they right inough and rent,
And eke her wiues, would it well assent:
And els certaine, they were to blame,
It is full faire to been ycleped madame,
And to gone to vigilles all before,
And haue a mantell roialliche ibore.

¶ The Coke. xii.

A Coke they had with hem for the nones,
To boyle the Chikens and the marie bones,
And pouder marchaunt, tarte, and galingale:
Well coud he know a draught of London ale,
He couthe roste, sethe, boile, and frie,
Make mortrefs, and well bake a pie.
But great harme was it, as it thought me,
That on his shinne, a mormall had he,
And blanke manger made he with the best.

¶ The Shipman. xiii.

A Shipman was there wonning ferre by West:
For aught I wote, he was of Derthmouth,
He rode vpon a rouncie, as he couthe
In a goune of falding to the knee:
A dagger hanging by a lace had hee
About his necke vnder his arme doune:
The hot sōmer had made his hew al broune:
And certain he was a good felaw,
Full many a draught of Wine had he draw
Frō Burdeux ward, while the chapmen slepe,
Of nice conscience tooke he no kepe:
If that he faught, and had the higher hand,
By water he sent him home to euery land:
But of his craft to reken well his tides,
His stremes and his daungers him besides,
His herbrough, his mone, & his lodemanage,
There was none soch, from Hull to Cartage.
Hardie he was, and wise to vndertake:
With many a tempest had his berde be shake:
He knew all the hauens, as there were,
Fro Scotland, to the Cape de fenestere,
And euery creeke in Britain and in Spain:
His barge was called the Maudelain.

¶ The Doctor of Phisike. xiiii.

With vs there was a Doctour of Phisike,
In all this world ne was there none him like
To speake of Phisike, and of Surgerie:
For he was grounded in Astronomie,
He kept his pacient a full great dell
In houres by his Magike naturell:
Well couthe he fortune the assendent,
Of his Image for his pacient.
He knew the cause of euery maladie,
Were it of cold, heate, moist, or drie,
And whereof engendred was eche humour,
He was a very parfite practisour,
The cause iknow, & of his harme the roote,
Anone he gaue to the sicke man his boote:
Full readie had he his Apothecaries
To send him drugges, and his lectuaries,
For eche of hem made other for to winne:

Her friendship nas not new to beginne,
Well knew he the old Esculapius,
And Dioscorides, and eke Ruffus,
Old Hippocrates, Halie, and eke Gallen,
Serapion, Rasis, and also Auicen,
Auerrois, Dam ascene, and Constantin,
Bernard, Gatisden, and Gilbertin,
Of his diete, miserable was he,
For it was of no superfluitee,
But of great nourishing, and digestible:
His studie was but little on the Bible.
In sangwine and in perce he clad was all
Lined with Taffata, and with Sendall.
And yet he was but easie of dispence,
He kept that he wan in time of Pestilence,
For gold in Phisike is a cordiall,
Therefore he loued gold in speciall.

¶ The wife of Bathe. xv.

A Good wife also there was beside Bathe,
But she was some deale defe, and ẏ was scathe:
Of cloth making she had such an haunt,
She passed hem of Ipre, or of Gaunt.
In all the Parish wife ne was there none,
That to the offring before her should gone,
And if there did, certain right wroth was she,
That she was all out of charitee.
Her kerchers full large were & fine of ground,
I durst sweare, they waiden ten pound,
That on a Sonday were vpon her hedde.
Her hosen were of fine scarlet redde,
Full straite istrained, and shoes full new,
Bold was her face, and redde was her hew,
She was a worthy woman, all her liue,
Husbands at the church doore had she fiue,
Withouten other company in youth:
But thereof needeth not to speake as nouth:
And thrise had she been at Ierusaleme,
She had passed many a strong streme:
At Rome had she been, and at Boloine,
In Galis at sainct James, and at Coloine,
She couth moch, of wandring by the way:
Gat tothed was she, sothly for to say.
Upon an ambler easely she satte,
I wimpled well, an on her hedde an hatte
As brode as is a bokeler, or a targe:
A foote mantell about her hippes large,
And on her feete a paire of spurres sharpe:
In fellowship well couth she laugh and carpe,
Of remedies of loue she coud perchaunce,
For she couth of that arte the old daunce.

¶ The Parsone. xvi.

A Good manne there was of religioun,
And was a poore Parsone of a toun:
But rich he was of holy thought and werke,
He was eke a learned man and a clerke,
That Christes Gospels truly would preach,
His parishens deuoutly would he teach.
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in aduersitie full pacient:
And soch one he was proued oft sithes,
Full loth were him to curse for his tithes,
But rather would he yeuen out of doubt,
Unto his poore parishens all about,
Both of his offring, and of his substaunce,
He couthe in little thing haue suffisaunce.
Wide was his parish & houses fer asonder,
But he ne left, neither for raine ne thonder,
In sikenesse ne in mischiefe for to visite
The ferdest in his parish, moch or lite,
Upon his feete, and in his hand a stafe:
This noble ensample to his shepe he yafe,
That first he wrought, & afterward taught,
Out of the Gospell he the words caught,
And this figure he added eke thereto,
That if gold ruste, what should Iron do?
For yef a priest be foule, on whom we trust,
No wonder is a leude man to rust:
And shame it is, if a priest take kepe,
To see a shitten shepherd, and a cleane shepe:
Well ought a priest, ensample for to yeue
By his clennesse, how his shepe should liue.
He set not his benefice to hire,
And let his shepe acomber in the mire,
And renne to London, to sainct Poules
To seken him a Chauntrie for soules:
Or with a brotherhede to be withold:
But dwelt at home, and kept well his fold,
So that the Wolfe made him not miscary,
He was a shepherd, and not a mercenarie.
And though he holy were, and vertuous,
He was not to sinfull men dispitous,
Ne of his speech daungerous ne digne,
But in his teaching discrete and benigne,
To drawen folke to heauen, with fairenesse,
By good ensample, this was his besinesse.
But if he were any persone obstinate,
Whether he were of hie, or low estate,
Him would he snibbe sharply for the nonis,
A better priest, I trowe, no where none is.
He waited after no pompe ne reuerence,
Ne maked him no spiced conscience.
But Christes lore, and his Apostles twelue,
He taught, but first he folowed it him selue.

¶ The

¶ The Plowman. xvii.

WIth him there was a Plowman his brother,
That had ilaud of dong many a fother:
A true swinker, and a good was he,
Liuing in peace, and perfite charitee.
God loued he best with all his hart
At all times, though him gamed or smart:
And then his neighbours right as himselfe.
He would thresh, and thereto dike, and delfe,
For Christes sake, for euery poore wight,
Without hire, if it lay in his might.
His tithes paied he full faire and well
Both of his proper swinke, and his cattell.
In a tabard he rode vpon a Mare.
There was also a Reue, and a Millare,
A Sompnour, and a Pardoner also,
A Manciple, and my selfe, there was no mo.

¶ The Miller. xviii.

THe Miller was a stoute carle for the nones,
Full bigge he was of braune, and eke of bones,
That proued well, for ouer all there he came,
At wrastling he would haue away the Ram.
He was short shouldered, a thicke gnarre,
There nas no dore, but he would heue y bar,
Or breake it at a renning with his heade:
His beard as any Sowe or Fore was redde,
And thereto brode, as it were a spade,
Upon the coppe right of his nose he hade
A werte, and thereon stode a tufte of heeres,
Redde as the bristles of a Sowes eares:
His nostrels blacke were and wide.
A sword and buckeler bare he by his side:
His mouth as great was as a furneis
He was a tangler, and a golierdeis,
And that was most of sinne, and harlotrise:
Well couth he steale corne, and tolle it thrise,
And yet he had a thombe of gold parde.
A white coate and a blew hode weared he
A bagpipe well couth he blow and soune,
And therewithall brought he vs out of toune.

¶ The Manciple. xix.

A Manciple there was of the Temple,
Of which all Catours might taken ensemple
For to been wise in buying of vitaile,
For whether he payed or tooke by taile,
Algate he waited so in his aduare,
That he was aye before in good estate.
Now is not that of God a full faire grace,
That such a leude mannes wit shall pace
The wisedome of an heape of learned men?
Of maisters had he more than thrise ten,
That were of Lawe expert and curious,
Of which there was a dosen in that hous,
Worthy to been stewards of rent and land,
Of any Lord that is in England,
To maken him liue by his proper good,
In honour debtlesse, but if he were wood,
Or liue as scarsly, as him list desire,
And able to helpen all a shire
In any case that might fallen or hap:
And yet the Manciple set all her cap,

¶ The Reue. xx.

THe Reue was a slender Colerike man,
His beard was shaue as nie as euer he can,
His heere was by his eares round ishorne,
His toppe was docked like a priest before,
Full long were his legges, and eke full lene,
Ilike a staffe, there was no calfe iseene.
Well couth he kepe a Garner and a Binne:
There was none Auditour could on him win.
Well wist he by the drought, and by the raine,
The yelding of his seed, and of his graine.
His Lords sheepe, his Nete, and his Deirie,
His swine, his horse, his store, and his pultrie,
Were holly in this Reues gouerning,
And by his couenaunt yaue the rekening,
Sith his Lord was twentie yeere of age,
There could no man bring him in arerage.
There nas Baillie, Herde, nor other Hine,
That he ne knew his sleight and his couine,
They were adradde of him, as of the death:
His wonning was full faire vpon an heath,
With grene trees shadowed was his place,
He couth better than his Lord purchace:
Full riche he was and stored priuely,
His Lord he could well please and subtilly,
To yeue and lene him of his owne good,
And haue a thank, and yet a coate and a hood.
In youth he had learned a good mistere,
He was a whele wright, and a Carpentere.
This Reue satte vpon a right good stot,
That was all pomell grey, and highte Scot.
A long surcote of perce vpon he hade,
And by his side he bare a rustie blade.
Of Northfolke was this Reue, of which I tell,

Biside

Biside a toune, men clepen it Baldeswell.
Tucked he was, as is a Frere about,
And euer he rode hinderest of the route.

¶ The Sompnour. xxi.

A Sompnour was with vs in the place,
That had a fire red Cherubins fare,
For saufleme he was, with iyen narow,
All hote he was, and lecherous as a sparow,
With scaled browes blacke, and pilled berde:
Of his visage children were sore afferde.
There nas quicksiluer, Litarge, ne brimstone,
Borage, Ceruse, ne oile of Tarter none,
Ne ointment that would clense or bite,
That him might helpe of his whelks white,
Ne of his knobbes sitting on his chekes:
Well loued he Garlike, Onions, and lekes,
And for to drinke strong wine, redde as blood,
Then would he speak, & cry as he were wood.
And when he had well idronke the wine,
Then would he speake no word but Latine:
A few termes coud he, two or three,
That he had learned out of some degree:
No wonder is, he heard it all the daie,
And ye knowen wel eke, how that a Iaie
Can clepe watte, as well as can the Pope:
But who so couth in other thing him grope,
Then had he spent all his Philosophie,
(A questio quid iuris) would he crie.
He was a gentill harlot and a kind,
A better fellow should a man not find:
He would suffer for a quarte of wine,
A good fellow to haue his concubine,
A twelue month, and excuse him at the full:
☞ Full priuely eke a Finch couth he pull,
And if he found o where a good felawe,
He would teachen him to haue none awe
In soch case of the archdekins course:
But if mans soule were in his pourse.
For in his pourse he should ipunished be,
Pourse is the archdeakens hell, saied he.
But well I wote, he lieth right in dede:
Of cursing ought ech sinfull man drede.
For cursing woll slea as asoiling saueth,
And also ware him of a significauit.
In daunger had he at his owne gise,
The yong girles of the Diocise,
And knew her counsaile, and was of her red,
A garlond he set vpon his hed,
As great as it were for an alestake:
A buckler had he maked him of a cake.

¶ The Pardoner. xxii.

With him there rode a gentle Pardonere
Of Rounceuall, his frend and his compere,
That streight was come fro the court of Rome,
Full loude song he, come hider loue sone,
This Sōpnour bare to him a stiffe burdoun,
Was neuer Trompe, of halfe so great a soun.
This Pardoner, had heer as yelow as wax,
But smoth it hing, as doeth a stricke of flaxe:
By vnces hing his lockes that he had,
And therewith he his shulders ouersprad,
Full thinne it laie, by culpons one and one,
But hode for iolite, ne weared he none,
For it was trussed vp in his walet,
Him thought he rode al of the new set,
Dishcuild, saue his cappe he rode all bare,
Soch glaring iyen had he, as an hare.
A vernacle had he sowed vpon his cappe,
His wallet beforne him on his lappe,
Bret-full of pardon come from Rome al hote:
A voice he had, as small as hath a Gote.
No berde had he, ne neuer should haue,
As smoth it was as it were new shaue,
I trow he were a gelding or a Mare:
But of his craft, fro Barwike vnto Ware,
Ne was there soch an other pardonere,
For in his male had he a pillowbere,
Which, as he saied, was our Ladies valle:
He saied, he had a gobbet of the saile
That sainct Peter had, when that he went
Vpon the sea, till Iesu Christ him hent.
He had a crosse of Latine full of stones,
And in a glasse he had Pigges bones:
But with these relikes, when that he fond
A poore Parsone dwelling in vplond,
Vpon a day he gat him more money
Than that Parsone gat in moneths twey.
And thus with fained flattering and iapes,
He made the Parson, and people, his apes.
But truly to tellen at the last.
He was in Church a noble Ecclesiast:
Well couth he rede a lesson or a storie,
But alderbest he sang an offitorie:
Full well he wist, when that song was song,
He must preach, and well afile his tong,
To winne siluer, as he full well coud:
Therefore he song so merily and loud.
Now haue I told you sothly in a clause,
The state tharaie, eche nomber, and the cause
Why that assembled was this companie
In Southwerke at this gentell hostelrie,
That hight the Tabard, fast by the Bell.

But

But now is time to you for to tell,
How that we baren vs that ilke night,
When we weren in that hostelrie alight.
And after woll I tell of our voiage,
And all the remnaunt of our Pilgrimage.
But first I pray you of your curtesie,
That ye ne arette it not my follie,
Though that I plainly speak in this matter,
To tellen you her words and eke her chere:
Ne though I speake her words properly.
For this ye knowen as well as I,
Who shall tellen a tale after a man,
He mote rehearse as nie as euer he can,
Euerich word, if it been in his charge,
All speake he neuer so rudely ne large:
Or els he mote tellen his tale vntrue,
Or feine things, or find words newe:
He may not spare, altho he were his brother,
He mote as well say o word, as an other.
Christ spake himself full brode in holy writ,
And well I wotte no villanie is it.
Eke Plato saieth, who so can him rede,
The words mote been cosin to the dede.
Also I pray you forgiue it me,
All haue I not set folke in her degree,
Here in this tale as they shoulden stand,
My wit is short, ye may well vnderstand.

Great chere made our hoste vs euerichone,
And to the Supper set hee vs anone:
And serued vs with vitaile of the best,
Strong was the wine, & wel to drink vs lest.
A seemely man our host was with all,
For to been a marshall in a lords hall.
A large man he was with iyen stepe,
A fairer burgeis is there none in Chepe:
Bold of his speech, wise and well itaught,
And of manhood him lacked right naught.
Eke thereto he was a right mery man,
And after supper plaien he began,
And spake of mirth among other things,
When that we had made our rekenings:
And said thus, now lordings truely
Ye been to me wellcome right hertely:
For by my trouth, if I should not lie,
I saw nat this yere so mery a companie
Atones in this herborow, as is now:
Fain wold I don you mirth, and I wist how:
And of a mirth I am right now bethought,
To don you ease, and it shall cost nought.
Ye gone to Canterbury, God mote you spede,
The blissfull martir quite you your mede,
And well I wot, as ye gone by the way,
Ye shapen you to talken and to play:
For truely comfort ne mirth is there none,
To riden by the way as dombe as a stone;
And therefore wold I maken you disport,
As I said erst, and done you some comfort,
And if you liketh all by one assent
For to stonden at my iudgement:
And for to worchen as I shall you say.
To morrow, when we riden on the way,
Now by my father soule that is deed,
But ye be mery, I will giue you my heed:
Hold vp your hands withouten more speech:
Our counsail was not long for to sech:
Vs thouzt it was not worth to make it nice,
And graunted him without more auise,
And bad him say his verdit, as him lest.
Lordings (qd. he) now herkeneth for ye best,
But take it nat, I pray you, in disdaine,
This is the point to speke it plat and plaine:
That ech of you to shorten others way,
In this viage, shall tellen tales tway,
To Canterbury ward, I meane it so,
And homewards he shal tell tales other two,
Of auentures whilom that han befal:
And which of you that bereth him best of all,
That is to saine, that tellen in this case
Tales of best sentence and most solace,
Shall haue a supper at our alder cost
Here in this place sitting by this post.
When that we comen ayen from Canterbury,
And for to make you the more mery,
I will my seluen goodly with you ride,
Right at mine owne cost, and be your gide.
And who that woll my iudgement withsay,
Shall pay all that we spend by the way:
And yef ye vouchsafe that it be so,
Tel me anone without words mo,
And I woll erly shape me therefore.
This thing was graunted & our othes swore
With glad hert, and praiden him also,
That he would vouchsafe for to do so,
And that he wold ben our gouernour,
And of our tales iudge and reportour:
And set a supper at a certaine prise,
And we wollen ben demed at his deuise,
In hie and lowe, and thus by one assent,
We ben accorded to his iudgement.
And thereupon the wine was fette anon,
We dronken, and to rest went ilke one,
Withouten any lenger tariyng.
A morrow when the day gan to spring,
Up rose our host, and was our alder cocke,
And gadird vs togedirs on a flocke,
And forth we riden a littel more than paas,
Unto the watering of seint Thomas:
And there our host began his horse arest,

And

And said: lordes herkeneth if you lest:
Ye wote your forwarde, and I it record
☞ If ene song and morow song accord,
Let se now who shall tell the first tale.
As ever I mote drinke wine or ale,
Who so is rebel to my iudgement,
Shall pay for all that by the way is spent:
Now draweth cut or that ye farther twin,
The which that hath the shortest shal begin.
Sir knight (qd. he) my maister and my lord
Now draweth cut, for that is mine acord:
Commeth nere (qd. he) my lady Prioresse,
And ye sir Clerke, let be your shamefastnesse,
Ne studieth nought, lay hand to, every man:
Anone to draw every wight began,
And shortly for to tellen as it was,
Were it by auenture chaunce or cas,
The sothe is this, the cut fell to the knight,
Of which blith and glad was every wight
And tell he must his tale as was reason,
By forward and by composition,
As ye han herd what needeth wordes mo?
And when this good man saw that it was so,
As he that wise was and obedient
To keepen his forward by his free assent
He said, sithen I shall begin the game
What welcome cut to me a goddes name,
Now let vs ride, and herkeneth what I say:
And with ỹ worde we riden forth our way,
And he began with a right mery chere,
His tale anone, right as ye shall here.

¶ Thus endeth the Prologues of the Canterbury tales.

PAlamon and Arcite, a paire of friends and fellow prisoners, fight a combat before Duke Theseus, for the ladie Emelie, sister to the queene Ipolita wife of Theseus. A Tale fitting the person of a Knight, for that it discourseth of the deeds of Armes, and love of Ladies.

WHylome, as old stories tellen vs
There was a Duke that hight Theseus,
Of Athens he was lord and gouernour, (querour,
And in his time such a con=
That greater was none vnder the son:
Full many a rich countrey had he won.
What with his wisdome and his chiualry
He conquerd all the reigne of Feminy,
That whylome was icleaped Cithea,
And wedded the queene Ipolita
And brought her home with him to his country
With mikell glorie and solemnity,
And eke her young sister Emely.
And thus with victorie and melody
Let I this worthy duke to Athens ride,
And all his hoast, in armes him beside.
And certes, if it nere to long to here,
I would haue told fully the manere,
How wonnen was the raigne of Feminy
By Theseus, and by his chiualry.
And of the great bataile for the nones
Betweene Athens and Amasones,
And how besieged was Ipolita
The young hardie queene of Cithea:
And of the feast, that was at her wedding,
And of the tempest at her home comming.
But all ỹ thing I mote as now forbeare,
I haue God wot a large field to ere:
And wekked ben the oxen in the plow,
The remnant of my tale is long ynow.
I will not letten eke none of this rout,
Let euery fellow tell his tale about,
And let see now who shall the supper win:
And there I left, I will againe begin.
This duke, of whom I make mencioun,
When he was come almost to the toun
In all his wele and in his most pride,
He was ware, as he cast his eye aside,
Where that there kneeled in the high wey
A company of ladies, twey and twey
Each after other, clad in cloths blacke:
But such a cric and such a wo they make,
That in this world nis creature liuing,
That euer heard such a waimenting.
And of this cric they nold neuer stenten,
Till they the reines of his bridle henten.
What folke be ye ỹ at mine home comming
Perturben so my feast with your crying,
Quod Theseus? Haue ye so great enuy
Of mine honour, that thus complaine and crie?
Or who hath you misdode, or offended?
Now telleth me, if it may be amended,
And why that ye be clothed thus in blacke?
The oldest lady of them all spake,
When she had sowned with a deadly chere,
That it was ruth for to see and here,
She said lord, to whom fortune hath yeue
Victorie, and as a conquerour to liue,
Nought grieueth vs your glory and honour:
But we beseeke you of mercie and succour,
And haue mercy on our wo and distresse,
Some drop of pitie, through thy gentilnesse
Upon vs wretched women let thou fall.

For certes lord, there nis none of vs all,
That she ne hath be a duchesse or a queene:
Now be we caitiues, as it is well iseene,
Thanked be fortune, and her false whele,
That none estate assureth to be wele.
Now certes lord, to abide your presence
Here in this temple of the goddesse Clemence
We haue be waiting all this fourtenight:
Helpe vs lord, sith it lieth in thy might.

I Wretch, that weep and wailen thus
Whylome wife was to king Campaneus,
That starke at Thebes, cursed be the day:
And all we that been in this aray,
And maken all this lamentacioun,
We losten all our husbands at that toun,
While that the siege there about is lay:
And yet the old Creon (welaway)
That lord is now of Thebes citie
Fulfilled of ire and iniquitie,
He for despight, and for his tirannie
To done the dead bodies villanie
Of all our lords, which that ben slaw,
Hath all the bodies on an heape ydraw,
And will not suffer hem by none assent
Neither to be buried, ne to be brent,
But maketh hounds to eat hem in despite:
And with that word, without more respite
They fallen grofly, and crien pitously,
Haue on vs wretched women some mercy,
And let our sorrow sinke in thine hert.
This gentle duke down from his horse stert
With hert pitous, when he heard hem speake
Him thought that his hert would all to breake
When he saw hem so pitous and so mate,
That whylome were of so great astate:
And in his armes he hem all vp hent,
And hem comforted in full good intent,
And swore his oth, as he was true knight,
He would done so ferforthly his might
Upon the tirant Creon hem to wreake,
That all the people of Greece should speake
How Creon was of Theseus yserued,
As he that hath his death full well deserued.
And right anon withouten more abode
His banner he displayed, and forth rode
To Thebes ward, and all his hoost beside:
No neere Athens nold he goe ne ride,
Ne take his ease fully halfe a day,
But onward on his way that night he lay:
And sent anone Ipolita the queene,
And Emely her yong suster shene
Unto the towne of Athens to dwell:
And forth he rideth, there nis no more to tell.

The red statue of Mars with spere & targe,
So shineth in his white banner large,
That all the fields glyttren vp and down:
And by his banner, borne is his penon
Of gold full rich, in which there was ybete
The minotaure, that he wan in Crete.
Thus rideth this duke, this conquerour
And in his hoast of chiualry the flour,
Till that he came to Thebes, and alight
Faire in a field, there as he thought to fight.
But shortly for to speaken of this thing,
With Creon, which was of Thebes king,
He fought, and slew him manly as a knight
In plaine battaile, and put his folke to flight:
And at a saut he wan the citie after,
And rent adowne wall, sparre, and rafter:
And to the ladies he restord again
The bodies of her husbands that were slain,
To done obsequies, as tho was the gise.
But it were all too long for to deuise
The great clamour, and the weimenting,
That the ladies made at the brenning
Of the bodies, and the great honour
That Theseus the noble conqueror
Doth to ỳ ladies, when they from him went:
But shortly to tellen is mine intent
When ỳ this worthy duke, this Theseus
Hath Creon slaine, and wan Thebes thus,
Still in the field he tooke all night his rest,
And did with all the countrey as him lest:
To ransacke in the taas of bodies deed
Hem for to strip of harneis and of weed
The pillours did her busines and cure
After the battaile and discomfiture:
And so befell, that in the taas they found
Through girt with many a greeuous wound
Two young knights lying by and by
Both in armes kene, wrought full richely:
Of which two, Arcite hight that one,
And that other hight Palamon:
Not fully quicke, ne fully dead they were,
But by her coat armours, and by her gere
The heraulds knew hem best in speciall,
As tho that weren of the blood riall
Of Thebes, and of sistren two yborne.
Out of the taas the pillours hath hem torne,
And han hem caried soft into the tent
Of Theseus, and he full soone hem sent
To Athens, to dwellen there in prison
Perpetuall, he nold hem not raunson.
And when this worthy duke had thus idone,
He tooke his hoast, and home he goth anone
With laurell crowned as a conquerour,
And there he liueth in ioy and honour
Terme of his life, what needeth words more?
And in a toure, in anguish and in woe
Dwelleth Palamon, and his fellow Arcite
For euermore, there may no gold hem quite.

Thus passeth yere by yere, and day by day
Till it fell once in a morrow of May

That

That Emelie, that fayrer was to seene
Than is the lillie vpon the stalke greene
And fresher than May, with floures new
For with the rose colour strofe her hew
I not which was the fayrer of them two.
Er it was day, as was her wont to do
She was arisen, and all redy dight
For May woll haue no slogardy a night.
The season prycketh euery gentell hert
And maketh it out of their slepe to stert
And saith arise, and do May obseruaunce
This maketh Emely to haue remẽbraunce
To done honour to May, and for to rise
I clothed was she fresh for to deuise
Her yellow haire was broided in a tresse
Behind her backe, a yard long I gesse
And in the gardyn at sunne vprist
She walketh vp and downe as her list
She gathereth floures, party white and reed
To make a subtell garland for her heed
And as an angell, heuenly she song
The great toure, that was so thicke & strong
Which of the castell was the chefe dungeon
Wherein the two knights were in prison
Of which I told you, and tellen shall
Was euyn joynant to the garden wall
There as this Emely had her playing
Bright was the sonne, & clere the morning
And Palamon this wofull prisoner
As was his wont, by leaue of his gayler
Was risen, and romed in a chambre on high
In which he all the noble cite sigh
And eke the gardyn, full of braunches grene
There as this fresh Emely the shene
Was in her walke, and romed vp and doun.
This sorowfull prisoner, this Palamon
Goth in his chambre roming to and fro
And to himselfe complaining of his wo
That he was borne full oft said alas
And so befell by auenture or caas
That through a window thick of many a bar
Of yron great, and square as any spar
He cast his eyen vpon Emilia
And therwith he blent and cried, ha, ha,
As though he stongen were vnto the hert.
And with that crie Arcite anon vp stert
And said, cosyn mine, what eyleth thee
That art so pale and deadly for to see?
Why criest thou? who hath do the offence?
For goddes loue, take all in pacience
Our prison, for it may none other be
Fortune hath yeuen vs this aduersite
Some wicked aspect or disposicion
Of Saturne, by some constellacion
Hath yeuen vs this, altho we had it sworn
So stood the heauen when that we were born
We mote endure this is short and playn.
This Palamon answered, and said agayn
Cosyn forsoth of this opinion
Thou hast a vaine imagination
This prison caused me not to crie
But I was hurt right now through mine eie
Into mine hert, that woll my bane be
The fayrnesse of a lady that I se
Yond in the gardyn, roming to and fro
Is cause of all my crying and wo
I not wher she be woman or goddesse
But Venus it is, soothly as I gesse
And therwithall on knees down he fyll
And said: Venus, if it be thy wyll
Yow in this gardyn thus to transfigure
Before me sorowfull wretched creature
Out of this prison helpe that we may scape
And if our destiny be so ishape
By eterne word, to dyen in prison
Of our linage haue some compassion
That is so low ybrought by tirany.
And with that word Arcite gan espy
Where as the lady romed to and fro
And with that sight her beauty hurt him so
That if that Palamon were wounded sore
Arcite was hurt as much as he, or more
And with a sigh he said pitously
The fresh beautie sleeth me sodenly
Of her that rometh in yonder place
And but I haue her mercy and her grace
That I may seen her at the least way
I nam but dead, there lyes no more to say.

This Palamon, whã he these words herd
Dispitously he looked, and answerd:
Whether sayest thou this in ernest or in play?
Nay quod Arcite, in ernest by my fay
God helpe me so, me list full yll to play.
This Palamon gan knit his browes twey
It were (quod he) to thee no great honour
To be false, ne for to be a traytour
To me, that am thy cosyn and thy brother
Isworne full depe, each of vs to other
That neuer for to dien in the paine
Till that the death depart shall vs twaine
Neither of vs in loue to hinder other
Ne in none other case my leue brother
But that thou shouldest truly further mee
In euery case, as I should further thee,
This was thine oth, and mine also certain
I wot it well, thou darst it not withsain
Thus art thou of my counsell out of dout
And now thou woldest falsly ben about
To loue my lady, whom I loue and serue
And euer shall, till that mine hert sterue.
Now certes false Arcite thou shalt not so
I loued her first, and told thee my wo
As to my counsell, and to my brother sworne
To further me, as I haue told before
For which thou art ibounden as a knight

To helpen me, if it lie in thy might
Or els art thou false, I dare well saine.
This Arcite full proudly spake againe,
Thou shalt (quod he) be rather false than I
And thou art false I tell thee utterly.
For paramour I loued her first or thou,
What wilt thou saine, thou wist it nat or now
Whether she be woman or goddesse:
Thine is affection of holinesse,
And mine is loue, as to a creature:
For which I told thee mine auenture
As to my cosin, and my brother swore.
Suppose that thou louedst her before:
Wost thou not well the old clerkes saw:
That who shall giue a louer any law?
Loue is a greater law by my pan,
Then may be yeuen to any earthly man:
And therefore positiue law, and such decree
Is broken all day for loue in eche degree.
A man mote needs loue maugre his head,
He may not flee it, though he shuld be dead
All be she maid, widdow, or else wife.
And eke it is not likely all thy life
To stonden in her grace, no more shall I:
For well thou wost thy selfe verely,
That thou and I be damned to prison
Perpetuall, vs gaineth no raunson.
We striuen, as did the hounds for the bone,
That fought all day, & yet her part was none,
There came a cur, while ỹ they wer so wroth,
And bare away the bone from hem both:
And therefore, at kings court my brother
Eche man for himselfe, there is none other.
Loue if thou list, for I loue and aye shall:
And soothly leue brother this is all.
Here in this prison mote we endure
And eueriche of vs taken his auenture.
Great was ỹ strife & long betwixt hem twey
If that I had leisure for to sey:
But to the effect, it happed on a day
(To tell it you shortly as I may)
A worthie duke that hight Perithous,
That fellow was to duke Theseus
Sith thilke day that they were children lite
Was come to Athens, his fellow to visite,
And for to play, as he was wont to do,
For in this world he loued no man so:
And he loued him as tenderly againe.
So well they loued, as old bookes saine,
That when that one was dead, soothly to tell
His fellow went & sought him downe in hell:
But of that storie list me not to write.
Duke Perithous loued well Arcite,
And had him know at Thebes yere by yere:
And finally at request and prayere
Of Perithous, without any raunson
Duke Theseus let him out of prison,
Freely to gone, whether him list ouer all
In such a guise, as I you tellen shall.
This was the forward, plainly to endite
Betwixt duke Theseus and him Arcite:
That if so were, that Arcite were yfound
Euer in his life, by day, night, or stound
In any countrey of this duke Theseus,
And he were caught it was accorded thus,
That with a sword he should lese his heed,
There was none other remedie ne reed,
But taketh his leaue, & homeward him sped:
Let him beware, his necke lieth to wed.
How great sorrow suffereth now Arcite?
The death he feeleth through his hert smite:
He weepeth, waileth, and crieth pitously,
To sleen himselfe he wayteth priuely:
And said, alas the day that I was borne,
Now is my prison worse than before:
Now is me shape eternally to dwell
Nought in purgatorie, but in hell.
Alas that euer I knew Perithous.
For els had I dwelt with Theseus
Ifettered in his prison euermo:
Then had I be in blisse, and not in wo.
Only the sight of her, whom that I serue,
Though that I neuer her grace may deserue,
Would haue sufficed right ynough for me.
O deare cousin Palamon (quod he)
Thine is the victorie of this auenture,
Full blissfull in prison maiest thou endure:
In prison, nay certes but in paradice,
Well hath fortune to thee turned the dice,
That hast the sight of her, and I thabsence:
For possible is, sithens thou hast her presence,
And art a knight, a worthy man and able,
That by some case, since fortune is chãgeable,
Thou maiest sometime to thy desire attaine.
But I that am exiled, and barraine
Of all grace, and in so great despaire,
That there nis water, earth, fire, ne aire,
Ne creature, that of hem maked is,
That may me heale, or done comfort in this,
Well ought I sterue in wanhope and distresse.
Farewell my life, my lust, and my gladnesse.
Alas, why playnen men so in commune
Of purueyance of God, or of fortune
That yeueth hem full oft in many a guise
Well better than hemselfe can deuise.
Some man desireth to haue richesse
That cause is of his murdre or sickenesse
And some man wold out of his prison fame
That in his house is of his meyne slaine.
Infinite harmes bene in this mattere
We wote not what thing we prayen here
We faren as he that dronke is as a mouse
A dronken man wot well he hath an house
But he wot not which the right way thider
And to a dronken man the way is slider
And certes in this world so faren we.

We

We seken fast after felicite
But we go wrong full oft truly
Thus we may say all, and namely I
That wenden, and had a great opinion
That if I might scape fro prison
Then had I been in ioy and perfite hele
There now I am exiled fro my wele
Sith that I may not seene you Emely
I nam but dead, there nys no remedy.
¶ Upon that other side Palamon
When that he wist Arcite was gon
Such sorow he maketh, that the great tour
Resowned of his yelling and clamour
The pure fetters on his shinnes grete
Were of his bitter salt teares wete.
Alas (quoth he) Arcite cosyn mine
Of all our strife, God wot the frute is thine
Thou walkest now in Thebes at large
And of my wo, thou yeuest litell charge
Thou maist, sith thou hast wisdome & mãhed
Assemble all the folke of our kinred
And make warre so sharpe in this countre
That by some auenture, or by some treate
Thou maist haue her to lady and to wife
For whom I must nedes lese my life.
For as by way of possibilite
Sith thou art at thy large of prison free
And art a lord, great is thine aduantage
More than is mine, that sterue here in a cage
For I may wepe & waile, whiles that I liue
With all the wo that prison may me yeue
And eke with paine, that loue yeueth me also
That doubleth all my tourment and my wo.
Therewith the fire of iealousie up stert
Within his brest, and hent him by the hert
So woodly, that he like ly was, to behold
The bore tree, or the ashen deed and cold
Then said he, O cruell goddes, that gouerne
This world with your word eterne
And written in the table of Athamant
Your parliament and eterne graunt
What is mankind more vnto you yhold
Than is the sheepe, that rouketh in the fold?
For slaine is man, right as another beest
And dwelleth eke in prison, and in arrest
And hath sickenesse, and great aduersite
And oft time giltelesse pardie.
What gouernance is in this prescience
That giltelesse tormenteth innocence?
And encreaseth thus all my penance
That man is bounden to his obseruaunce
For Gods sake to letten of his will
There as a beest may all his lustes fulfill
And what a beest is dead, he hath no pain
But after his death man mote wepe & plain:
Though in this world he haue care and wo
Without dout it may stonden so.
The answere of this lete I to diuines
But well I wote, in this world great pine is
Alas I see a serpent or a theefe
That many a true man hath do mischiefe
Gon at his large, & where him list may turn
But I mote ben in prison thrugh Saturn
And eke thrugh Juno, ialous and eke wood
That hath stroied well nye all the blood
Of Thebes, with his wast walles wide
And Venus sleeth me on that other side
For iealousie, and feare of him Arcite.
Now will I stint of Palamon alite
And let him in his prison still dwell
And of Arcite forth woll I you tell.
The sommer passeth, and the nights long
Encreseth double wise the paines strong
Both of the louer, and of the prisoner
I not which hath the wofuller mister
For shortly to say, this Palamon
Perpetuell is damned to prison
In chaines and fetters to the deed
And Arcite is exiled on his heed
For euermore as out of that countre
Ne neuermore shall his lady se.
You louers aske I now this question
Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamon?
That one may se his lady day by day
But in prison mote he dwell alway
That other where him list may ride or go
But see his lady shall he neuer mo.
Now deemeth as ye list, ye that can
For I will tell forth my tale as I began.
¶ When that Arcite to Thebes comen was
Full oft a day he swelt and said alas
For see his lady shall he neuer mo
And shortly to conclude, all his wo
So mikell sorow made neuer creature
That is or shal be, while the world may dure
His slepe, his meat, his drinke is him byraft
That leane he waxeth, and drie as a shaft
His eyen hollow, and grisly to behold
His hew pale, and fallow as ashen cold
And solitary he was, and euer alone
And wailing all the night, making mone
And if he herd song or instrument
Then would he wepe, he might not stent
So feeble were his spirits, and so low
And changed so, that no man coud him know
His speech ne his voice, though men it herd
As in his gyre, for all the world it ferd
Nought comly like to louers malady
Of Eros, but rather like manie
Engendred of humours melancolike
Before his fell fantastike
And shortly was turned all vp so doun
Both habit and disposicioun
Of him, this wofull louer Arcite
What should I all day of his wo endite?
When he endured had a yere or two

This cruell torment, and this paine and wo
At Thebes, in his countre, as I said
Upon a night in slepe as he him laid
Him thought how that the winged Mercury
Before him stood, and bad him be mery
His slepy yerd in hand he bare vpright
An hat he weared vpon his haires bright
Arayed was this god, as he tok kepe
As he was when Argus tooke his slepe
And said him thus: to Athens shalt thou wend
There is the shapen of thy woe an end.
And with that word Arcite awoke and stert
Now truly how sore that euer me smert
Quod he, to Athens right now wol I fare
Ne for no drede of death shall I spare
To see my lady, that I loue and serue,
In her presence recke I not to sterue.
And with that word he caught a gret mirrour
And saw that chaunged was all his colour
And saw his visage all in another kind
And right anon it ran him in his mind
That sith his face was so disfigured
Of malady, the which he had indured
He might well, if that he bare him low
Liue in Athens euermore unknow
And seme his lady wel nigh day by day
And right anon he chaunged his aray
And clad him as a poore labourer
And all alone, saue only a squier
That knew his priuitie and all his caas
Which was disguised poorely as he was
To Athens is he gone the next way,
And to the court he went vpon a day,
And at the gate he profered his seruice
To drugge and draw, what men would deuise:
And shortly of this matter for to saine
He fell in office with a chamberlaine
The which was dwelling with Emelie
For he was wise, and soone couth espie
Of euery seruaunt, which that serued here
Well couth he hewen wood, and water bere
For he was yong and mightie for the nones
And therto he was strong and big of bones
To done that any wight can him deuise
A yere or two he was in this seruice
Page of the chamber of Emelie the bright
And Philostrate he said that he hight
But halfe so well beloued man as he
Ne was there none in court of his degre
He was so gentill of conditioun
That through all the court was his renoun
They said that it were a charitie
That Theseus would enhaunce his degre
And put him in a worshipfull seruice
There as he might his vertue exercise
And thus within a while his name is sprong
Both of his deeds, and of his good tong
That Theseus hath taken him so nere
That of his chamber he made him squier
And yaue him gold to maintaine his degre
And eke men brought him out of his countre
From yere to yere full priuely his rent
But honestly and slyly he it spent
That no man wondered how he it had
And three yere in this wise his life he lad
And bare him so in peace and eke in werre
That there nas man that Theseus herd derre
And in this blisse let I now Arcite
And speake I woll of Palamon alite:
In darkenesse horrible and strong prison
This seuen yere hath sitten this Palamon
Forpined, what for woe and distresse
Who feeleth double sore and heuinesse
But Palamon, that loue distraineth so,
That wood out of his wit he goeth for wo,
And eke therto he is a prisonere
Perpetuell, and not onely for a yere.
Who couth rime in English properly
His martirdome? forsooth it am not I
Therefore I passe as lightly as I may.
It befell that in the seuenth yere in May
The third night, as old bookes vs saine
(That all this storie tellen more plaine)
Were it by aduenture or by destine
As when a thing is shapen, it shalbe
That soone after midnight, Palamon
By helping of a friend brake his prison
And fleeth the citie as fast as he may go,
For he had yeuen the gaoler drinke so
Of a clarre, made of certaine wine,
With Narcotike and Opie, of Thebes fine,
That all the night though men would him
The gaoler slept, he nought not awake (shake
And thus he fleeth as fast as he may.
The night was short, and fast by the day
That needs cost he mote himselfe hide
And to a groue that was fast there beside
With dreadfull foot then stalketh Palamon
For shortly this was his opinion
That in the groue he would him hide all day,
And in the night then would he take his way
To Thebes ward, his friends for to prie
On Theseus to helpe him to warrie:
And shortly, either he would lese his life
Or win Emelie unto his wife
This is the effect, and his intent plaine.
Now will I turne to Arcite againe
That little wist how nie was his care
Til that fortune had brought him in her snare
The merrie Larke, messenger of the day
Salueth in her song the morrow gray
And fierie Phebus riseth up so bright,
That all the orisont laugheth of the light
And with his stremes, dryeth in the greues
The siluer drops, hanging in the leues.
And Arcite, that in the court riall

With Theseus his squire principall
Is risen, and looketh on the merrie day
And for to doen his obseruaunces to May
Remembring on the point of his desire
He on his courser, startling as the fire
Is riden into the fieldes him to play
Out of the court, were it a mile or twey
And to the groue of which I you told
By aduenture, his way he gan hold
To maken him a garlond of the greues
Were it of Woodbind or Hauthorn leues
And loud he song ayenst the Sonne shene
May, with all thy floures and thy grene
Welcome be thou (said he) faire fresh May
I hope that I some greene thing get may:
And from his courser, with a lustie hert
Into the groue full hastily he stert
And in a path he romed vp and doun
There, as by aduenture this Palamon
Was in a bush, that no man might him se
For sore afraied of his death was he
Nothing ne knew he that it was Arcite
God wot he would haue trowed that full lite.
But sooth is said, gone sithen are many yeres
That field hath eyen, and the wood hath eres
It is full faire a man to beare him euin
For all day men mete at vnset steuin
Full little wote Arcite of this felaw
That was so nigh to hearken of his saw
For in the bush sitteth he now full still
When that Arcite had romed all his fill
And sungen all the roundell lustily
Into a studie he fell sodenly
As doen these louers in their queint gires
Now in the crop, and now doun in the bires
Now vp now doune, as boket in a well
Right as the Friday, soothly for to tell
Now it raineth, now it shineth fast
Right so gan gere Venus ouercast
The hearts of her folke, right as her day
Is gerefull right so chaungeth she aray
Selde is the Friday all the weke like
When that Arcite had song, he gan to sike
And set him doune withouten any more:
Alas (quod he) the day that I was bore,
How long Juno through thy cruelte
Wilt thou warren Thebes the cite?
Alas confusion
The blood roiall of Cadmus and Amphion.
Of Cadmus, I say, which was ỳ first man,
That Thebes built, or first the toune began,
And of the citie first was crowned king:
Of his lignage am I, and of his spring
By very line, as of the stocke riall:
And now I am so caitife and so thrall,
That he that is my mortall enemie
I mought serue him as his squire poorely.
And yet doeth me Juno well more shame,
For I dare not be knowe mine owne name,
But there as I was wont to hight Arcite,
Now hight I Philostrat, not worth a mite.
Alas thou fell Mars, alas thou Juno,
Thus hath your ire our linage all fordo
Saue onely me, and wretched Palamon,
That Theseus martireth in prison:
And ouer all this, to sleen me vtterly
Loue hath his fierie dart so brenningly
Istricked through my true carefull hert,
That shapen was my death erst my shert.
Ye sleen me with your eyen Emelie
Ye been the cause wherefore that I die.
Of all the remnaunt of mine other care
Ne set I not the mountaunce of a Tare,
So that I could do ought to your pleasaunce.
And with that word he fell doun in a traunce
A long time, and afterward he vp stert.
This Palamõ thought ỳ through his hert
He felt a cold sword sodenly glide:
For ire he quoke, no lenger would he bide.
And when that he had heard Arcites tale,
As he were wood, with face dead and pale
He stert him vp out of the bushes thicke,
And saied: Arcite thou false traitour wicke
Now art thou hent, that louest my ladie so
For whom that I haue this pain and wo
And art my blood, and to my counsell sworn
As I haue full oft told thee here beforn
And hast beyaped here duke Theseus
And falsely hast chaunged thy name thus
I will be dedde, or els thou shalt die
Thou shalt not loue my ladie Emelie
But I will loue her only and no mo
For I am Palamon thy mortall fo
Though that I haue no weapon in this place
But out of prison am astert by grace
I dred nat, that either thou shalt die
Or thou ne shalt nat louen Emelie
Chese which thou wilt, or thou shalt not astert.
This Arcite, with full despitous hert
When he him knew, and had his tale heard
As fers as a Lion, pulled out his sweard
And saied: By God that sitteth aboue
Ne wer that thou art sicke, and wood for loue
And eke that thou no weapẽ hast in this place
Thou shouldest neuer out this groue pace
That thou ne shouldest dien of mine hond
For I defie the suertie and the bond (thee
Which that thou saist that I haue made to
What very foole, thinke wel that loue is free
And I will loue her maugre all thy might
But for almoch as thou art a knight
And wilnest to daren here by battaile
Haue here my truth, to morow I will not faile
Without witting of any other wight
That here I will be founden as a knight
And bringen harneis, right inough for thee

And chese the best, and leaue the worst for me
And meat and drinke this night will I bring
Inough for thee, and clothes for thy bedding
And if so be that thou my ladie win
And slea me in this wodde, there I am in
Thou maiest well haue thy ladie as for me.
This Palamon answerd, I grant it thee.
And thus they been departed till a morow
When ech of hem had laid his faith to borow.
O Cupide out of all charitee (thee
O reigne, that wouldest haue no felow with
Full soth is saied, that loue ne lordship
Will nat his thankes haue any fellowship
We find that of Arcite and Palamon
Arcite is ridden anon into the toun
And on the morow or it were day light
Full priuely two harneis had he dight
Both sufficient and mete to darreigne
The battail in the field betwixt him tweine
And on his horse, alone as he was borne
He carrieth all his harneis him before
And in the groue, at time and place iset
That Arcite and this Palamon been met
To changen gan the colour in her face
Right as the hunter in the reigne of Trace
That standeth at a gappe, with a speare
When hunted is the Lion or the Beare
And heareth him rushing in the leues
And breaketh the boughs in the greues
And thinketh, hercometh my mortal enemy
Without faile, he must be dedde or I
For either I mote slea him at the gap
Or he mote slea me, if me mishap
So ferden they, in chaunging of her hew
As farre as cuerich of other knew
There nas no good day, ne no saluing
But streight, without word or rehersing
Eueriche of hem helped for to arme other
As friendly, as he were his owne brother
And after that, with sharpe speares strong
They foinen ech at other wonder long
Thou mightest wenen, that this Palamon
In his fighting, were a wood Lion
And as a cruell Tigre was Arcite
As wild Bores gan they fight and smite
That frothen white as fome for ire wood
Up to the ancle foughten they in her blood
And in this wise, I let hem fighting dwell
As forth I will of Theseus you tell.
The destinie and the minister generall
That executeth in the world ouer all
The purueiance, that God hath said before
So strong it is, that though the world had
The contrary of thing by ye or nay (swore
Yet sometime it shall fall on a day
That fell neuer yet in a thousand yere
For certainly our appetites here
Be it of warre peace hate or loue
All is ruled by the sight aboue
This meane I now by mightie Theseus
That for to hunt is so desirous
And namely at the great Hart in May
That in his bed there daweth him day
That he nis clad, and ready for to ride
With hunt and horne, and hounds him beside
For in his hunting hath he such delite
That it is all his ioy and appetite
To been himselfe the great Harts bane
For after Mars, he serueth now Diane.
Clere was the day, as I haue told or this
And Theseus, with all ioy and blis
With his Ipolita, the faire queene
And Emelie, iclothed all in greene
An hunting been they ridden rially
And to the groue, that stood there fast by
In which ther was an Hart as men him told
Duke Theseus the streight way hath hold
And to the land he rideth him full right
For thither was ỳ hart wõt to haue his flight
And ouer a brooke, and so forth on his way
This duke will haue a course at him or two
With hounds, such as him list commaund
And whẽ the duke was comen into the laund
Under the sonne he looked, and that anon
He was ware of Arcite and Palamon
That foughten breme, as it were bulles two
The bright swords went to and fro
So hidously, that with the least stroke
It seined that it would haue fellen an oke
But what they weren, nothing he ne wote
This duke with his spores his courser smote
And at a start he was betwixt hem two
And pulled out his sword, and cried, ho
No more on paine of leesing your head
By mighte Mars, he shall anone be dead
That smiteth any stroke, that I may seen
But telleth me what maner men ye been
That been so hardie for to fighten here
Without iudge or other officere
As though it were in listes rially?
This Palamon answered hastily
And said: sir, what nedeth words mo?
We haue the death deserued both two
Two wofull wretches been we and caitiues
That been encombred of our owen liues
And as thou art a rightfull lord and iudge
Ne yeue vs neither mercie ne refuge
But slea me first, for saint charite
But slea my fellow as well as me
Or slea him first, for though thou know it lite
This is thy mortall foe, this is Arcite
That fro thy land is banished on his head
For which he hath deserued to be dead
For this is he that came vnto thy gate
And said, that he hight Philostrate
Thus hath he iaped full many a yere

And thou hast made him thy chiefe squiere
And this is he, that loueth Emelie.
For sith the day is come that I shall die
I make plainly my confession
That I am thilke wofull Palamon
That hath thy prison broke wickedly
I am thy mortall foe, and he am I
That loueth so hot Emelie the bright
That I woll die here present in her sight.
Wherefore I aske death and my iewise,
But slea my fellow in the same wise,
For both we haue deserued to be slaine.
This worthy duke answered anon againe
And saied, this is a short conclusion
Your owne mouth, by your owne confession
Hath damned you, and I woll it record
It needeth not to pine you with a cord,
Ye shall be dead by mightie Mars the redde.
The queene anon for very womanhedde
Gan for to weepe, and so did Emelie,
And all the ladies in the companie:
Great pitie was it, as thought hem all,
That euer such a chaunce should befall.
For gentlemen they were of great estate,
And nothing but for loue was this debate,
And saw her bloudie wounds wide and sore,
And all criden at once both lesse and more,
Haue mercie lord vpon vs women all:
And on her bare knees adoune they fall,
And would haue kist his feet there as he stood,
Till at the last, aslaked was his mood:
For pitie renneth soone in gentle hert,
And though he at first for ire quoke and stert,
He hath considered shortly in a clause
The trespasses of hem both, and eke the cause:
And although his ire her gilt accused,
Yet in his reason he hem both excused
As thus: he thought well that euery man
Woll helpe himselfe in loue all that he can,
And eke deliuer himselfe out of prison,
And eke his heart had compassion
Of women, for they weepen euer in one:
And in his gentle heart he thought anone,
And soft vnto himselfe he saied: fie
Upon a lord that woll haue no mercie,
But be a Lion both in word and deed
To hem that been in repentaunce and dreed
As well as to a proud despitous man,
That will maintaine that he first began.
That lord hath little of discretion,
That in such case can no difference:
But weigheth pride and humblenesse after one.
And shortly, when his ire was thus agone,
He gan to looken vp with eyen light
And spake in place these words all on hight.
The god of loue, ah benedicite,
How mightie and how great a lord is he:
Against his might there gaineth no obstacles,
He may be cleaped a God for his miracles.
For he can maken at his owne guise
Of euerich hart, as him list deuise.
Lo here this Arcite, and this Palamon,
That quietly were out of my prison gon,
And might haue liued in Thebes rially,
And knowne I am her mortall enemie,
And that her death is in my power also,
And yet hath loue, maugre her eyen two
Ibrought hem hither both for to die.
Now looketh, is not this a great folie?
Who may be a foole, but if he loue?
Behold for Gods sake that sitteth aboue,
See how they bleed, be they not well araied?
Thus hath her lord, ỳ god of loue hem paied
Her wages, and her fees for her seruice:
And yet they weenen to be full wise,
That serue loue, for ought that may befall.
But yet is this the best game of all,
That she, for whom they haue this iolitie,
Can hem therefore as much thanke as me,
She wot no more of all this hote fare
By God, than wot a Cuckow or an Hare.
But all mote been assaied hot and cold,
A man mote been a foole or he yong or old,
I wot it by my selfe full yore agone:
For in my time a seruant was I one.
And therefore sith I know of loues paine,
I wot how sore it can a man distraine,
As he that oft hath been caught in her laas,
I you forgeue all wholly this trespaas
At the request of the queen that kneeleth here,
And eke of Emely, my sister dere.
And ye shall both anon vnto me swere,
That ye shall neuer more my country dere,
Ne make warre vpon me night ne day,
But been my friends in all that ye may:
I you forgeue this trespas euery dele.
And they him swore his asking fair and wele,
And him of lordship and of mercie praid,
And he hem graunted grace, and thus he said.

To speake of worthie linage and richesse,
Though that she were a queen or a princesse
Ilke of you both is worthie doubtlesse
To wed when time is, but nathelesse
I speake, as for my sister Emelie
For whom ye haue this strife and iealousie,
Ye wot your selfe, she may not wed two
At ones, though ye fighten euermo:
But one of you, all be him loth or lefe,
He mot goe pipe in an Yuie leafe:
This is to say, she may not haue both
Been ye neuer so iealous, ne so wroth.
And therefore I you put in this degre,
That each of you shall haue his destinee
As him is shape, and hearken in what wise,
Lo here your end, of that I shall deuise.

Why will is this, for plat conclusion
Without any replication
If that you liketh, take it for the best
That eucrich of you shall goe where him lest
Freely without ransome or daungere
And this day sixtie weekes, ferre ne nere
Eucrich of you shall bring an C. knights
Armed for the lists upon all rights
Alredy to darrein here by battaile
And this behote I you withouten faile
Upon my truth, as I am true knight
That whether of you both hath that might
That is to say, that whether he or thou
May with his hundred, as I spake of now,
Slea his contrary, or out of lists driue
Him shall I yeue Emely to wiue
To whom fortune yeueth so fair a grace.
The lists shall I do make in this place
And God so wisely on my soule rew
As I shall euen iudge be, and trew.
Ye shall none other end with me make
That one of you shall be dedde or take
And ye thinken this is well saide
Saith your aduise, and hold you well apaid
This is your end, and your conclusion.
Who looketh lightly now but Palamon?
Who springeth vp for ioy but Arcite?
Who could tell, or who could rightly endite
The great ioy that is made in this place
When Theseus had done so faire a grace?
But down on knees went euery maner wight
And thanked him with all her hert and might
And namely these Thebanes full many a sith
And thus with good hope and hert blith
They taken her leue, a homward gan they ride
To Thebes ward, with his old wals wide.
I trow men would deme it negligence
If I forgetten to tell the dispence
Of Theseus, that goeth busily
To maken vp the lists rially
To such a noble Theatre, as it was
I dare well say, in all this world there nas
The circuit whereof a mile was about
Walled with stone, and dicched all about
Round was the shape, in manner of a compas
Full of degrees, the hight of sixtie paas
That when a man was set on one degree
He letted not his fellow for to see.
Eastward there stood a gate of marble white,
Westward right such another in thopposite.
And shortly to conclude, such a place
Was none in yearth, as in so little space,
For in the lond there nas no crafts man
That Geometrie, or Arithmetike can
Ne purtreiture, ne caruer of Images
That Theseus ne gaue him meat and wages
That Theatre to make and deuise
And for to do his Rite and Sacrifice
He Eastward hath upon the gate aboue
In worship of Venus, the Goddesse of loue,
Doe make an auter and an oratorie,
And on the West side, in memorie
Of Mars he maked such another
That cost of gold largely a fother.
And Northward, in a turret in the wall
Of Alabaster white and red Corall
An oratorie rich for to se
In worship of Diane the Goddes of chastite
Hath Theseus doe wrought in noble wise.
But yet had I forgetten to deuise
The noble caruings and the purtreitures
The shape, the countnaunce and the figures
That were in the oratories three.
First in the temple of Venus thou maist see
Wrought on the wall, full pitously to behold
The broken sleepes, and the sighs cold
The salt teares, and the weimenting
The fire strokes, and the desiring
That loues seruants in this life enduren
The othes, that her couenants assuren
Pleasaunce and hope, desire, foolehardinesse
Beautie and youth, baudrie and richesse
Charmes and forcerie, leasing and flatterie
Dispence, businesse, and iolitie
That weared of yellow golds a garland
And a Cuckow sitting on her hand.
Feasts, instruments, carols, and daunces,
Iusts and array, and all the circumstaunces
Of loue, which I reken and reken shall
By order, were painted on the wall,
And mo than I can make of mencion
For sothly all the mount of Citheron
Where Venus hath her principall dwelling
Was shewed on the wall in purtreing
With all the ioy, and the festiuesse
Nought was forgetten the portresse idlenesse
Ne Narcissus the faire of yore agon
Ne yet the follie of king Salomon
Ne yet the great strength of Hercules
Thenchauntment of Medea and Circes
Ne of Turnus, with his hardie corage
The rich Cresus caitife in seruage
Thus may you seen, that wisdome ne richesse
Beautie ne sleight, strength ne hardinesse
Ne may with Venus hold champartie
For as her list the world may she gie,
Lo, all these folke so caught were in her laas
Till they for wo full oft said alas
Sufficeth here one example or two
And though I coud reken a thousand mo.
The statue of Venus glorious to see
Was maked fleeting in the large see
And fro the nauell doune all couered was
With waues grene, and bright as any glas
A citriole in her right hand had shee
And on her hedde, full semely for to see

A rose garland fresh, and well smelling
Above her hedde Doues flittering
Before her stood her sonne Cupido
Upon his shoulders wings had he two
And blind he was, as it is oft sene
A bow he had and arrowes bright and kene
Why should I not as well tellen all
The purgatory that was thereabout ouer all
Within the temple of mightie Mars the rede
All painted was the wall in length and brede
Like to the Estris of the grisly place,
That hight ỹ great tẽple of Mars in Thrace,
In thilke cold and frostie region,
There Mars hath his soueraine mancion.
First on the wall was painted a forrest,
In which there wonneth nother man ne beast
With knottie and knarie barrein trees old
Of stubs sharpe and hideous to behold:
In which there was a romble and a swough
As though a storme should break euery bough
And downward from an hill vnder a bent,
There stood the temple of Mars armipotent
Wrought all of burned stele, of which thentre
Was long and streight, and gastly for to see.
And therout came such a rage and a vise,
That it made all the gates for to rise.
The Northern light in at the dores shone,
For window on the wall was there none,
Thrugh which men might any light discerne,
The dores were all of Adamant eterne
Yclenched ouerthwart and endelong
With yron tough, for to maken it strong.
Euery piller, the temple to sustene
Was tonne great, of yron bright and shene.
There saw I first the darke imagining
Of felonie, and eke the compassing:
The crudll ire, red as any glede,
The pickpurse also, and eke the pale drede.
The smiler, with the knife vnder the cloke,
The shepen brenning with the blacke smoke
The treason of the murdring in the bed,
The open war, with woundes all be bled.
Contek with bloody knives, and sharp manace
All full of chirking was that sorrie place.
The slear of himselfe yet saw I there,
His hearte blood hath bathed all his here:
The naile ydriuen in the shode on hight,
With cold death, with mouth gaping vpright.
Amids of the temple sate Mischaunce
With Discomfort and sorrie Countenaunce:
Yet saw I Woodnesse laughing in his rage
Armed complaint, theft, and fierce courage,
The carraine in the bush, with throte ycorue
A thousand slaine, and not of qualme storue.
The tirant, with the prey by force raft,
The toune destroied, there was nothing laft.
Yet saw I brent the shippes hoppesteres,
The hunter strangled with the wild beres:
The Sow fretting the child in cradle,
The Cooke scalded, for all his long ladle.
Nought was forgeten the infortune of Mart,
The Carter ouerridden by his owne cart,
Under the wheele full low he lay adoun.
There were also of Mars deuision,
The Barbour, the Bocher, and the Smith,
That forgeth sharpe swords on the stith.
And all aboue depainted in a tour
Saw I Conquest, sitting in great honour
With the sharpe sword right ouer his head
Hanging by a subtill twined thread.
Depainted was there the slaughter of Julius,
Of great Nero, and of Antonius:
All be that thilke time they were vnborne,
Yet was her death depainted there beforne
By manacing of Mars, right by figure,
So was it shewed on that portreiture
As is depainted in the starres aboue,
Who shall be dead or elis slaine for loue.
Sufficeth one ensample in stories old,
I may not reken them all, though I would.
The statue of Mars vpon a cart stood
Armed, and looked grim as he were wood,
And ouer his head there shinen two figures
Of starres, that been cleaped in scriptures,
That one (Puella) hight, that other (Rubeus)
This god of armes was arayed thus:
A wolfe there stood before him at his fete
With eyen red, and of a man he ete:
With subtill pensill was painted this storie
In redouting of Mars and of his glorie.
Now to the temple of Diane the chast
As shortly as I can I will me hast,
To tell you all the discription:
Depainted been the walls vp and doun
Of hunting and of shamefast chastite:
There saw I how wofull Calistope,
When that Diane greued was with her,
Was turned fro a woman to a bere,
And after ward was she made the loadsterre:
Thus was it painted, I can say no ferre,
Her sonne is eke a starre as men may see.
There saw I Dane turned vnto a tree,
I meane not the goddesse Diane,
But Venus daughter, which ỹ hight Dane.
There saw I Acteon an Hert ymaked
For vengeance that he saw Diane all naked:
I saw how ỹ his hounds haue him caught,
And freten him, for they knew him nought.
Yet painted was a little further more,
How Athalant hunted the wild Bore,
And Meliager, and many other mo,
For which Diane wrought him care and wo.
There saw I many another wonder storie,
Which me list not to drawe in memorie.
This goddesse full well vpon an Hart sete,
With smale hounds all abouten her fete,

And

And vnderneath her feet she had a Moone,
Wexing it was, and yet should wane soone.
In gaudie greene her statue clothed was,
With bow in hand, and arrowes in caas.
Her eyen aye she cast full low adoun
There Pluto hath his darke regioun.
A woman trauelling was her before,
But for her child so long was vnbore,
Full pitously Lucina gan she call.
And said helpe, for thou maiest best of all.
Well could he paint liuely that it wrought,
With many a florein he the hewes bought.

Now been these lists made, and Theseus
That at his great cost hath arayed thus
The temples, and the theatre eueridele,
When it was done, it him liked wonder wele.
But stint I will of Theseus alite,
And speake of Palamon and of Arcite.
The day approcheth of her returning,
That euerich should an C. knights bring,
The battaile to darreine, as I you told,
And to Athens her couenants to hold,
Hath euerich of hem brought an C. knights
Well armed for the warre at all rights:
And sikerly, there trowed many a man
That neuer sithens the world began,
As for to speake of knighthood of her hond,
As farre as God hath made ea or lond,
Nas of so few, so noble a company:
For euery wight that loued chiualry,
And would his thankes haue a passing name
Hath prayed, that he might be of that game,
And well was him, that thereto chosen was:
For if there fell to morrow such a caas,
Ye know well, that euery lusty knight,
That loueth paramours, and hath his might
Were it in England, or were it elsewhere,
They would all full faine willen to be there.
☞ To fight for a lady, ah, benedicite,
It were a lustie sight for men to se.
And right so farden they with Palamon,
With him there went knights many on:
Some would been armed in an habergeon,
And in a breast plate, with a light gippon,
And some would haue a paire of plates large,
And some wold haue a pruce sheld, som a targe
Some would be armed on his legs wele,
And haue an axe, and some a mace of stele.
There nas none new guise, that it nas old.
Armed were they, as I haue you told
Euerich after his opinion.
¶ Ther maist thou se comming with Palamō
Ligurge himselfe, the great king of Trace:
Blacke was his berd, & manly was his face.
The sercles of his eyen in his hed
They glouden betwixt yellow and red:
And like a Lion looked he about,
With kemped haires on his browes stout,
His lims great, his brawnes hard and strong
His shoulders brode, his armes round & long.
And as the guise was in his countre,
Full high vpon a chaire of gold stood he,
With foure great white buls in the trays.
Instead of a coat armour ouer his harnays
With nailes yellow, and bright as any gold
He hath a beares skin, cole blacke for old.
His long haire was kempt behind his backe,
As any rauens feather it shone for blacke.
A wreath of gold arme great, of huge weight
Upon his head set full of stones bright
Of fine rubies and cleare diamands.
About his chaire there went white allaunds
Twenty and mo, as great as any steere
To hunten at the lion or the wild bere
And followed him, with mosell fast ybound:
Collers of gold, and torrettes filed round.
An hundred lords had he in his rout
Armed full well, with hearts sterne and stout.

With Arcite, in stories as men doe find,
The great Emetrius the king of Inde
Upon a steed bay, trapped in stele,
Couered with a cloth of gold diapred wele,
Came riding like the god of armes Marce,
His coat armure was of cloth of Trace
Well couched with perle, white, round & great:
His saddle was of brent gold new ybet.
A mantle vpon his shoulders hanging
Bretted full of rubies, red as fire sparkling.
His crispe haire like rings was of yron,
And that was yellow, and glittering as ỳ son.
His nose was high, his eyen bright citryn,
His lips ruddie, his colour was sanguyn.
A few freckles in his face yspreint
Betwixt yellow, and somdele blacke ymeint,
And as a Lion he his eyen kest
Of fiue and twenty yere his age I gest:
His beard was well begun for to spring,
His voice was as a trumpet sowning.
Upon his head he wared of laurer greene
A garland fresh and lustie for to seene.
Upon his hand he bare for his delite
An Eagle tame, as any lilly white.
An hundred lords had he with him there,
All armed saue her heads in her gere,
And that full richely in all manner things.
For trusteth well, that earles, dukes, & kings
Were gathered in this noble company
For loue, and for encrease of chiualry.
About this king there ran on euery part
Full many a tame Lion and Libart.
And in this wise, these lords all and some
Been on the sunday to the citie come
About prime, and in the toune alight.
This Theseꝰ, this duke this worthy knight
When

When he had brought hem into his citee,
And inned hem, euerich after his degree,
He feasteth hem, and doth so great labour
To easen hem, and done hem all honour,
That yet men wenen that no mans wit
Of none estate coud ne amend it.
The minstralcie, the seruice at the feast,
The great yefts also, to the most and least,
The rich array, throughout Theseus paleis,
Ne who sat first ne last vpon the deys,
What ladies fairest been or best dauncing,
Or which of hem can best daunce or sing,
Ne who most feelingly speaketh of loue,
Ne what hawkes sitten on perchen aboue,
Ne what hounds liggen on the flour adoun,
Of all this now make I no mentioun:
But of the effect, that thinketh me the best,
Now cometh the point, harkeneth if you lest.

The sunday at night, or day gan to spring,
When Palamon the larke herd to sing,
Although it were not day by houres two,
Yet song the larke, and Palamon right tho
With holy heart, and with an high corage
He rose vp, to wenden on his pilgrimage
Unto the blisfull Cithera benigne,
I meane Venus, honourable and digne:
And in her houre, he walketh forth a paas
Unto the lists, there as the temple was:
And doun he kneleth, and with humble chere
And heart full sore, he said as ye shall here.
¶ Fairest of faire: O lady mine Venus,
Daughter of Ioue, and spouse to Vulcanus,
Thou glader of the mount of Citheron,
For thilke loue thou haddest to Adon,
Haue pity of my bitter teares smart,
And take my humble prayer at thine heart.
Alas. I ne haue no language to tell
The effect, ne the torment of mine hell:
Mine heart may not mine harmes bewray,
I am so confuse, that I cannot say,
But mercy lady bright, that wost wele
My thought, and seest what harms that I fele:
Consider all this, and rue vpon my sore,
As wisly as I shall for euermore
Enforce my might, thy true seruant to be,
And hold warre alway with chastite:
That make I mine auow, so ye me helpe.
I keepe not of armes still for to yelpe,
Ne aske I to morrow to haue victory,
Ne renoume in this case, ne vaine glory
Of prise of armes, to blowen vp and doun,
But would haue fully possessioun
Of Emely, and die in her seruise,
Find thou the maner how, and in what wise,
I recche it not, but it may better be
To haue victory of hem, or they of me,
So that I haue my lady in mine armes.
For though so be that Mars is god of Armes
Your vertue is so great in heauen aboue,
That if you list, I shall well haue my loue.
Thy temple shall I worship euermo,
And on thine aulter, where I ride or go
I woll done sacrifice, and fires bete.
And if ye woll not so, my lady swete,
Then pray I you, to morrow with a speare
That Arcite doe me through the heart beare:
Then recke I not when I haue lost my life,
Though Arcite win her to his wife.
This is the effect and end of my prayere,
Yeue me my lady, thou blisfull lady dere.
When the orison was done of Palamon,
His sacrifice he did, and that anon
Full pitously, with all circumstances,
All tell I not as now his obseruances.
But at the last the statue of Venus shoke,
And made a signe, whereby that he toke,
That his prayer accepted was that day.
For though the signe shewed a delay,
Yet wist he well that graunted was his bone,
And with glad hart he went him home full sone.

The third houre in equall that Palamon
Began to Venus temple for to gon,
Up rose the sunne, and vp rose Emelie,
And vnto the temple of Diane gan hie:
Her maidens, the which thider were lad
Full readily with hem the fire they had,
The incense, the clothes, and the remnant all,
That to the sacrifice longen shall:
The hornes full of meeth, as was the gise,
There lacked nought to done her sacrifise
Smoking the temple, full of clothes faire:
This Emely with heart debonaire
Her body wisshe with water of a well:
But how she did right I dare not tell,
But it be any thing in generall,
And yet it were a game to heare it all,
To him that meaneth wel it were no charge:
But it is good a man be at his large.
Her bright haire vnkempt was, vntressed all,
A crowne of a greene Oke vnserial
Upon her head was set full faire and mete,
Two fires on the aulter gan she bete,
And did her things, as men may behold
In Stace of Thebes, and these bookes old.
Whē kindled was ꝑ fire, with pitous chere
Unto Diane she spake as ye may here.
O chast goddesse of the woods greene,
To whom both heuen & earth and see is seene:
Queen of the reigne of Pluto, darke and low,
Goddesse of maidens, ꝑ mine hart hath know
Full many a yeare, and wost what I desire,
As keepe me fro the vengeance of thine ire,
That Acteon abought cruelly:
Chast goddesse, well wost thou that I

Desire to been a maid all my life,
Ne neuer will I be louer ne wife.
I am (thou wost well) of thy company
A maid, and loue hunting and venery,
And for to walken in the woods wild,
And not for to been a wife, ne been with child,
Nought will I know company of man.
Now helpe me lady sith you may and can,
For tho three formes that thou hast in thee.
And Palamon, that hath such a loue to me,
And eke Arcite, that loueth me so sore,
This grace I pray thee withouten more,
As send loue and peace betwixt hem two:
And fro me turne away her hearts so,
That all her hote loue, and her desire,
And all her busie torment, and all her fire
Be queint, or turned in another place.
And if so be thou wolt not do me that grace
Or if my destiny be shapen so,
That I shall needs haue one of hem two,
As send me him that most desireth me.

Behold goddesse of cleane chastite
The bitter teares, that on my cheekes fall,
Sith thou art a maid, and keeper of vs all,
My maidenhed thou keep and well conserue,
And while I liue, a maiden will I serue.

The fires burn vpon the auter clere,
While Emely was thus in her prayere:
But sodenly she saw a thing queint,
For right anon one of the fires queint,
And quicked againe, and after that anon
That other fire was queint, and all agon:
And as it queint, it made a whistling,
As done these wet brands in her brenning.
And at the brondes end outran anone
As it were bloudy drops many one:
For which so sore agast was Emely,
That she was well nie mad, and gan to cry.
For she ne wist what it signified,
But only for the feare thus she cried,
And wept, that it was pity for to heare.

And therewithall Diane gan to appeare
With bow in hond, right as an huntaresse,
And said doughter, stint thine heauinesse:
Among the gods high it is affirmed,
And by eterne word written and confirmed,
Thou shalt been wedded to one of tho,
That haue for thee so much care and wo:
But vnto which of hem I may not tell.
Farwell, for I may no longer dwell:
The fires which now on mine auter bren
Shall declaren, ere that thou gone hen
This auenture of loue, as in this case.

And with that word, the arrows in ỹ case
Of the goddesse clatteren fast and ring,
And forth she went, and made vanishing,
For which this Emely astonied was,
And said: what amounteth this, alas,
I put me vnder thy protection
Diane, and vnder thy direction.
And home she goth anon the next way,
This is the effect, there is no more to say.

The next houre of Mars following this
Arcite vnto the temple walked is
Of fierce Mars, to done his sacrifise
With all the might of his paynem wise.
With pitous heart and high deuotion,
Right thus to Mars he said his orison.

O strong god, that in the regnes cold
Of Trace honoured art, and lord yhold,
And hast in euery reigne and euery lond
Of armes, all the bridle in thine hond,
And hem fortunest as thee list deuise,
Accept of me my pitous sacrifise,
If so be that my thought may deserue,
And that my might be worthy for to serue
Thy godhead, that I may been one of thine:
Then pray I thee that thou rue on my pine
For thilke sore paine, and for thilke hot fire,
In which thou brentest whylome for desire,
When thou vsedst the faire beaute
Of faire young Venus both fresh and free,
And haddest her in thine armes at thy will:
Although thou ones on a time mistill,
Whē Vulcanus had caught thee in his laas,
And found thee ligging by his wife alas:
For thilke sorrow that was in thine hart,
Haue ruth as well on my paines smart.
I am young and vnconning, as thou wost,
And as I trow with loue offended most,
That euer was any liues creature:
For she that doth me all this wo endure,
Ne recketh neuer, where I sinke or flete.
And well I wot, or she me mercy hete,
I mote with strength win her in this place:
And well I wot, without helpe or grace
Of thee, ne may my strength not auaile:
Thē helpe me lord to morrow in my battaile,
For thilke fire that whylome brenned thee,
As well as the fire now brenneth mee.
And do, that I to morrow haue the victory,
Myne be the trauell, and thine be the glory.
Thy soueraign temple will I most honouren
Of any place, and alway most labouren
In thy pleasaunce and in thy crafts strong.
And in thy temple I will my banner hong,
And all the armes of my companie,
And euermore, vntill the day I die,
Eterne fire I will before thee find:
And eke to this auow I will me bind.
My beard, my haire that hongeth low adoun
That neuer yet felt offencioun
Of rasour ne of shere, I will thee yeue,
And been thy true seruaunt while I liue.
Now lord haue ruth vpon my sorrowes sore,

Yeue

Yeue me the victory, I aske thee no more.
The prayer stint of Arcite the strong,
The rings on the temple dore they rong,
And eke the doores yclattren full fast,
Of which Arcite somewhat him agast.
The fires brennen upon the auter bright,
That it gan all the temple for to light:
A sweet smell anon the ground up yaf,
And Arcite anon his hond up haf,
And more incence into the fire he cast,
With other rites mo, and at the last
The statu of Mars began his hauberke ring:
And with that sound he heard a murmuring
Full low and dim, that said thus: Victory.
For which he yaf to Mars honor and glory.
And thus with ioy, and hope well to fare
Arcite anon into his inne is fare,
As faine as foule is of the bright sun.
And right anon such a strife is begun
For thilke graunting, in the heauen aboue
Betwixt Venus the goddesse of loue,
And Mars the sterne god armipotent,
That Iupiter was busie it to stent:
Till that the pale Saturnus the cold,
That knew so many auentures old,
Found in his experience and art,
That he full soone hath pleased euery part.
And sooth is said, elde hath great auauntage,
In elde is both wisdome and usage:
Men may the old outren, but not outread.
Saturne anon, to stinten strife and dread,
Albeit that it be againe his kind,
Of all this strife he can remedy find.
My deare doughter Venus, qd. Saturne,
My course that hath so wide for to turne,
Hath more power than wot any man.
Mine is the drenching in the sea so wan,
Mine is the prison in the darke coat,
Mine is ỹ strangling & hanging by ỹ throat,
The murmure, and the churles rebelling,
The groning, and the priuy empoysoning.
I do vengeance and plaine correction,
While I dwell in the signe of the Lion.
Mine is the ruin of the high hals,
The falling of the tours and of the wals
Upon the minor, or on the carpenters:
I slew Sampson, shaking the pillers.
And mine been also the maladies cold,
The darke treasons, and the castes old:
My looking is the father of pestilence.
Now weep no more, I shall do my diligence,
That Palamon, that is thine owne knight,
Shall haue his lady, as thou him behight.
Thogh Mars shal help his knight, natheles
Betwixt you it mot sometime be pees:
All be ye not of one complection,
That causeth all day such deuision.
I am thine ayle, ready at thy will,
Weep no more, I will thy lust fulfill.
Now will I stenten of these gods aboue
Of Mars, and of Venus goddesse of loue,
And plainely will tellen you as I can
The great effect, of which that I began.

Great was the feast in Athens that day,
And eke that lusty season in May
Made euery wight to ben in such pleasaunce,
That all that day iusten they and daunce,
And spenden it in Venus high seruise:
But because that they shoulden arise
Early, for to see the great and strange fight,
Unto her rest went they quickly at night:
And on the morrow when day gan spring,
Of horse and harneis, noise and clattering
There was in the hostelries all about:
And to the pallace rode there many a rout
Of lords, upon great steeds and palfreis.
There mayst thou see deuising of harneis
So uncouth, so rich, and wrought so wele
Of goldsmithry, of braudry, and of stele,
The shields bright, testers, and trappers,
Gold hewen helms, hauberks, & coat armers,
Lords in paraments on her coursers,
Knights of retinue, and eke squiers,
Nailing the spears, and helmes bokeling,
Gigging of shields with laniers lacing
There as need is, they were nothing ydell:
The foming steeds on the golden bridell
Gnawing, and fast the armurers also
With file and hammer, riding to and fro:
Yemen on foot, and communes many one
With short staues, thicke as they may gone.
Pipes, trompes, nakoners, and clarions,
That in the battaile blowne bloudie souns,
The pallace full of people up and doun,
Here three, there ten, holding her question
Deuining of these Theban knights two.
Some said thus, some said it should be so:
Some did hold with him with ỹ black berd,
Some with ỹ balled, some with ỹ thick herd.
Some said he looked grim, and would fight,
He hath a sparth of twenty pound of weight.
Thus was the hall full of deuining
Long after the sunne gan to spring.
The great Theseus of his sleepe gan wake
With minstralcie and noise that they make:
Held yet the chamber of his pallace rich,
Till that the Theban knights both ylich
Honoured weren, and to the place yfet.
Duke Theseus is at the window set
Arayed right as he were a god in trone:
The people preased thyderward full sone
Him for to seen, and done him high reuerence,
And eke to heare his hest and his sentence.
An herauld on a scaffold made an oo,
Till all the noise of the people was ydo:

And when he saw the people of noise still,
Thus shewed he forth the mighty dukes will.
The lord hath of his high discretion
Considered, that it were destruction
To gentle blood, to fighten in this gise
Of mortall battell, now in this empryse:
Wherefore to shapen that they shall not die,
He will his first purpose modifie.
No man therefore, vp paine of losse of life
No manner shot, polax, ne short knife
Into the lists send, or thider bring.
Ne short sword to sticke with point biting
No man ne draw, ne beare it by his side:
Ne no man shall to his fellow ride
But one course, with a sharpe grounden spere:
Foin if him list on foot, the same he shall were.
And he that is at mischiefe, shall be take,
And not slaine, but brought vnto the stake,
That shall ben ordained on either side,
Thider he shall by force, and there abide.
And if so fall, that the cheefetaine be take
On either side, or els slean his make,
No longer shall the turnament last:
God speed you goth and layeth on fast
With swords & long maces fighten your fill,
Goth now your way, this is the lords will.
The voice of the people touched heuen,
So loud cried they with mery steuen:
God saue such a lord that is so good,
He willeth no destruction of blood.
Vp goth the trompes and the melody,
And to the lists rideth so the company
By ordinance, throughout the cite large,
Hanged with cloth of gold, & not with sarge.
Full like a lord this noble duke gan ride
And these two Thebans on either side:
And after rode the queene and Emely,
And after that another company
Of one and other, after her degree:
And thus they passen throughout the citee,
And to the lists comen they be by time.
It nas not of the day yet fully prime,
When set was Theseus full rich and hie
Ipolita the queene, and Emelie,
And other ladies in degrees about:
Vnto the seats preaseth all the rout.
And westward, through the gates vnder mart
Arcite, and eke an hundred of his part
With banner red, is entred right anon:
And in the selue moment entred Palamon
Is, vnder Venus, eastward in that place,
With banner white, and hardy cheare & face.
In all the world, to seeken vp and doun,
So euen without variatioun
There nas no where such companies twey:
For there was none so wise that could sey,
That any had of other auauntage
Of worthinesse, ne of estate, ne age,
So euen were they chosen for to gesse:
And into the renges faire they hem dresse.
When that her names red were euerichone,
That in her number, gile were there none,
Tho were the gates shut, and cried was loud,
Do now your deuoir yong knights proud.
The heraulds left her pricking vp & doun,
Now ringen trompes loud and clarioun,
There is no more to say, east and west
In goth the sharpe speres sadly in the arrest:
In goth the sharpe spurs into the side,
There see men who can iust, and who can ride.
There shiueren shafts vpon shields thicke,
He feeleth through the hert spoone the pricke.
Up springeth the speres, twenty foot on hight,
Out goth the swords as the siluer bright.
The helmes they to hew, and to shred,
Out burst the blood, with sterne stremes red:
With mighty maces the bones they to breke.
He through ỹ thickest of the throng gan threke.
There stumblen steeds strong, & doun go all,
He rolled vnder foot as doth a ball.
He foineth on his feet with a troncheoun,
And he hurleth with his horse adoun.
He through the body is hurt, and sith ytake
Maugre his head, & brought vnto the stake,
As forward was, right there he must abide.
Another is led on that other side.
And sometime doth hem Theseus to rest,
Hem to refresh, and drinke if hem lest.
Full oft a day haue these Thebans two
Together met, and done ech other wo:
Vnhorsed hath ech other of hem twey.
There was no tigre in the vale of Colophey,
When her whelpe is stole, when it is lite,
So cruell on the hunt, as is Arcite
For icalous hert vpon this Palamon:
Ne in Belmarie there is no fell Lion,
That hunted is, or for his hunger wood,
Ne of his pray desireth so the blood,
As Palamon to slee his foe Arcite:
The icalous strokes on her helmes bite,
Out renneth the blood on both her sides reed.
Sometime an end there is of euery deed:
For ere the sunne vnto the rest went,
The strong king Emetrius gan hent
This Palamõ, as he fought with this Arcite,
And made his sword deepe in his flesh bite.
And by force of twenty is he take
Vnyolden, and drawne to the stake.
And in the rescous of this Palamon
The strong king Ligurge is borne adoun:
And king Emetrius for all his strength
Is borne out of his saddle a swords length,
So hurt him Palamon or he were take:
But all for naught, he was broght to ỹ stake:
His hardy heart might him helpen naught,
He must abide, when that he was caught

By

By force, and eke by composition.
Who sorroweth now but wofull Palamon?
That mote no more gone againe to fight.
And when ỳ Theseus had seen that sight,
He cried ho: no more, for it is don:
Ne none shall lenger to his fellow gon.
I woll be true iudge, and not party,
Arcite of Thebes shall haue Emely,
That by his fortune hath her faire ywon.
Anon there is a noise of people begon
For ioy of this, so loud and high withall,
It seemed that the lists shoulden fall.
What can now faire Venus done aboue?
What saith she now? what doth the queene of
But weepeth so, for wanting of her will, (loue?
Till that her teares adowne on the lists fell:
She said: I am ashamed doutles:
Saturnus said: fair daughter hold thy pees,
Mars hath al his wil, his knizt hath his boon
And by mine head thou shalt be eased soon.
The trumpes with the loud minstralcie,
The heraulds, that so loud yell and crie
Been in her wele, for loue of Dan Arcite.
But herkeneth me, and stinteth noise alite,
Which a miracle there befell anon.
The fierce Arcite hath his helme of ydon,
And on a courser for to shew his face
He pricketh endlong in the large place,
Looking vpward vpon Emelie,
And she ayen him cast a friendly eye.
☞ (For women, as to speake in commune,
They follown all the fauour of fortune)
And was all his chere, as in his hert.
Out of the ground a fire infernall stert
From Pluto sent, at the request of Saturne,
For which his horse for feare gan to turne,
And leape aside, and foundred as he lepe:
And ere that Arcite may taken kepe,
He pight him ouer the pomell of his head,
That in the place he lay as he were dead.
His brest to brosten with his saddle bow:
As blacke he lay as any coale or crow,
So was the blood yronne in his face.
Anon he was brought out of the place
With hart full sore, to Theseus paleis:
Tho was he corven out of his harneis,
And in a bed ybrought full faire and bliue,
For he was yet in memory, and on liue,
And alway crying after Emely.
Duke Theseus, with all his company
Is comen home to Athens his cite
With all blisse and great solempnite:
Albeit that this auenture was fall,
He would not discomfort hem all.
Wen said eke, that Arcite should not die,
He should ben healed of his maladie.
And of another thing they were as faine,
That of hem all there was none islaine,
All were they sore hurt, and namely one.
That with a spere was thirled his brest bone.
Two other had wounds, a two broken arms,
Some of the had salues, & some had charms:
Sundry fermaces of hearbes, and eke saue
They dronken, for they would her liues haue.
For which this noble duke, as he well can,
Comforteth and honoureth euery man,
And made great reuell all the long night,
Unto the straunge lords, as it was right.
Ne there nas hold no discomforting,
But as is at iusts or a turneying:
For soothly there nas no discomfiture,
For falling is hold but an auenture.
Ne to be lood by force vnto a stake
Unyolden, and with twenty knights take:
And one person, withouten any mo
To be hatied forth by arme, foot, and too,
And eke his steed driuen forth with staues,
With footmen, both yeomen and knaues,
It was arretted him no villanie:
There may no man cleape it cowardie.
For which anon, duke Theseus did cry
To stinten all rancour and enuy.
They gre as well of one side as of other,
And either side is like, as others brother:
And yaue hem gyfts after her degree,
And helden a feast fully daies three:
And conueyed the knights worthily
Out of his toune a daies iourney largely.
And home went euery man the right way,
There nas no more but farwell & haue good
Of this battell I woll no more endite, (day.
But speake of Palamon and of Arcite.
Swelleth the brest of Arcite, and the sore
Encreaseth at his heart still more and more.
The clottered blood, for any leeche craft
Corrumped, and is in his bouke laft,
That neither veine blood, ne ventousing,
Ne drinke of herbes may be helping,
By vertue expulsiue, or animall:
For thilke vertue cleaped naturall
Ne may the venim void, ne expell:
The pipes of his lungs began to swell,
And euery lacerte in his brest adoun
Is shent with venim and corruption.
Hun gaineth neither, for to get his life,
Vomit vpward, ne downward laxatife:
All is to brusten thilke region,
Nature hath no domination.
And certainly ther as nature woll not wirch, ☞
Farwell physicke, go beare the corse to chirch.
This is all and some, that Arcite must die:
For which he sendeth after Emelie,
And Palamon that was his cosyn deare:
Then said he thus, as ye shall after heare.
Nought may my wofull spirit in my hart
Declare o point of all my sorrows smart,

To you my lady, that I loue most,
But I bequeath the seruice of my gost
To you abouen any creature,
Since that my life may no lenger dure.
Alas the wo, alas my paines strong,
That I for you haue suffered, and so long.
Alas the death, alas mine Emely,
Alas departing of our company:
Alas mine hearts queene, alas my liues wife,
Mine hearts ladie, ender of my life.
What is the world, what aken men to haue?
Now with his loue, now in his cold graue
Alone withouten any company.
Farwell my sweet foe, mine Emely,
And softe me take me in your armes twey,
For the loue of God, & hearken eth what I sey:
I haue here with my cousin Palamon
Had strife and rancour many a day agon
For loue of you, and for my ielousie:
And Iupiter so wisely my soule gie
To speaken of a seruant properly
With circumstances all, and truly,
That is to say, trouth, honor, and knighthede
Wisdome, humblesse, estate, and high kinrede,
Freedome, and all that longeth to that art,
So Iupiter haue of my soule any part,
As in this world right now know I non,
So worthy to be loued as Palamon:
That serueth you, and wol doen all his life.
And if that you shall euer been a wife,
Forget not Palamon, the gentle man:
And with that word his speech faile began.
For from his feet vnto his breast was come
The cold death, that had him ouernome.
And yet moreouer for in his armes two
The vitall strength is lost, and all ago.
Saue only the intellect, without more,
That dwelleth in his heart sicke and sore,
Gan failen, when the hart felt death.
Dusked been his yen two, and failed breath.
But on his ladie yet cast he his ye,
His last word was, mercy Emelie.
His spirit chaunged, and out went there,
Whither ward I cannot tell, ne where:
Therfore I stint, I am no diuinistre,
Of soules find I not in this registre.
Ne me lust not thilke opinion to tell
Of hem, though they write where they dwel.
Arcite is cold, there Mars his soule gie.
Now wol I speake forth of Emelie.
Shright Emelie, and houlen Palamon,
And Theseus his sister vp tooke anon
Swouning, and bare her fro his corse a way:
What helpeth it to tarrie forth the day,
To tellen how she wept both euen & morow?
For in such case women haue much sorow,
When that her husbands been fro hem go,
Or els fallen in such maladie,
That at the last certainely they die.
Infinit been the sorow and the teares
Of old folke, and folke of tender yeares,
In all the toune for death of this Theban:
For him there weepeth both child and man.
So great weeping was there not certaine,
When Hector was brought, all fresh y slaine
To Troy alas, the pitie that was there
Scratching of cheekes, and renting eke here.
Why woldest thou be dead? thus women crie,
And haddest gold inough, and Emelie.
No man ne may gladen Theseus,
Sauing his old father Egeus,
That knew this worldes transmutation,
As he had seene it, both vp and doun:
Ioy after wo, and wo after gladnesse,
And shewed him ensamples and likenesse.
Right as there died neuer man (quod he)
That he ne liued in yearth in some degree,
Right so there liued neuer man (he saied)
In this world, that sometime he ne deied.
This world is but a throughfare full of wo,
And we been pilgrimes, passing to and fro:
Death is an end of euery worldes sore.
And ouer all this yet said he much more
To this effect, full wisely to exhort
The people, that they should hem recomfort.
Duke Theseus with all his busie cure
Casteth now, where that the sepulture
Of good Arcite shall best y maked bee
And eke most honourable for degree.
And at the last he tooke conclusion,
That there as Arcite and Palamon
Had for loue the battaile hem betweene,
That in the same selue groue, sweet & greene,
There as he had his amorous desires,
His complaint, and for loue his hote fires,
He would make a fire, in which the offis
Funerall he mighten all accomplis.
He hath anon commaunded to hack and hew
The Okes old, and lay hem all on a rew
In culpons, well araied for to brenne:
His officers with swift foot they renne
Right anon at his commaundement.
And after Theseus hath y sent
A large bere, and it all ouerspraad
With cloth of gold, the richest that he had:
And of the same sute he clothed Arcite.
Vpon his hands his gloues white,
Eke on his head a croune of Laurell grene,
And in his hand a sword full bright and kene.
He laied him bare visaged on the bere,
Therewith he wept that pitie was to here.
And for the people should seene him all.
When it was day he brought him to the hall,
That roreth of the crying and the soun.
Tho come this wofull Theban Palamon
With

With glitering beard, & ruddie shining heres
In clothes blacke, dropped all with teres
(And passing other of weeping Emelie)
The rufullest of all the companie.
And in as much as the seruice should bee
The more noble and rich in his degree,
Duke Theseus let foorth the steeds bring,
That trapped were in steele all glittering,
And couered with the armes of Dan Arcite:
Upon these steeds great and lilly white,
There saten folk, of which one bare his shield,
Another his speare in his hand held:
The third bare with him a bow Turkes,
Of brent gold was the case and the harnes:
And ridden forth apace with sorie chere
Toward the groue, as ye shall after here.
The noblest of the Greeks that there were
Upon her shoulders caried the bere
With slacke pace, and eyen red and wete
Throughout the citie, by the maister strete,
That sprad was all with black, & ẏ wōder hie:
Right of the same is the street ywrie.
Upon the right hand went Egeus,
And on the other side duke Theseus
With vessels in her hand of gold full fine,
All full of hony, milke, blood, and wine.
Eke Palamon, with full great companie:
And after that came wofull Emelie,
With fire in hand, as was that time the gise,
To doen the office of funerall seruice.
Hie labour, and full great apparelling
Was at seruice, and at fire making,
That with his green top the heauen raught,
And twenty fadome of bred armes straught:
This is to saine, the boughes were so broad,
Of straw first there was laid many a load.
But how the fire was maken vp on height
And eke the names, how all the trees hight,
As oke, firre, beech, aspe, elder, elme, popelere,
Willow, holme, plane, boxe, chesten, & laurere,
Maple, thorne, beech, ewe, hasell, whipultre,
How they were feld, shall not be told for me:
Ne how the gods runnen vp and doun
Disherited of her habitatioun,
In which they wonned in rest and pees:
Nimphes, Faunies, and Amadriades.
Ne how the beasts, ne how the birds all
Fledden for feare, when the trees was fall.
Ne how the ground agast was of the light,
That was not wont to see the sunne bright.
Ne how the fire was couched first with stre,
And then with drie stickes clouen a thre,
And then with greene wood and spicerie,
And then with cloth of gold and perrie,
And garlands hanging with many a flour,
The mirrhe, the incense, with sweet odour.
Ne how Arcite lay among all this,
Ne what richesse about his body is,
Ne how that Emely, as was the guise
Put in the fire of funerall seruice:
Ne how she souned when made was the fire,
Ne what she spake, ne what was her desire:
Ne what iewels men in the fire cast
When that the fire was great and brent fast:
Ne how some cast her shield, & some her spere,
And of her vestments, which that they were,
And cups full of wine, of milke, and blood,
Into the fire, that brent as it were wood.
Ne how the Greekes with a huge rout
Thrice did riden all the fire about
Upon the left hand, with a loud shouting,
& thrice on the right, with her speres clatering:
And thrice how the ladies gan all to crie.
Ne how that led was homeward Emelie:
Ne how that Arcite is brent to ashen cold,
Ne how the liche wake was yhold.
All that night long ne how the Greeks play.
The wake plaies ne keepe I not to say:
Who wrestled best naked, with oile annoint,
Ne who bare him best in euery point.
I woll not tellen eke how they gone
Home to Athens when the play is done.
But shortly to the point then woll I wend,
And maken of my long tale an end.

By processe and by length of certain yeares
All stinten is the mourning and the teares
Of Greekes, by one generall assent.
Then seemed me there was a parliament
At Athens, vpon a certaine point and caas:
Among the which points yspoken was
To haue with certaine countries alliance,
And haue of Thebanes fully obeisance.
For which this noble Theseus anon
Let send after this gentle Palamon
Unwist of him, what was the cause and why:
But in his blacke clothes sorrowfully
He came at his commaundement on hie,
Cho sent Theseus after Emelie.
When they were set, & husht was the place,
And Theseus abidden hath a space,
Or any word came from his wise brest
His eyen set he there as was his lest,
And with a sad visage he siked still,
And after that, right thus he saied his will.
The first mouer of the cause aboue
When he first made the faire chaine of loue,
Great was theffect, and high was his intent,
Well wist he why, and what thereof he ment,
For with that faire chaine of loue he bond
The fire, the aire, the water, and the lond
In certaine bonds, that they may not flee:
The same prince and that mouer (qd. he)
Hath stablisht in this wretched world adoun
Certaine of daies aud duracioun
To all that are engendred in this place,

Ouer the which day they may not pace,
All mow they yet tho daies abredge:
There needeth none authority to ledge.
For it is proued by experience,
But that me list declare my sentence.
Then may men by this order discerne,
That thilke mouer stable is and eterne.
☞ Wel may men know, but he be a foole,
That euery part is deriued from his hoole.
For nature hath not taken his beginning
Of one part or cantle of a thing,
But of a thing that perfit is and stable,
Descending so, till it be corrumpable.
And therefore of his wise purueyaunce
He hath so well beset his ordinaunce,
That spaces of things and progressions
Shullen endure by successions
And not eterne, without any lie:
This maiest thou understand and see at eie:
☞ Lo the oke, that hath so long a norishing,
Fro the time that it begunneth first to spring,
And hath so long a life, as ye may see,
Yet at the last wasted is the tree.
Considereth eke, how that the hard stone
Under our feet, on which we tread and gone
Yet wasteth it, as it lieth in the wey.
The broad riuer sometime wexeth drey.
The great tounes see we do wane and wend,
Then ye see that all this thing hath end.
And man and woman see shall we also,
That nedeth in one of the tearmes two,
That is to saine, in youth or elis in age
He mote be dead, a king as well as a page,
Some in his bed, some in the deepe see,
Some in the large field, as ye may see:
It helpeth not, all goeth that ilke wey:
Then may you see that all thing mote dey.
What maketh this but Iupiter the king?
That is prince, and cause of all thing,
Conuerting all to his proper will,
From which it is deriued sooth to tell.
And here again, no creature on liue
Of no degree auaileth for to striue.
☞ Then is it wisdome, as thinketh me,
To make vertue of necessitie:
And take it well, that we may not eschew,
And namely that to vs all is dew.
And who so grutcheth ought, he doth follie,
And rebell is to him that all may gie.
☞ And certainely, a man hath most honour
To dien in his excellence and flour,
When he is siker of his good name:
Thē hath he don his freends ne him no shame.
And gladder ought his friends be of his death,
When with honour yolde is vp the breath,
Then when his name apaled is for age,
For all forgetten is his vasselage:
Then it is best, as for a worthy fame,
To dien when he is best of name.
The contrary of all this, is wilfulnesse.
Why grutchen we? why haue we heauinesse,
That good Arcite (of chiualry the flour)
Departed is, with duetie and with honour,
Out of this foule prison of this life?
Why grutchen here his cosin and his wife,
Of his welfare, that loueth him so wele:
Can he him thank? nay God wot neuer a dele,
That both his soule, and eke himselfe offend,
And yet they mow not her lusts amend?
What may I conclude of this long storie,
But after sorrow I rede vs be merrie,
And thanke Iupiter of all his grace:
And ere we departen from this place,
I rede we maken of sorrowes two
One perfit ioy, lasting euermo:
And look now where most sorrow is herein,
There will I first amend and begin.
Sister (qd. he) this is my full assent
With all the people of my parlement
Of gentle Palamon your owne knight,
That serueth you with wil, hart, and might,
And euer hath done, sith ye first him knew,
That ye shall of your grace vpon him rew,
And take him for husband and for Lord:
Lend me your hand, for this is our accord.
Let see now of your womanly pite:
He is a kings brothers sonne parde,
And though he were a poore batchelere,
Since he hath serued you so many a yere,
And had for you so great aduersite,
It must ben considered, leueth me.
For gentle mercy ought to passen right.
Then said he thus to Palamō the knight:
I trow there need little sermoning
To make you assenten to this thing.
Commeth nere, & take your lady by the hond,
Betwixt hem was maked anon the bond,
That hight Matrimonie or mariage,
By all the counsaile of the Baronage.
And thus with all blisse and melody
Hath Palamon iwedded Emely.
And God ỹ all this world hath ywrought,
Send him his loue, ỹ it hath so dere bought.
For now is Palamon in all wele,
Liuing in blisse, in richesse, and in hele,
And Emely him loueth so tenderly,
And he her serueth so gentilly,
That neuer was there no word hem betweene
Of iealousie, or of any other teene.
Thus endeth Palamon and Emely:
And God saue all this faire company.

Nicholas,

NIcholas, a Scholler of Oxford, practiseth with Alison the Carpenters wife of Osney to deceive her husband, but in the end is rewarded accordingly.

¶ The Millers Prologue.

WHen that the knight had thus his tale ytold,
In all the company nas there yong ne old,
That he ne said it was a noble storie,
And worthie to be drawne in memorie:
And namely the gentiles euerichone.
Our host lough and sware, so mote I gone,
This goeth aright, vnbokeled is the male,
Let see now who shall tell another tale:
For truly the game is well begon.
Now telleth us sir Monke if ye con
Somewhat, to quite with the knights tale.
The Miller for dronken was all pale,
So that vnneths vpon his horse he sat,
Ne nold auaile neither hood ne hat,
Ne abide no man for his courtesie,
But in Pilats voice he began to crie,
And swore by armes, blood, and bones,
I can a noble tale for the nones, (tale.
With which I woll now quite the knight his
Our host saw that he was dronken of ale,
And saied: abide Robin leue brother,
Some better man shall tell vs first another:
Abide, and let vs wirch thriftely.
By Gods soule (qd. he) that woll not I,
For I woll speake, or els goe my way.
Our host answered: tell on a deuill way:
Thou art a foole, thy wit is ouercome.
Now hearketh qd. the Miller, all & some:
But first I make protestatioun,
That I am drunke, I know it by my soun:
And therefore if I mispeake or say,
Wite it the ale of Southwarke, I you pray:
For I woll tell a legend and a life
Both of a Carpenter and his wife,
How that a clarke set a Wrights cap.
The Reue answered & said stint thy clap:
Let be thy leaud drunken harlottrie,
It is a sinne, and eke a great follie
To apairen any man, or him defame,
And eke to bring wiues in such blame.
Thou maiest inough of other things saine.
This drunken Miller spake full soon againe
And saied: my leue brother Oswold,
Who hath no wife, he is no cokold.
But I say not therefore that thou art one,
There been full good wiues many one.
Why art thou angry with my tale now?
I haue a wife parde as well as thou,
Yet nold I for all the Oxen in my plough,
Take vpon me more then is inough
To deemen of my selfe that I am one,
I woll beleeue well that I am none.
An husband should not been inquisitife
Of Gods priuity, ne of his wife.
For so he find Gods foison there,
Of the remnant needeth not to enquere.
What should I more say, but this Millere
He nold his word for no man forbere,
But told his churles tale in this mannere:
Me forthinketh I shall rehearce it here,
And therefore euery gentle wight I pray,
Deemeth not for Gods loue that I say
Of euill intent, but that I mote rehearse
Her tales all, been they better or werse,
Or else falsen some of my matere.
And therefore who so list it not to here,
Turne ouer the leafe, and chuse another tale,
For ye shall find ynow great and smale
Of historiall thing touching gentlenesse,
And eke moralitie, and holinesse.
Blame not me, if that ye chose amis,
The Miller is a churle, ye know well this,
So was the Reue eke, and other mo,
And harlotrie they told eke both two.
Auise you, and put me out of blame,
And eke men should not make ernest of game.

¶ The Millers Tale.

WHylome there was dwelling in Oxenford
A rich gnofe, that gests helden to bord,
And of his craft hee was a Carpenter,
With him there was dwelling a poor scholler
Had learned art, but all his fantasie
Was turned to learne Astrologie:
And coud certaine of conclusions
To demen by interrogations,
If that men asken him in certain houres
When ẏ mē shouldē haue drought or shoures:
Or if men asked him what should befall
Of euery thing, I may not reken all.
This clarke was cleped Hend Nicholas:
Of derne loue he coud and of solas,
And thereto he was slie and right priuee
And ilike to a maiden meeke to see.
A chamber he had in that hostelrie
Alone, withouten any companie,
Full fetously dight with hearbes sote,
And he himselfe as sweet as is the rote
Of Licores, or of any Seduwall.
His almagiste, and bookes great and small,

His

His alther lagour, longing for his art,
His augrim stones lying faire apart
On shelues all couched at his beds hed:
His presse ycouered with a falding red,
And all aboue there lay a gay Sautrie,
On which he made on nights melodie,
So sweetly, that all the chamber rong:
And *Angelus ad virginem* he song.
And after that he song the kings note,
Full oft blessed was his merry throte.
And thus the sweet clarke all his time spent
After his friends finding and his rent.

This Carpenter had wedded new a wife,
Which that he loued more then his life:
Of eighteene yeare I gesse she was of age,
Jealous he was, and kept her strait in cage,
For she was wild, and yong: and he was old,
And deemed himselfe to been a Cokewold.
He knew not Cato, for his wit was rude,
That bade men wed her similitude.
Men should wed after her estate,
For youth and elde is often at debate.
But sith he was fallen in the snare,
He must endure (as other folke) his care.
Faire was this yong wife, and therewithall
As any wesele her body gentle and small.
A ceinte she wered, barred all with silke,
A barme cloth, as white as morrow milke
Upon her lendes, full of many a gore.
White was her smock, embrouded all before
And eke behind, on her colere about,
Of cole blacke silke, within and eke without.
The tapes of her white volipere
Were of the same sute of her colere.
Her filler broad of silke, and set full hie,
And sikerly, she had a likerous eie:
Full small ypulled were her browes two
And tho were bent, and blacke as any sloe.
She was much more blisful for to see
Than is the new Perienet tree:
And softer than the wooll is of a Weather.
And by her girdle hung a purse of leather
Tassed with silke, and perled with latoun,
In all this world to seeken up and doun
There nis no man so wise, that couth thence
So gay a popelote, or so gay a wench.
Full brighter was the shining of her hew,
Than in the toure the Noble forged new.
But of her song, it was so loud and yerne,
As any Swallow sitting on a berne:
Thereto she couth skip and make a game,
As any Kid or Calfe following his dame.
Her mouth was sweet, as braket or the meth,
Or hord of apples, lying in hay or heth.
Winsing she was, as is a iolly colt,
Long as a mast, and vpright as a bolt.
A broach she bare on her low collere,
As broad as the bosse of a buckelere.
Her shoes were laced on her legs hie:
She was a primrose and pigsnie,
For any lord to liggen in his bed,
Or yet for any good yoman to wed.

Now sir and eft sir, so befell the cas,
That on a day this hend Nicholas
Fell with this yong wife to rage and play,
While that her husband was at Oseney:
As clerkes ben full subtill and queint,
And prively he caught her by the queint
And saied: I wis but I haue my will,
For derne loue of thee lemman I spill:
And held her full fast by the haunch bones,
And saied: lemman loue me well at ones,
Or I woll dien also God me saue.
And she sprong as a colt in a traue:
And with her head she writheth fast away,
And saied: I woll not kisse thee by my fay.
Why let be (qd. she) let be Nicholas,
Or I woll crie out harrow and alas.
Doe away your hands for your courtesie.
This Nicholas gan mercy for to crie,
And spake so faire, and profered him so fast,
That she her loue graunted him at last,
And swore her oth by S. Thomas of Kent,
That she would been at his commandement,
When that she may her leisure well espie.
My husband is so full of ielousie,
That but ye wait well, and be priue,
I wot right well I nam but dead qd. she.
Ye mote be full derne as in this cas.
May thereof care ye not qd. Nicholas:
A clarke had litherly beset his while,
But if he couth a Carpenter beguile.
And thus they were accorded and ysworne
To awaiten a time as I haue said beforne.
And whē Nicholas had done thus euery dele,
And thanked her about the lendes wele,
He kissed her sweet, then taketh his Sautrie
And plaieth fast, and maketh melodie.
Then fell it thus, that to the parish church
(Christs owne worke for to wirch)
This good wife went vpon a holy day:
Her forehead shone as bright as any day.
So was it washt, when she let her worke.
Now was there of ỹ chirch a parish clerke,
The which that was cleaped Absolon,
Crull was his haire, and as gold it shon,
And strouted as a fanne large and brode,
Full straight and euen lay his iolly shode,
His rode was red, his eyen gray as Goos,
With Poles windowes coruen on his shoes.
In hosen red he went fetously,
Gird he was full small and properly,
All in a kirtle of light waget:
Full faire and thicke been the points set,
And thereupon he had a gay surplise,
As white as the blossome on the rise.

A merrie child he was, so God me saue,
Well could he let blood, clippe, and shaue,
And make a charter of lond, and a quitaunce:
In twenty manner could he trip and daunce,
After the schoole of Oxenford tho,
And with his legs casten to and fro:
And play songs on a small Ribible,
Thereto he song sometime a loud quinible:
And as well could he play on a Geterne.
In all the toune nas brewhouse ne Tauerne,
There as any gay girle or Tapstere was.
That he ne visited with his solas,
But sooth to say he was somwhat squaimus
Of farting, and of speech daungerous.

This Absolon, that was ioily and gay,
Goeth with a Censer on a Sunday,
Censing the wiues of the parish fast,
And many a louely looke on hem he cast,
And namely on this Carpenters wife:
To looke on her him thought a merry life.
She was so proper, and sweet as Licorous.
I dare well saine, if she had been a Mous,
And he a Cat, he would haue her hent anon.

This parish clerke, this ioily Absolon
Hath in his heart such a loue longing,
That of no wife he tooke none offering,
For courtesie he said he would haue none.
The moon whē it was night ful bright shone,
And Absolon his Geterne hath ytake,
For paramours he thought for to wake,
And forth he goeth, iealous and amorous,
Till he came to the Carpenters hous,
A litle after the Cocke had crow.
And dressed him by a shot window,
That was vpon the Carpenters wall:
He singeth in his voice gentle and small,
Now deare lady, if that thy will it be,
I pray you that ye would rew on me:
Full well according to his Gestening.

This Carpenter awoke, & heard him sing,
And spake vnto his wife and said anon,
What Alison, heares thou not Absolon,
That chaunteth thus vnder our bowres wal?
And she answerd her husband therewithall,
Yes God wot, I heare him euery dele.
This passeth forth, what wol ye bet thē wele:
Fro day to day this ioily Absolon
So wocth her, that him was woe begon.
He waketh all the night, and all the day,
He kembeth his locks broad, & made him gay
He woeth her by meanes and brocage,
And swore that he would been her owne page.
He singeth brokking as a Nightingale:
He sent her pimient, methe, and spiced ale,
And wafres piping hot out of the glede:
And for she was of toun, he profered her mede.
For some folke woll be won for richesse,
And some for strokes, & some with gentlenesse.

Somtime to shew his lightnesse & maistrie
He plaieth Herodes on a scaffold hie.
But what auaileth him as in this caas?
So loueth she this hend Nicholas,
That Absolon may blow the Bukes horne:
He ne had for his labour but a scorne,
And thus she maketh Absolon her ape,
And all his request turneth to a iape.
For sooth this prouerbe it is no lie,
Men say thus alway, that the nye slie
Still maketh the ferre loue to be lothe:
For though that Absolon be wood or wrothe,
Because that he ferre was from her sight,
This nie Nicholas stood in his light.

But now beare thee well hend Nicholas,
For Absolon may waile and sing alas.

And so befell it on a Saterday,
This Carpenter was gone to Oseney,
And hend Nicholas and Alison
Accorded were to this conclusion,
That Nicholas should shapen him a while
This silly iealous Carpenter to beguile:
And if so be the game went aright,
She should sleep in his armes all night,
For this was his desire and hers also.
And right anon, withouten words mo,
This Nicholas no longer would tarie,
But doth full soft vnto his chamber carie
Both meat and drinke for a day or twey.

And to her husbond bad her for to sey,
If that he asked after Nicholas,
She should aunswere she nist where he was:
Of all that day she saw him not with eie,
She trowed he was in some maladie.
For no crie that she or her maid could call
He nold answer, for nought that might befall.

Thus passeth forth all the ilke Saturday,
That Nicholas still in his chamber lay,
And eat, dranke, and slept, & did what him list
Till Sunday, that the sunne goeth to rest.

This silly Carpenter hath great maruele
Of Nicholas, or what thing might him ele,
And said: I am adrad by saint Thomas
It stondeth not aright with Nicholas.
God shilde that he died sodainely:
This world is now full tickle sickerly.
I saw to day a corse borne to church,
That now on monday last I saw him wirch.

Goe vp (qd. he vnto his knaue) anone,
Clepe at his doze, & knocke fast with a stone:
Looke how it is, and tell me boldely.

This knaue goth him vp full sturdely,
And at the chamber doze while that he stood,
He cried and knocked as he were wood:
What how? what doe ye maister Nicholay?
How may ye sleepen all this long day?
But all for nought, he heard not a word.
A hole he found full low vpon a bord,

There

There as the cat was wont in to creepe,
And at that hole he looked in full deepe,
And at the last he had of him a sight.
This Nicholas sat euer gaping vpright,
As he had keyked on the new moone.
Adowne he goeth, & told his maister soone,
In what array he saw this ylke man.
This carpenter to blissen him began,
And said: now helpe vs saint Frideswide.
A man wote little what shall him betide.
This man is fallen with his Astronomie
In some woodnesse or in some agonie.
I thought ay well how it shoulden be,
Men shouldenn not know of Gods priuite.
Yea blessed be alway the leaud man,
That naught but only his beleeke can.
Right so ferd another clarke with astronomy,
He walked into the fields for to pry
Upon the starre, to wete what should befall,
Till he was in a marlepit yfall,
He saw not that: yet by saint Thomas
Me reweth sore on Hend Nicholas:
He shall be arated out of his studying,
If that I may, by Iesus heauen king.
Get me a staffe, that I may vnderspore
While that thou Robin heauest vp the doore:
He shall out of his studying, as I gesse.
And to the chamber doore he gan him dresse.
His knaue was a strong carle for the nones,
And by the haspe bare vp the doore at ones,
Into the floore the doore fell anone.
This Nicholas sat as still as any stone,
And euer gaped vpward into the aire.
This carpenter wend he were in despaire,
And hent him by the shoulders mightily,
And shoke him hard, and cried pitously,
What Nicholas, what: how looke adoun:
Awake, and thinke on Christs passioun.
I crouch thee fro elues, & fro wicked wights:
Therewith the nightspel he said anon rights
On foure halues of the house about,
And on the threshfold of the doore without,
Jesu Christ, and saint Benedight
Blisse this house from euery wicked wight:
Fro the nights mare, the white Pater noster,
Where wonnest thou saint Peters sister?
And at the last this Hend Nicholas,
Gan for to sike sore, and said alas:
Shall all this world be lost eftsoones now?
This carpenter answerd: what sayest thou?
What thinke on God, as we men do ỹ swinke.
This Nicholas answerd, fetch me drinke,
And after will I speake in priuite
Of certaine things that toucheth thee & me:
I will tell it none other man certaine.
This carpenter goth doun, & cometh againe,
And brought of mighty ale a large quart,
And when each of hem had dronken his part,
This Nicholas his chamber doore fast shet,
And doune the carpenter by him set
And said: Iohan hoast mine icke and dere,
Thou shalt vpon thy trouth swere me here,
That to no wight thou shalt my counsel wrey:
For it is Christs counsaile that I say,
And if thou tell it any man, thou art forlore:
For this vengeance thou shalt haue therfore,
That if thou wray me, thou shalt be wood.
Nay Christ it forbid for his holy blood
Qd. tho this silly man, I am no blabbe
Ne though I say it, I nam not lefe to gabbe.
Say what thou wolt, I shall it neuer tell
To child ne wife, by him that harrowed hell.
Now John (qd. Nicholas) I will not lie,
I haue yfounden in mine astrologie,
As I haue looked in the Moone bright,
That now on munday next, at quarter night
Shall fall a raine, and that so wild and wood
That halfe so great was neuer Noes flood:
This world (he said) in lesse than in an houre
Shall all be drent, so hidous is the shoure:
Thus shall mankind drench, and lese her life.
This carpēter answerd & said: alas my wife
And shall she drench? Alas mine Alisoun:
For sorrow of this he fell almost adoun,
And said: is there no remedy in this caas?
Yes yes full good (qd. Hende Nicholas)
If thou wolt werch after lore and rede,
Thou mait not werchē after thine owen hede:
For thus saith Salomon that was full trew,
Worke all by counsel, and thou shalt not rew.
And if thou wilt werken by good counsaile,
I vndertake, without mast or saile
Yet shall I saue her, and thee and me.
Hast thou not heard how saued was Noe,
When that our lord had warned him before,
That al the world with water should be lore?
Yes (qd. the carpenter) full yore ago.
Hast thou not heard (qd. Nicholas) also,
The sorrow of Noe with his fellowship,
Or that he might get his wife to ship?
Him had leuer I dare well vndertake
At thilke time, than all his wethers blake,
That she had a ship her selfe alone:
And therfore wost thou what is best to done?
This asketh hast, and of an hasty thing
Men may not preach ne make tarrying.
Anon goe get vs fast into this inn
A kneding trough or els a kemelyn,
For ech of vs: but looke that they been large,
In which men mow swimmen as in a barge:
And haue therein victuals sufficient
But for a day, fie on the remnant:
The water shall aslake and gone away
Abouten prime vpon the next day.
But Robin may not weten of this, thy knaue,
Ne eke thy maid Gille I may not saue:

Alle

Aske not why: for though thou aske me,
I woll not tellen Gods priuite.
Sufficeth thee, but if thy wits be mad,
To haue as great a grace as Noe had:
Thy wife shall I well saue out of dout,
Goe now thy way, and speed thee hereabout.
But when thou hast for her, & thee, and me,
Ygetten vs these kneading tubs three,
Then shalt thou hang hem in ỹ roofe full hie,
That no man of our purueyaunce espie:
And when thou hast don thus as I haue said,
And hast our vitaile faire in hem plaid,
And eke an axe to smite the cord atwo
When the water commeth, that we may go,
And breake an hole on high vpon the gable
Vnto the garden ward, ouer the stable,
That we may freely passen forth our way,
When that the great shoure is gone away,
Thẽ shal thou swim as mery I vndertake,
As doth the white ducke after her drake:
Then woll I clepe, how Alison, how John
Be merry: for the flood woll passe anon:
And thou wolt saine, haile maister Nicholay,
Good morrow, for I see well that it is day:
And then we shall be lords all our life
Of all the world, as was Noe and his wife.
But of one thing I warne thee full right,
Be well auised on that ilke night,
That we ben entred into the ships bord,
That none of vs ne speake not a word,
Ne clepe ne crie, but been in his prayere,
For so to done it is Gods owne hest dere.
Thy wife & thou mote hang for a twinne,
For that betwixt you shall be no sinne,
No more in looking than there shall in deed:
This ordinaunce is said, go God thee speed.
To morow at night, whẽ men ben all asleepe,
Into our kneading tubs woll we creepe,
And sitten there, abiding Gods grace:
Go now thy way, I haue no longer space
To make of this no longer sermoning:
Wen saine thus: send the wise, & say nothing:
Thou art so wise, it needeth thee not teach,
Goe saue our liues, and that I thee beseech.
This silly carpenter goth forth his way,
Full oft he said alas, and welaway,
And to his wife he told his priuite,
And she was ware, and knew it bet than he
What all this queint cast was for to sey:
But natheles, she ferde as she would dey,
And said: alas, go forth thy way anone,
Helpe vs to scape, or we be dead eachone:
I am thy true very wedded wife,
Go deare spouse, and helpe to saue our life.
Lo, what a great thing is affection,
Wen may die of imagination,
So deepe may impression be take.
This silly carpenter beginneth to quake:
Him thinketh verily that he may see
Noes flood come walting as the see
To drenchen Alison, his hony dere:
He weepeth, waileth, and maketh sory chere,
He siketh, with many a sory thought,
He goth, and getteth him a kneading trough,
And after a tub, and a kemelin,
And priuily he sent hem to his in:
And hing hem in the roofe full priuilie.
With his own hãd he made him ladders three
To climben by the ronges, and by the stalkes
Into the tubs hanging by the balkes,
And hem vitailed, both trough and tubbe,
With bread and cheese, & good ale in a iubbe:
Sufficing right ynow as for a day.
But er that he had made all this array,
He sent his knaue, and eke his wench also
Upon his need to London for to go.
And on the munday, when it drew to night,
He shut his doore, without candle light,
And dresse all thing as it should bee,
And shortly they clomben vp all three.
They sit still not fully a furlong way,
Now pater noster clum, said Nicholay,
And clum qd. Iohan, and clum said Alison:
This carpenter said his deuotion,
And still he sit, and biddeth his prayere
Awayting on the raine, if he it here.
The dead sleepe, for wery busines
Fell on this carpenter, right as I gesse
About curfewe time, or little more:
For trauaile of his ghost he groneth sore,
And eft he routeth, for his head misslay:
Adoune the ladder stalketh Nicholay,
And Alison full soft after she sped:
Withouten words mo they went to bed
There as the carpenter was wont to lie,
There was the reuell, and the melodie.
And thus lieth Alison and Nicholas
In busines of mirth and solas,
Till that the bell of laudes gan to ring,
And Freres in the chaunsell gone to sing.
This parish clerke, this amorous Absolon,
That is for loue alway so wo bygon,
Upon the monday was at Oseney
With company, him to disport and play:
And asked vpon a case a cloisterere
Full priuily, after John the carpentere:
And he drew him apart out of the chirch,
And said I not: I saw him not here wirch
Sith saturday, I trow that he be went
For timbre, there our Abbot hath him sent,
For he is wont for timbre for to go,
And dwellen at the graunge a day or two:
Or elis he is at his house certaine,
Where that he be, I cannot soothly saine.
This Absolon full iolly was and light,
And thought, now is my time to walk al night.

For sikerly, I saw him nat stering
About his dore, sith day began to spring.
So mote I thriue, I shall at cockes crow
Full priuily knocke at his window,
That stant full low vpon his boures wall:
To Alison woll I now tellen all
My loue longing: for yet I shall not misse,
That at the least way I shall her kisse.
Some manner comfort shall I haue parfay,
My mouth hath itched all this long day:
That is a signe of kissing at the least.
All night me mette eke, that I was at a feast.
Therefore I woll goe sleepe an houre or twey,
And all the night than woll I walke and pley.
When that the first cocke hath crow anon,
Up rist this iolly louer Absolon,
And him arayeth gay, and in queint deuice:
But first he cheweth greyns and licorice,
To smellen sote, or he had kempt his here,
Under his tongue a trueloue he bere,
For thereby he wend to been graciouse.
He rometh to the carpenters house,
And still he stant vnder the shotwindow,
Unto his breast it raught, it was so low:
And soft he knocked with a semely soun.
What doe ye honycombe, sweet Alisoun?
My faire bird, and my sweet sinnamon:
Awake lemman mine, and speketh to Absolon
Full little thinken ye vpon my wo,
That for your loue I swelt there as I go.
No wonder is though I swelt and sweat,
I mourne as doth the lambe after the teat.
Iwis lemman, I haue such loue longing,
That like a Turtle true is my mourning.
I may not eaten no more than may a maid.
Go fro the window iacke foole, she said:
As helpe me God and sweet saint Iame,
I loue another, or els I were to blame
Well bet than thee (by Iesu) Absolon:
Goe forth thy way, or I woll cast a stone,
And let me sleepe, a twenty diuell way.
Alas, qd. Absolon, and welaway,
That true loue was euer so yuell besette:
Then kisse me, since it may be no bette
For Iesus loue, and for the loue of me.
Wilt thou thē go thy way therwith qd. she?
Ye certes lemman qd. this Absolon.
Then make thee ready (qd. she) I come anon.
And vnto Nicholas she said, be still,
Now peace, and thou shalt laugh thy fill.
This Absolon doun set him on his knees,
And said: I am a lord at all degrees:
For after this I hope there commeth more.
Lemman thy grace, and sweet bird thy nore.
The window she vndoth, and that in hast,
Haue do (qd. she) come off and speed thee fast,
Least that our neighbours thee espie.
This Absolon gan wipe his mouth full drie.
Darke was the night, as any pitch or cole,
And at the window she put out her ers hole,
And Absolon sped neither bet ne wers,
But with his mouth he kist her bare ers
Full sauorly: and as he was ware of this,
Abacke he stert, and thought it was amis,
For well he wist a woman had no berde,
He felt a thing all rowe, and long herde,
And said: fie, alas what haue I do?
Te he (qd. she) and clapt the window to,
And Absolon goeth forth a sorrie paas.
A beard, a beard, said Hende Nicholas,
By gods corpus, this goeth faire and wele.
This silly Absolon heard it euery dele,
And on his lip he gan for anger bite,
And to himselue he said, I shall thee quite.
Who rubbeth now, who froteth now his lips
with dust, with sond, with straw, & with chips,
But Absolon? that saith full oft alas,
My soule betake I to Sathanas,
But me were leuer than all this toun (qd. he)
Of this despight awreken for to be.
Alas (qd. he) alas that I ne had bleint,
His hot loue is cold, and all yqueint.
For fro the time that he had kist her ers,
Of paramours he set not a kers,
For he was healed of his maladie,
Full oft paramours he gan defie.
And weepe as doth a child that is ybete.
A soft pace he went ouer the strete
Unto a smith, men callen dan Gerueys,
That in his forge smiteth plow harneys,
He sharpeth shares and culters busily.
This Absolon knocketh all easily,
And said vndo Gerueys, and that anon.
What who art thou? It am I Absolon.
What Absolon, what for Christs sweet tre,
Why rise ye so rath? eye benedicite
What eileth you? some gay girle God it wote
Hath brought you thus on the merytote:
By saint Neotes, ye wote well what I mene.
This Absolon ne raught not a bene
Of all his play, no word againe he gaffe,
He had more towe vpon his distaffe
Than Geruays knew, and said friend so dere,
The hot culter in the chimney here
As lene it me, I haue therewith to done:
I woll bring it thee againe full sone.
Geruays answerd: certes were it gold,
Or in a poke nobles all vntold,
Thou shouldest it haue, as I am true smith:
Eye Christs foot, what wol ye don therwith?
Thereof (qd. Absolon) be as be may
I shall well tellen thee by to morrow day.
And caught the culter by the cold stele,
Full soft out at the dore gan he stele,
And went vnto the carpenters wall:
He coughed first, and knocked therewithall

Upon the windowe, right as he did ere.
This Alison answerd: who is there
That knocketh so? I warrant hee is a theefe.
Why nay (qd. he) God wot my sweet leefe,
I am thine Absolon, thine owne derling:
Of gold (qd. he) I haue thee brought a ring,
My mother gaue it me, so God me saue,
Full fine it is, and thereto well ygraue:
This will I yeue thee, if thou me kisse.
This Nicholas was risen for to pisse,
And thought he would amenden all the iape,
He should kisse his ers ere that he scape:
And vp the window did he hastily
And out his ers he put full priuily,
With all his buttocke, to the haunch boon:
And therwith spake this clerke, this Absolon,
Speake sweet bird, I not where thou art.
This Nicholas anon let fleen a fart,
As great as it had been a thunder dint,
That with the stroke he was well nie yblent:
And he was readie with his yron hote,
And Nicholas in the arse he smote.
Off goeth the skin an hondbreede about,
The hot culter brend so his tout,
That for the smart he wend for to die,
As he were wood, he gan for to crie,
Helpe, water, water, for Gods hert.
This carpenter out of his slomber stert,
And heard one crie water, as he were wood,
And thought, alas how commeth Noes flood,
And set him vp withouten words mo,
And with an axe, he smote the cord atwo:
And doun goth all, he found neither to sell
Breed ne ale, but doune shortly he fell
Upon the floore, and there a swowne he lay.
Up stert then Alison and Hende Nicholay
And cried out, and harrow in the street.
The neighbors about both small and great
In ronne, for to gauren on this man,
That in a swounc lay, all palish and wan:
For with that fall broken hath he his arme,
But stonden he must vnto his owne harme.
For when he spake, he was yborne adoun
With Hend Nicholas and Alisoun,
They told euery man that he was wood
He was agast so sore of Noes flood
Through fantasie, that of his vanite,
He had getten him kneading tubs three,
And had hem honged in the roofe aboue,
And that he prayed hem for Gods loue
To sitten in the roofe par companie.
The folke gan laughen at his fantasie,
And into the roofe they kyken, and they gape,
And turned all his earnest into a iape
For what so this carpenter answerd,
It was for nought, no man his reason herd,
With othes great, he was ysworne adoun,
That he was holden wood in all that toun.
For euerich clerke anon held with other,
They said ỳ man was wood, my leue brother,
And euery wight gan laughen at this strife.
Thus swiued was the carpenters wife,
For all his keeping, and his iealousie:
And Absolon hath kist her nether eie,
And Nicholas is scalded in the tout,
This tale is done, and God saue all the rout.

¶ The Reues Prologue.

When folke had laughed at this nice caas
Of Absolon and Hend Nicholas,
Diuers folke hereof diuersly they said,
But for the more part they lough and plaid:
Ne at this tale I saw no man him greue,
But it were onely Oswolde the Reue:
Because he was of carpenters craft,
A little ire in his heart plaft.
He gan to grutchen and blame it a lite:
Soothly (qd. he) full well couth I thee quite
With blearing of a proud millers eie,
If that me list to speake of ribaudrie.
But I am old, me lust not play for age,
Grasse time is done, my fodder is forage:
This white top writeth mine old yeres,
which sõtime yelow was, now white ben mine heres:
But yet I fare as doth an open ers,
That ilke fruit is euer lenger the wers
Till it be rotten in mollok, or in stre.
We old men, I dreaden so fare we,
Till we be rotten can we not be ripe,
We hoppen alway, while the world wol pipe:
For in our will there stiketh euer a naile,
To haue an hore head and a greene taile,
As hath a leke, for though our might be gone,
Our will desireth folly euer in one:
For whẽ we may not don thã wol we spoken.
Yet in our ashen cold is fire yreken.
Foure gledes han we, which I shall deuise,
Auaunting, lying, anger, and couetise,
These foure sparkles longen vnto eilde:
Our old limes mow well been vnwelde,
But will ne shall not faile, that is sooth.
And yet haue I alway a colts tooth,
As many a yeare as it is passed henne,
Since that my tap of life began to renne.
For sikerly, when I was borne anone,
Death drew the tap of life, and let it gone:
And euer since hath the tap yronne,
Till that almost all emptie is the tonne.
The streme of life now droppeth on ỳ chimbe,
The silly tongue may well ring and chimbe
Of wretchednesse, that passed is full yore:
With old folke saue dotage is no more.

When ꝑ our host had heard this sermoning,
He gan to speake as lordly as a king,
And said: what amounteth all this wit?
What shall we speake all day of holy writ?
The diuell I thinke made a Reue to preche
Or a souter, a shipman, or a leche.
Say forth thy tale, and tary not the time:
Lo Depford, and it is halfe way prime:
Lo Greenwiche, that many a shrew is in,
It were time thy tale for to begin.
Now sirs then qd. this Oswold the Reue,
I pray you all, that ye not you greue,
That I answere, and somedele set his houle,
For lefull it is with force, force off to shoute.
This dronken Miller hath ptold vs here,
How that beguiled was a carpentere
Peraventure in scorne, for I am one:
And by your leaue, I shall him quite anon.
Right in his churles termes woll I speke,
I pray to God his necke mote be to breke,
He can well in mine eye seene a stalke,
But in his owne he cannot seene a balke.

DEnyse Simkin, the Miller of Trompington, deceiueth two Clarkes of Schollers Hall in Cambridge, in stealing their corne: but they so vse the matter, that they reuenge the wrong to the full. The Argument of this Tale is taken out of Boccha ce in his Nouels.

¶ The Reues Tale.

AT Trompington, not far fro Cambridge
There goth a brooke, and ouer that a bridge,
Upon the which brooke there stant a melle:
And this is very sooth, as I you tell.
A Miller was there dwelling many a day,
As any peacocke he was proud and gay:
Pipen he couth, and fishen, and nets bete,
And turne cups, and wel wrastle and shete.
Ape by his belt he bare a long pauade,
And of a sword ful trenchaunt was the blade.
A iolly popere bare he in his pouch,
Ther nas no man for perill durst him touch.
A Sheffeld thwitel bare he in his hose,
Round was his face, & camused was his nose.
As pilled as an ape was his skull,
He was a market beater at the full.
There durste no wight hond on him ledge,
But he ne swore he should fore abedge.
A theefe he was forsooth, of corne and mele,
And that a slie, and vsaunt for to stele.
His name was hoten Deynous Simkin,
A wife he had, comen of noble kin:
The parson of the toune her father was,
With her he yafe full many a penne of bras.
For that Simkyn should in his blood allie,
She was yfostered in a nonnerie:
For Simkyn would no wife, as he said.
But she were well ynourished, and a maid.
To saue his estate of yomanrie.
And she was proud, and pert as a pie,
A full faire sight was it to see hem two.
On holy daies before her would he go
With his tipet wounden about his heed,
And she came after in a gite of reed,
And Simkin had hosen of the same.
There durst no wight clepen her but dame:
Was none so hardy, that went by the way,
That with her once durst rage or play,
But if he would be slaine of Simkin
With pauade, or with knife, or bodkin.
For ielous folkes been perilous euermo
Algates they would her wiues wenden so.
And eke for she was somedele smoterliche:
She was as digne as water in a diche,
And as full of hoker, and of bismare,
As though that a ladie should her spare,
What for her kinred, and her norterly,
That she had learned in the nonnery.
A doughter had they betwixt hem two
Of twenty yeare, withouten any mo
Sauing a child was halfe a yeare of age,
In cradle it lay, and was a proper page.
This wench thicke and well ygrowne was,
With camused nose, and eyen gray as glas:
With buttockes broad, & brests round & hie,
But right faire was her haire, I woll nat lie.
The person of the toune, for she was faire,
In purpose was to maken her his haire
Both of his cattell, and of his mesuage,
And straunge he made it of her marriage:
His purpose was to bestowen her hie
Into some worthy blood of auncetrie.
For holy churches good mote been dispended
On holy churches blood that is descended.
Therefore he would his holy blood honour,
Though that he holy church should deuour.
Great soken hath this Miller out of dout
With wheat and malt, of all the land about,
And namely there was a great college
Mē clepē it the Scholliers hall of Cambrege,
Ther was her wheat & eke her malt iground.
And on a day it happed in a stound,
Sicke lay the Manciple on a maladie,
Men wenden wisely that he should die.
For which this miller stale both wheat & corn
An hundred time more than he did beforn.
For there before, he stale but courteously,

But

But he now was a theefe outragiously:
For which the warden chid and made fare,
But thereof set the Miller not a tare,
He craked, bosted, and swore it nas not so.
Then were there yong poor scholliers two,
That dwelten in the hall, of which I say,
Testife they were, and lustie for to play:
And only for her mirth and reuely,
Upon the Warden busily they cry
To yeue hem leaue but a little stound,
To gone to mill, to see her corne yground:
And hardely they durst lay her necke,
The Miller should not steale hem halfe a peck
Of corne by sleight, ne by force hem reue.
And at the last the warden yaue hem leue:
Iohan hight that one, & Alein hight ỹ other,
Of a towne they were both, ỹ hight Strother
Farre in the North, can I not tell where.
This Alein maketh all ready his gere,
And on a horse the sacke he cast anon:
Forth goth Alein the clerke, and also Iohn,
With good sword and buckeler by her side.
Iohan knew the way, him needeth no guide,
And at the mill dore the sacke down he layth.
Alein spake first: all haile Simkē in fayth,
How fares thy faire doughter, and thy wife?
Alein welcome (qd. Simken) by my life,
And Iohn also: how now, what doe ye here?
☞ By god Simond (qd. Iohn) need has no pere,
☞ Him behoues serue himselfe ỹ has no swaine,
Or els he is a foole, as clerkes saine.
Our Wanciple I hope he will be dead,
Swa werkes aye the wange in his head:
And therefore is I come, and eke Alein,
To grind our corne and carry it home agein:
We pray you speed vs home in that ye may.
It shalbe done (qd. Simken) by my fay:
What will you done while it is in hand?
By God, right by the hopper will I stand
Qd. Iohn: and seen howgates ỹ corn goth in,
Yet saw I neuer by my father kin,
How that the hopper waggs to and fra.
Alein answered: Iohan wilt thou sa?
Then will I stand beneath by my croune,
And see how the meale falleth adoune
Into the troghe, that shalbe my disport:
Qd. Iohn, in fay I may been of your sort,
I is as ill a Miller as is ye.
This Miller smileth at her nicite,
And thought all his done but for a wile,
They wene that no man may hem beguile,
☞ But by my thrift yet shall I bleare her eie,
For all the sleight in her philosophie,
The more queint clerks ỹ they thēselues make,
The more will I steale when I gin to take:
☞ In stede of flour yet, will I giue hem bren,
☞ The greatest clerks ben not the wisest menne
As whylome to the wolfe spake the Mare:
Of all her art count I not a tarē.
Out at the dore he goeth full priuily,
When that he saw his time, subtilly
He looked vp and doune, till he had yfound
The clerkes horse, there as he stood ybound
Behind the Mill, vnder a lessell:
And to the horse he goth him faire and well,
He strippeth off the bridle right anon.
And when ỹ horse was loose, he gan to gon
Toward the fen, there as wild mares rinne,
And forth, with wehe, thrugh thick & thinne,
The Miller goeth againe, no word he said,
But doth his note, & with these clerkes plaid,
Till that her corne was faire & well yground.
And when the meale was sacked and ybound,
This Ihon goth out, & found her hors away,
And gan to crie harrow and welaway,
Our horse is lost Alein for Gods bones,
Step on thy feet man, come forth all atones:
Alas our Warden has his palfrey lorne.
This Alein all forgot both meale & corne:
All was out of mind his husbandrie:
What, whilke way is he gone? he gan to crie.
The wife came leaping inward at a renne,
She cried alas, he goeth to the fenne
With wild Mares as fast as he may go:
Unthanke come on his hond ỹ bound him so,
And he that better should haue knit the rein.
Alas (qd. Ihon) Alein for Christs peine
Lay doun thy sword, and I shall mine alswa:
I is full swift God wote as is a raa.
By Gods sale he shall not scape vs bathe:
Why ne hadst thou put the capell in ỹ lathe?
Ill heile Alein, by God thou is a fonne.
These selie clerkes han full fast ironne
Toward the fenne, Alein and eke Iohn:
And when the miller saw that they wer gon,
He halfe a bushell of her flower hath take,
And bad his wife knede it in a cake.
He sayd, I trow the clerks were aferde.
Yet can a Miller make a clerks berde,
For all her art, yet let hem gone her way,
Lo where they gone, let the children play:
They get him not so lightly by my croune.
These selie clerks rennen vp and doune
With kepe, kepe, iossa, iossa, warth there,
Go whistle thou, and I shall keepe hem here.
But shortly, till it was very night
They couth not, thogh they did al her might,
Her capell catch, he ran away so fast:
Till in a ditch they caught him at the last.
Werie and wet as beasts in the rain
Cometh silie Iohn, & with him cometh Alein:
Alas (qd. Iohn) the day that I was borne,
Now are we driuen to hethen and to skorne:
Our corne is stole, men will vs fooles call,
Both the Warden, and our fellowes all,
And namely the Miller, wailaway.

Thus plaineth Jhon, as he goth by the way
Toward the Mill, and bayard in his hond.
The Miller sitting by the fire he fond,
For it was nyght, & ferther might they nought.
But for the loue of God they him besought
Of herbrough and ease, as for her peny.
The Miller said ayen, if there been any,
Such as it is, yet shall ye haue your part:
My house is strait, but ye haue learned art,
Ye can by argument make a place
A mile broad, of twenty foot of space:
Let see now if this place may suffice,
Or make it roomer with speech, as is your gise.
Now Simond said Jhon) by S. Cutberd
Aye is thou mery, and that is faire answerd.
I haue herd say, men should take of two thinges
Swilke as he finds, or swilke as he brings.
But specially I pray thee host dere,
Get vs some meat & drink, and make vs chere
And we will pay truly at the full:
With empty hond, men may no haukes tull.
Lo here our siluer ready for to spend.
The Miller to the toyn his doughter send
For ale and bread, and rosted hem a goos,
And bound her hors he should no more go loos:
And in his owne chamber he made a bed
With sheets and with chalons faire ypyred,
Not from his owne bed ten foot or twelue:
His doughter had a bed all by her selue,
Right in the same chamber fast them by:
It might be no bette, and the cause why,
There was no roumer herbrough in ỹ place.
They soupen, and speaken of mirth and solace,
And dronken euer strong ale at the best.
About midnight went they to rest.
Well hath this Miller vernished his hed,
Full pale he was for dróken, and nothing red.
He gaspeth, and he speaketh through his nose,
As he were in the quacke, or in the pose.
To bed he goeth, and with him his wife,
As any Jay was she light and iolife,
So was her iolly whistle well ywet.
The cradle at the beds feet was set
To rocken, and to yeue the child to suke.
And when that dronken was all in the cruke
To bed went the doughter right anon,
To bed goeth Alein and also Jhon.
There nas no more, hem needed no dwale,
This Miller hath so wisely bibbed ale,
That as an hors he snorteth in his sleepe,
Ne of his taile behynd he tooke no keepe.
His wife bare to him a bordon well strong,
Men might hem heare routen a furlong.
The wench routeth eke par company.
Alein the clerke that heard this melody,
He poked on Johan, and said: sleepest thou?
Heardst thou euer swilke a sang ere now?
Lo swilke a coupling is it wixt hem all,
A wild fire vpon her bodies fall,
Who heard euer swilke a ferly thing,
Ye, they shall haue the floure of euill ending:
All this lang night there rides me no rest:
But yet natore, all shall be for the best.
For Jhon (said he) as euer mote I thriue,
If that I may, yon wench woll I swiue.
Some esement hath law yshapen vs.
For Johan, there is a law that saieth thus,
That if a man in one point been agreeued,
That in another he shall be releeued.
Our corne is stolne, soothly it is no nay,
And we haue had an euill fit to day.
And since I shall haue none amendement
Againe my losse I will haue mine esement:
By Gods sale, it shall none other bee.
This Johan answered: Alein, assoile thee:
The Miller is a perilous man, he said,
And if that he out of his sleepe abraied,
He might doen vs bath a villanie.
Alein answered: I count him not worth a flie.
And vp he rest, and by the wench he crept.
This wench lay vpright, and fast she slept,
Till he so nigh was, ere she might espie,
That it had been too late for to crie:
And shortly for to say, they were at one.
Now play Alein, for I will speake of Jhon.
This Jhon lay still a furlong way or two,
And to himselfe he maketh routh and wo:
Alas (qd. he) this is a wicked iape,
Now may I say, I is but an Ape:
Yet hath my fellow somewhat for his harme,
He hath the Millers doughter in his arme:
He auntreth him, and hath his need ysped,
And I lie as a drafte sacke in my bed,
And when this iape is told another dey,
I shall be hold a daffe or a cokeney:
I will arise, and auntre me by my fay:
Unhardie is vnsely, thus men say.
And vp he rose, and softly he went
Unto the cradle, and in his arme it hent,
And bare it softly to his beds fete.
Soone after the wife her routing lete,
And gan awake, and went her out to pisse,
And came againe, and gan the cradle misse,
And groped here & there, but she found none:
Alas (qd. she) I had almost misgone,
I had almost gone to the clerkes bed:
Eye benedicite, then had I fouleysped.
And forth she goeth, till she the cradle fond,
She groped alway further with her hond,
And found the bed, and thought nat but good,
Because that the cradle by it stood:
And nist where she was, for it was derke,
But faire and well she crept in by the clerke,
And lieth full still, & wold haue caught a sleepe.
Within a while this Jhon the clerke vp lepe,
And on this good wife he laid full sore,

So

So merry a fit had she nought full yore:
And priked hard and deepe, as he were mad.
This iolly life haue these two clerkes lad,
Till that the third cocke began to sing.
Alein waxe wearie in the dauning,
For he had swonken all the long night,
And saied, farewell Malin my sweet wight.
The day is comen, I may no longer bide,
But euermo, where so I goe or ride,
I am thine owne clerke, so haue I hele.
Now deare lemman (qd. she) go, farwele:
But or thou go, one thing I woll thee tell,
When thou wendest homeward by the Mell.
Right at the entre of the dore behind
Thou shalt a cake of halfe a bushell find,
That was ymaked of thine owne meale,
Which that I did helpe my sire to steale.
And good lemman God thee saue and keepe,
And with that word she gan almost to weepe.
Alein vprist and thought ere it daw
He would goe creepe in by his felaw:
And found the cradle with his hand anon,
By God thought he all wrong haue I gon:
My head is tottie of my swinke to night,
That maketh me that I go not aright.
I wot well by the cradle I haue misse go,
Here lieth the Miller and his wife also.
And forth he goeth on twenty deuill way
Unto the bed, there as the Miller lay.
He wend haue cropen by his fellow Iohn,
And by the Miller he crept in anon,
And caught him by the necke, and soft he spake,
And saied: Iohn, thou swineshead awake,
For Cristis soule, and heare a noble game:
For by that lord that called is saint Iame,
I haue thrise as in this short night
Swined the Millers doughter bolt vpright,
Whilest thou hast as a coward been agast.
Ye false harlot (qd. the Miller) hast?
A false traitour, A thou clerke (qd. he)
Thou shalt be dead by Gods dignite.
Who durst be so bold to disparage
My doughter, that is come of such linage?
And by the throat boll he caught Alein,
And he him hent dispitously again,
And on the nose he smote him with his fest,
Doune ran the blood streame vpon his brest:
And in the flore, with mouth and nose ybroke
They wallowen, as doth pigs in a poke.
And vp they gone, and doune ayen anone,
Till that the Miller spurned on a stone,
And doune he fell backward vpon his wife,
That wist nothing of this nice strife.
For she was fall asleepe a little wight
With Iohn the clerke, that waked had all night:
And with the fall out of her sleepe she braied,
Helpe holy crosse of Bromholme she saied:
In manus tuas, lord to thee I call,
Awake Simond, the fiend is on me fall.
My heart is broken, helpe I am but dead,
There lieth one on my wombe and on my head.
Helpe Simkin, for these false clerks do fight.
This Iohn start vp as fast as euer he might,
And graspeth by the walls to and fro
To find a staffe, and she start vp also,
And knew the estres bet than did this Iohn,
And by the wall she found a staffe anon:
And saw a little shemering of a light,
For at an hole in shone the Moone bright,
And by that light she saw hem both two,
But sikerly she nist who was who,
But as she sey a white thing in her eie:
And when she gan this white thing espie
She wend the clerke had weard a voluper,
And with the staffe she drow ner and ner,
And wend haue hit this Alein at full,
And smote the Miller on the pilled skull,
That doun he goth, and cried harrow I die:
These clerkes beat him well, and let him lie,
And raieth hem, and tooke her horse anon,
And eke her meale, and on her way they gon:
And at the Mill doore they tooke her cake
Of halfe a bushell floure, well ybake.
Thus is the proud Miller well ybete,
And hath plost the grinding of the whete,
And paied for the supper euery dele
Of Alein and of Iohn, that beat him wele:
His wife is swined, and his doughter als,
Lo such it is a Miller to be fals.
And therefore this prouerbe is full sooth,
Him dare not well weene that euill dooth:
A guilour shall himselfe beguiled be.
And God that sit in hie maieste
Saue all this company, great and smale,
Thus haue I quit the Miller in his tale.

¶ The Cookes Prologue.

THe Cooke of London, while the Reue spake,
For ioy he thought, hee claude him on the backe:
Aha (quoth hee) for Christes passion,
This Miller hath a sharpe conclusion,
Upon this argument of herbigage.
Well sayd Salomon in his language,
Ne bring not euery man into thine house,
For herbouring by night is perillous.
Well ought a man auised for to be,
Whome that he brought into his priuite.
I pray to God so yeue me sorrow and care,
If euer sithen I high Hodge of Ware,
Heard I a Miller bette itself awerke,
He had a iape of malice in the derke.
But God forbid that we stinten here,

And therefore if ye vouchsafe to heare
A tale of me that am a poore man,
I will tell you as well as I can
A little pape that fell in our citee.
Our host saied, I graunt it thee:
Now tell on Rodger, looke that it be good,
For many a pastie hast thou letten blood,
And many a Jacke of Douer hast thou sold,
That hath been twise hot and twise cold.
Of many a pilgrime hast thou Christs curse,
For of thy persle yet fare they the worse,
That they haue eaten with thy stoble Goos:
For in thy shop is many a Flie loos.
Now tell on gentle Rodger by thy name,
But yet I pray thee be not wroth for game,
A man may say full sooth in game and play.
Thou saiest full sooth (qd Roger) by my fay
But sothe play, quade play, as ỳ Flemming saith:
And therefore Henry Bailly by thy faith,
Be thou not wroth, or we departen here,
Though that my tale been of an hostelere.
But nethelesse, I will not tellen it yet,
But ere we part, ywis thou shalt be quit.
And therwithall he lough and made cheare,
And saied his tale, as ye shullen after heare.

THe description of an vnthriftie Prentice, giuen to dice, women, and wine, wasting thereby his maisters goods, and purchasing Newgate to himselfe. The most of this Tale is lost, or else neuer finished by the Authour.

¶ The Cookes Tale.

A Prentise whylome dwelt in our citee,
And of the craft of Victuallers was he:
Galiard he was, as Goldfinch in the shawe,
Broune as a berrie, a proper short felawe:
With lockes blacke, and kemt full fetously,
Daunce he couth full well and iollily:
He was called Perkin Reuelour,
He was as full of loue and paramour,
As is the hiue full of hony sweet,
Well was the wench with him ỳ might meet.
At euery Bridall would he sing and hop,
He loued bette the tauernes than the shop.
For when any riding was in Cheape,
Out of the shop thither would he leape,
Till that he had of all the sight sein.
And soothly, he would not come agein,
But gather him a meinie of his sort,
To hop and sing, and make such disport:
And there they set Steuin for to meet
To plaien at the dice in such a street.
For in the city nas there no prentise
That fairer couth casten a paire of dise
Then Perkin couth, and thereto he was free
Of his dispence, in place of priuitee.
That found his maister well in his chafare,
For oft times he found his boxe full bare.
For likerly, a prentise reuelour,
That haunteth dise, riot or paramour,
His maister shall it in his shop abie,
All haue he no part of the Minstralcie.
For theft and riot they been conuertible.
All can he play on Gitron or on Rebible,
Reuell and truth, as in low degree
They ben full wroth all day, as men may see.
This iolly prentise with his maister abode,
Till he were nigh out of his prentishode.
All were he snibbed both early and late,
And sometime led with reuell to Newgate.
But at the last, his maister him bethought
Upon a day, when he his paper sought,
Of a prouerbe, that saith this same word,
Well bette is rotten apple out of hord,
Than that it should rot all the remnaunt:
So fareth it by a rioious seruaunt.
It is much lesse harme to let him passe,
Than he shend all the seruaunts in the place.
Therefore his master gaue him a quittaunce,
And bad him go, with sorow and mischaunce.
And thus this iolly prentise had his leue:
Now let him riot all the night or leue.
And for there is no theefe without a louke,
That helpeth him to wast or to souke
Of that he byde can, or borrow may,
Anon he sent his bed and his array
Unto a compere of his owne sort,
That loued dice, reuell, and disport:
And had a wife, that held for countenance
A shop, and swinged for her sustenance.

¶ The man of Lawes Prologue.

OUr host saw well, how that the bright Sunne
The arke of his artificiall day had runne
The fourth part, and eke halfe an houre more:
And though he were not deepe expert in lore,
He wist well it was the eighteene day
Of Aprill, that is the messenger to May:
And saw well that the shaddow of euery tree
Was in length of the same quantitee
As was the body erect, that caused it:
And therefore by the shadow he tooke his wit,
That Phebus, which ỳ shone clere & bright

Degrees

Degrees was foztie fiue clomben of hight.
And foz that day, as in latitude
It was ten of the clocke, he gan conclude,
And suddenly he plight his hozse about.
Lozdings (qd. he) I warne you al the rout,
The fourth part of this day is now agon.
Now foz the loue of God and of saint John
Leseth no time, as ferfoozth as ye may:
Lozdings ỹ time wasteth both night and day,
And stealeth from vs, what priuely sleeping,
And what through negligence in our waking
As doth the streme, that turneth neuer again,
Descending fro the mountain into the plain.
Well can Seneke and many a Philosophze,
Bewailen time, moze than gold in cofre.
Foz losse of cattell may recouered be,
But losse of time shendeth vs (qd. he)
It would not come ayen withouten dzead,
No moze than woll Walkins maidenhead,
When she hath lost it in her wantonnesse.
Let vs not mowlen thus in idlenesse.
Sir man of Law (qd. he) so haue I blis,
Tell vs a tale anon, as fozward is:
Ye been submitted, through your free assent
To stonden in this case at my iudgement.
Acquiteth you now of your behest,
Then haue you done your deuer at the lest.
Host (qd. he) de pardeux ieo assent,
To breake fozward is not mine intent.
Biheste is debt, and I woll hold faine
All my behest, I can no better saine.
Foz such law as a mã yeueth another wight,
He should himselfe vsen it by right,
Thus woll our text: but natheless certaine
I can right now ao thrifty tale saine,
Foz that Chaucer (though he can but leaudly
On Metres and in rimung craftily)
Hath saied hem, in such English as he can
Of old time, as knoweth many a man:
And if he haue not saied hem leue brother
In one booke, he hath said hem in another.
Foz he hath told of louers vp and doun,
Mo than Ouid made of mentioun
In his Epistles, that been full old.
What should I tell hem, sithen they ben told?
In youth he made of ire all alone,
And sithen he hath spoken of cucrichone
These noble wines, and these louers eke,
Who so that woll his large volume seke
Cleaped the saints liues of Cupide:
There may he see the large wounds wide
Of Lucresse, and of Babylon Thisbe
The swerd of Dido foz the false Enee,
The tree of Phillis foz her Demophoon,
The plaint of Deianire, and of Hermion,
Of Ariadna, and of Hypsiphile,
The barraine Ile stonding in the see
Which that dzeint Liandze foz Hero.
The teares of Helein, and eke the wo,
Of Brixeis, and of Laodomia,
The cruelte of queene Medea.
The little childzen honging by the hals,
Foz the Jason that was of loue so fals.
Of Hipermistra, Penelope, and Alcest,
Your wifehood he commendeth with the best.
But certainely no wozd ne wzitteth he
Of thilke wicke ensample of Canace,
That loued her owne brother sinfully:
Of such cursed stozies I say fie.
Oz els of Tyro Appolonius,
How that cursed king Antiochus
Biraft his doughter of her maidenhead,
That is so hozrible a tale foz to read,
When he her dzew vpon the pauement.
And therefoze he of full auisement
Nold neuer wzite in none of his sermons
Of such vnkind abhominations.
Ne I woll none rehearse, yet that I may.
But of my tale how shall I done this day?
Me were loth be likened doubtles
To Muses, that men cleapeth Piriades,
Methamozphoseos wote what I mene.
But natheless I recch not a bene,
Though I come after him with hawbake,
I speake in proze, and let him rimes make.
And with that wozd, he with a sober chere
Began his tale, as ye shullen after here.

¶ The man of Lawes Tale.

Ladie Custance the Emperours daughter of Rome, after her marriage with the Soudan of Surrey, through the mallice of the Sowdans mother, suffereth great trouble and miserie with her young child Mauris: but yet in the end is restored to comfort.

Hatefull harme, condition of pouert
with thirst, with cold, with hunger confounded,
To asken helpe thee shameth in thine hert,
If thou non ask, with need thou art so wounded,
that very nede vnwrappeth al thy wounds hid
Maugre thine head thou must foz indigence
Oz stele, oz beg, oz borow thy dispence.

Thou blamest Christ, and saiest ful bitterly,
He misdeparteth richesse temporall,
Thy neighbour thou witest sinfully,
And saiest, thou hast too little, and he hath all:

Parkay

Parfay (saiest thou) sometime he reken shall
When that his taile shall to brenne in glede,
For he nought helpeth needfull in her nede.

Hearken what is the sentence of the wise,
Better is to dien than haue indigence,
Thine owne neighbour woll thee to despise,
If thou be poore, farwell thy reuerence.
Yet of the wise man take this sentence,
All the daies of poore men been wicke,
Beware therefore or thou come to the pricke.

If thou be poore, thy brother hateth thee,
And all thy friends fleech fro thee, alas:
O rich merchaunts full of wele be yee,
O noble prudent folke, as in this caas,
Your bags been not fild with ambes aas,
But with eise sink, ẏ rẽneth for your chaunce,
At Christenmasse merry may ye daunce.

Ye seeken lond and see for your winnings,
As wise folke ye knowne all the state
Of reignes, ye been fathers of tidings,
And tales many, both of peace and debate:
I was right now of tales desolate,
Nere that a marchant, gone many a yeare,
He taught a tale, which ye shullen heare.

IN Surrey whylome dwelt a company
Of chapmen rich, and thereto sad and true,
That wide where senten her spicery,
Clothes of gold, and Satten rich of hew:
Her chafare was so thriftie and so new,
That euery wight hath deintie to chafare
With hem, and eke to sellen hem her ware.

Now fell it, that the maisters of that sort
Han shapen hem to Rome for to wend,
Were it for chapmanhood or for disport,
None other messenger would they send,
But comen hemselfe to Rome, this is the end:
And in such place as thought hem auauntage
For her intent, they taken her herbigage.

Soiourned han these merchants in ẏ toun
Certaine time, as fell to her pleasance:
But so befell, that the excellent renoun
Of the emperours doughter dame Custance
Reported was, with euery circumstance
Unto these Surrein marchants, in such wise
Fro day to day, as I shall you deuise,

This was the comen voice of euery man:
Our Emperour of Rome, God him se,
A doughter hath, that sithen the world began,
To recken as well her goodnesse as beaute,
Nas neuer such another as is she:
I pray to God in honour her susteine,
And would she were of all Europe the quene.

In her is high beautie without pride,
Youth, without grenhed or follie,
To all her workes vertue is her guide,
Humbles hath slaine in her all tyrannie:
She is a mirrour of all courtesie,
Her heart is very chamber of holinesse,
Her hond minister of freedome and almes.

And al this voice was soth, as God is true,
But now to our purpose let vs turne ayen:
These marchants han don fret her ships new:
And when they han this blisfull maiden sein,
Home to Surrey been they went agein,
And doen her needs, as they han doen yore,
And liuen in wealth, I can say no more.

Now fell it, ẏ these marchants stood in grace
Of him that was the Soudan of Surrie:
For when ẏ they came from any strange place
He would of his benigne courtesie
Maken hem good cheare, and busily espie
Tidings of sundry realmes, for to lere
The wonders that they might seen or here.

Emong other things specially
These marchants haue him told of dame Custance,
So great noblesse, in earnest seriously,
That this Soudã hath cauzt so great plesãce
To han her figure in his remembrance,
And all his lust, and all his busie cure
Was for to loue her, while his life may dure.

Parauenture in that ilke large booke
Which cleaped is the heauen, ywritten was
With starres, when that he his birth tooke,
That he for loue should han his death, alas:
For in the starres clearer then is the glas
Is written God wot, who so could it read,
The death of euery man withouten dread.

In starres many a Winter there before
Was written the death of Hector & Achilles,
Of Pompey, and Julius, or they were bore:
The strife of Thebes, and of Hercules,
Of Sampson, Turnus, and of Socrates
The death: but that mens wits been so dull,
That no wight can well read it at the full.

This Soudan for his priuie counsell sent,
And shortly of this matter for to pace,
He hath to hem declard all his intent,
& said hem certain, but if he might haue grace
To haue Custance, within a little space
He nas but dead, and charged hem to hie
To shapen for his life some remedie.

Diuers

Diuers men, diuerſly they ſaiden:
The argument they caſten vp and doune,
Many a ſubtill reaſon forth they laiden,
They ſpeaken of Magicke, and abuſioun:
But finally, as in concluſioun
They cannot ſeene in that none auauntage
Ne in none other way, ſaue in mariage.

Then ſaw they therein ſuch difficulty
By way of reaſon, to ſpeake all plain,
Becauſe that there was ſuch diuerſity
Betweene both her lawes, that they ſain.
They trow that no chriſten prince would fain
Wedden his child vnder our lawes ſwete,
That vs was tauzt, by Mahoũd our prophet

And he anſwerd: rather than I leſe
Cuſtance, I would be chriſten doubtleſs:
I mote been hers, I may none other cheſe,
I pray you hold your argument in pees,
Saueth my life, and be ye not retcheles
To getten her that hath my life in cure,
For in this woe I may not long endure.

What needeth greater dclatation?
I ſay, by treatie and embaſſadrie,
And by the Popes mediation
And all the church, and all the chiualrie,
That in deſtruction of Maumetrie
And in encreaſe of Chriſts law deare,
They been accorded, as ye ſhall heare.

How that the Soudan and his baronage,
And all his lieges ſhould ychriſtened be,
And he ſhall han Cuſtance in marriage
And certaine gold, I not what quantite,
And her to find ſufficient furnite:
The ſame accord was ſworne on either ſide,
Now fair Cuſtance, almighty God thee gide.

Now woulden ſome men waiten as I geſſe
That I ſhould tellen all the purueiance
That the Emperour of his nobleſſe
Hath ſhapen for his daughter dame Cuſtance:
Well may men know that ſo great ordinance
May no man tellen in a little clauſe,
As was araied for ſo high a cauſe.

Biſhops been ſhapen with her for to wend,
Lords and ladies, and knights of renoun,
And other folke ynow this is the end;
And notified is throughout the toun,
That euery wight with great deuotioun
Should pray Chriſt, that he this mariage
Receiue in gree, and ſpeed this voyage.

The day is come of her departing,
I ſay the wofull day naturall is come,
That there may be no longer tarrying,
But forward they hem dreſſe all and ſome:
Cuſtance, that with ſorrow is all ouercome
Full pale ariſt, and dreſſed her to wend,
For well ſhe ſey there is none other end.

Alas, what wonder is it though ſhe wept?
That ſhall be ſent to a ſtraunge nation
Fro friends, that ſo tenderly her kept,
And be bounden vnder ſubiection
Of one, ſhe knoweth not his condition.
Huſbands been all good, and han been yore,
That knowne wiues, I dare ſay no more.

Father (ſhe ſaid) thy wretched child Cuſtance,
Thy young daughter, foſtered vp ſo ſoft,
And ye my mother, my ſouereigne pleaſaunce
Ouer all thing (out take Chriſt on loft)
Cuſtance your child her commendeth oft
Vnto your grace: for I ſhall to Surrie,
Ne ſhall I neuer more ſee you with eie.

Alas, vnto the Barbaric nation
I muſt anon, ſithen it is your will:
But Chriſt that ſtarfe for our redemption,
So yeue me grace, his hells to fulfill:
I wretched woman no force though I ſpill,
Women arn borne to thraldome & penaunce,
And to been vnder mans gouernaunce.

I trow at Troy whẽ Thurus brake ỹ wall
Of Ilion, ne when brent was Thebes cite,
Ne Rome for the harme of Hanniball,
That Romans hath wenquiſhed times thre,
Nas heard ſuch tender weeping for pite,
As was in the chamber for her parting,
But forth ſhe mote, whether ſhe weepe or ſing.

O firſt moouing cruell firmament
With thy diurnall ſweigh, that troubleſt aye,
And hurleſte all fro Eaſt to Occident,
That naturally would hold another way:
Thy ceounding ſet the heauen in ſuch array
At the beginning of this fierce voyage,
That cruell Mars hath ſlaine this mariage.

O infortunat aſſendent toztuous,
Of which the lord is helpeleſſe fall, alas,
Out of his angle into his derkeſt houſe
O Mars, O occiſier, as in this caas:
O feeble Moone, vnhappy been thy paas,
Thou knitteſt there thou nart not receiued,
Ther thou wer wel, fro thence art thou waiued.

Impzudent Emperour of Rome, alas,
Was there no philoſopher in thy toun?
Is no time bette than other in ſuch cas?
Of voiage, is there none election?
Namely to folke of high condition

Nat

Nat when a tolei is of a birth yknow ∘
Alas we been too leud, or to slow.

To ship is brought this wofull faire maid
Solemnely, with every circumstance:
Now Jesus Christ be with you all (she said)
There nis no more, but farwell faire Custance,
She paineth her to make good countenance,
And forth I let her saile in this manere,
And turne I woll againe to my matere.

Explicit prima pars: & sequitur pars secunda.

THe mother of the Soudan, well of vices,
Espied hath her sonnes plaine intent,
How he woll lete his old sacrifices:
And right anon she for her counsaile sent,
And they ben comen, to know what she ment,
And when assembled was this folke in feare,
She set her doune, and said as ye shall heare.

Lords (qd. she) ye knowne everychone,
How that my sonne is in point to lete
The holy lawes of our Alkaron
Yeuen by Gods messenger Mahomete:
But ones anow to great God I hete,
The life shall rather out of my body start,
Or Mahomets law goe out of my hart.

What should vs tiden of this new law
But thraldome to our bodies and penaunce
And afterward in hell to been drawe,
For we reneyed Mahound our creaunce,
But lords, woll ye now make assuraunce,
As I shall say, assenting to my loze,
And I shall make vs safe for euermoze ∘

They swozen, and assenten every man
To live with her and die, and by her stond:
And everich in the best wise that he can
To strengthen her, shall all his friends fond.
And she hath this emprise taken in hond,
Which ye shall heare that I shall deuise,
And to hem all she spake in this wise.

We shal vs first faine, christendome to take,
Cold water shall not greeue vs but a lite:
And I shall such a reuell and a feast make,
That as I trow I shall the Soudan quite:
For tho his wife be christened neuer so white,
She shall haue need to wash away the rede,
Though she a font ful of water with her lede.

O Soudonnesse, roote of iniquite,
Virago, thou Semyramis the secound,
O serpent under femenincte,
Like to the serpent deepe in hell ibound:
O faigned woman, all that may confound
Vertue and innocence, through thy malice
Is bred in thee a neast of every vice.

O Sathan envious, since thilke day
That thou wert chased from our heritage,
Well knewest thou to women the old way:
Thou madest Eue to bring vs in seruage,
Thou wolt fordoen this Christen marriage:
Thine instrument, so welaway the while,
Make thou of women when thou wolt begile

This Soudonnesse, whom I blame & wreie,
Let priuily her counsaile gone her way:
What should I in this tale longer tarie ∘
She rideth to the Soudon on a day,
And saied him that she would reny her lay,
And christendome of priests hondes fong,
Repenting her she Heathen was so long.

Beseeching him to doen her that honour,
That she might haue the christen folke to fest:
To plesen hem I woll doen my labour.
The Soudon saith, I woll done al your hest,
And kneeling, thanked her of that request,
So glad he was, he nist not what to say,
She kist her sonne, & home she goth her way.

Arriued been these christen folke to lond
In Surrey, with a great solemne rout,
And hastily this Soudon sent his sond,
First to his mother, and all the reigne about,
And saied, his wife was comen out of dout,
And praiden hem for to riden against ỹ queene
The honour of his reigne for to sustene.

Great was the presse, and rich was ỹ ray
Of Surreyans, and Romanes ymet yfere:
The mother of the Soudon rich and gay
Receiueth her with all manner glad chere,
As any mother might her doughter dere:
Unto the next city there beside
A soft paas solemnly they all ride.

Nought trow I, the triumph of Julius,
Of which that Lucan maketh such a bost,
Was roialler, and more curious,
Than was thassembling of his blisfull host:
But this Scorpion, this wicked ghost
The Soudonnesse, for all her flattering
Cast vnder all this, mortally to sting.

The Soudō cometh himself soon after this
So rially, that wonder is to tell:
He welcometh her with much ioy and blis,

And

And thus in mirth and ioie I let hem dwell.
The fruit of euery tale is for to tell,
Whan time come, men thought it for the best,
That euell stint, and men gon to rest.

The time come, this old Soudonnesse
Ordained hath the feast of which I told,
And to the feast, chriſten folke hem dresse
And that in generall, both yong and old:
There may men feast and rialte behold
And daintes moe than I can deuise,
But all to dere they bought it or they rise.

O Souden, wo ȳ euer thou art successour
To worldly blisse, spronged with bitternesse,
The end of ioy, is worldly labour.
Wo occupieth the ende of our gladnesse,
Herken this counsaile for thy sikernesse:
Upon thy glad day haue thou in minde,
The vnware wo or harme, ȳ cometh behinde.

For shortly to tellen at a word,
The Souden, and the Chriſten euerichone
Been all to hewe, and sticken at the boord,
But it were onely dame Custance alone,
This old Soudonnesse, this cursed crone,
Hath with her friends doen this cursed deed,
For she her selfe would all the country lede.

There was Surreien non ȳ was cõuerted,
That of the counsaile of the Souden wot,
That he nas all to hewe, er he asserted:
And Custance han they taken anon forthot,
And in a ship all sterneles (God wot)
They han her set, and bidden her lerne to saile
Out of Surrey ayenward to Italie.

A certain tresour that she thither ladde,
And sooth to sayne, vitaile great plente,
They han her yeuen, and clothes eke she had,
And forth she saileth in the salt se:
O my Custance, full of benignite
O Emperours yong doughter so dere,
He that is lorde of fortune be thy stere.

She blesseth her, & with full pitious voice
Unto the crosse of Chriſt, tho said she.
O clere, O welful auter, holy croice
Reed of the lambes blood full of pite,
That wesh the world fro the old iniquitie:
Me fro the fende, and fro his clawe kepe.
That day that I shall drenchen in the deepe.

Victorious tree, protection of trewe,
That onely worthy were for to bere
The king of heauen, with his woundes newe,
The white lambe, that hurt was with a spere:
Flemere of feendes, out of him and here
On which thy limmes, faithfully extenden
Me kepe & yeue me might my life to menden.

Yeres and daies fleeteth this creature
Through the see of Grece, vnto the straite
Of Marocke, as it was her auenture:
O, many a sory meale may she baite,
After her death full oft may she waite,
Or that the wilde waues would her drine
Unto the place there she should arriue.

Men mighte asken why she was not slayn
Eke at the feast, who might her body saue?
I answer to that demaund agayn,
Who saued Daniel in that horrible caue?
There euery wight, were he master or knaue,
Was with the Lyon fretie or he asserte,
No wight but God, that he bare in his hert.

God list to shew his wonderfull miracle
In her, for she should seen his mighty werkes:
Chriſt that is to euery harme triacle,
By certain meanes often, as knowen clerkes,
Doth thing for certaine end, that full derke is
To mans wit, that for our ignorance
Ne can nat know his prudent purueyance.

Now that she was not at the feast yslawe,
Who kepeth her fro the drenching in the see?
Who kept Jonas in the fisches mawe,
Till he he was spouted out at Ninuee?
Wel may me know, it was no wight but he
That kept the people Ebrak from drenching
With dry feet, through the see passing.

Who hath the foure spirits of the tempest,
That power had, both to anoy lond and see?
Both north and south, and also west and east,
Anoyeth neither see, ne lond, ne tree:
Soothly the commaunder thereof was he
That fro the tempest aye this woman kept,
As well whan she woke as whan she slept.

Wher might this woman meat & drink haue?
Thre yere and more, how lasteth her vitaile?
Who fed the Egyptian Mary in the caue
Or in desert (none but Chriſt sans faile)
Fiue thousand folke it was as great marueile
With loaues fiue and fisches two to feed,
God sent his foyson at her great need.

She driueth forth into our Occian
Throughout the wide see, till at the last
Under han holde, that nempne I ne can,
Fer in Nort humberlond, the waue her cast,
And in the sand her ship sticked so fast,
That thence nolne it not of all a tyde,
The wil of Chriſt was ȳ she should ther abide.

The constable of the castle doun is fare
To seene this wrecke, & al the ship he sought,
And found this weary woman full of care,
He found also the treasure that she brought:
In her language mercy she besought
The life out of her body for to twin,
Her to deliuer of wo that she was in.

A manner latin corrupt was her speche,
But algates thereby was she vnderstond,
The constable, when him list no lenger seche,
This wofull woman brought he to lond:
She kneleth doun, and thanketh Gods sond,
But what she was, she would no man sey
For foule ne faire, though she shoulden dey.

She said she was so mased in the see,
That she forgate her mind by her trouth:
The constable of her hath so great pite
And eke his wife, that they weepen for routh:
She was so diligent withouten slouth
To serue and please euerich in that place,
That all her louen, that looken in her face.

The constable, & dame Hermegild his wife
Were paiens, & that countrey euery where,
But Hermegild loued her right as her life,
And Custance hath so long sojourned there
In orisons with many a bitter tere,
Till Jesu hath conuerted through his grace
Dame Hermegild, constablesse of that place.

In all that lond dursten no christen rout,
All christen folke been fled from the countre
Through paiens, that conquered all about
The plagues of the North by lond and see:
To Wales fled the christianite
Of old Bretons, dwelling in that Ile,
There was her refute for the meane while.

Yet nas there neuer Christen so exiled,
That there nas some in her priuite
Honoured Christ, and Heathen beguiled,
And nigh the castle such there dwellen three:
That one of hem was blind, & might not see
But it were with thilke eyen of his mind,
With which men seen after they been blind.

Bright was the sunne, as in sommers day,
For which the constable and his wife also
And Custance, han taken the right way
Toward the sea, a furlong way or two,
To playen, and to romen to and fro:
And in her walke, three blind men they met
Crooked and old, with eyen fast yshet.

In the name of Christ cried this blind Breton
Dame Hermegild, yeue me sight again:
This lady ware afraied of the soun,
Least that her husbond hastily for to sain
Would her for Jesus Christs loue haue slain,
Till Custance made her bold, & bad her werch
The will of Christ, as doughter of his cherch.

The constable wexe abashed of that sight,
And said: what amounteth all this farce?
Custance answerd: sir it is Christs might,
That helpeth folke out of the fiends snare:
And so forsoth she gan our law declare,
That she the constable ere that it was eue
Conuerted, and on Christ made him beleeue.

This Cõstable was nothing lord of this place
Of which I speake, there he Custance fond,
But kept it strongly many a winter space,
Under Alla, king of Northumberlond,
That was full wise, and worthy of his hond
Against the Scots, as men may well here,
But tourne I will againe to my matere.

Sathan, that euer vs waiteth to beguile,
Saw of Custance all her perfectioun,
And cast anon how he might quite her wile,
And made a yong knight ỹ dwelt in the toun
Loue her so hot, of foule affectioun,
That verily him thought that he should spill,
But he of her once might haue his will.

He woeth her, but it auailed nought,
She would doe no manner sinne by no wey:
And for despight, he compassed in his thought
To maken her on shamefull death to dey:
He waiteth when the Constable is away,
And priuily on a night he crept
Into Hermegilds chamber while she slept.

Wery for waked in her orisons
Sleepeth Custance and Hermegilde also:
This knight, through sathans temptations
All softly is to the bed ygo,
And cut the throat of Hermegilde atwo,
And laied the bloody knife by dame Custance,
& went his way, ther God yeue him mischãce.

Soon after cometh the constable home again
And eke Alla, that king was of that lond,
And saw his wife dispitously yslain,
For which he wept and wrong his hond,
And in the bed the bloody knife he fond
By dame Custance, alas what might she say?
For very wo her wit was all away.

To king Alla was told all this mischance,
And eke ỹ time, and where, and in what wise,
That in a ship was founden this Custance,
As here before ye han heard me deuise:

The

The kings heart for pity can agrise,
When he saw so benigne a creature
Fall in disease and in misaduenture.

For as the lamb toward his deth is brought,
So stant this innocent before the king:
This fals knight ỹ hath this treson wrought
Bereth her in hond ỹ she hath don this thing:
But natheless there was great mourning
Emong the people, and said they cannot gesse
That she had done so great a wickednesse.

For they han seen her euer so vertuous,
And louing Hermegild right as her life:
Of this bare witnesse euerich in the hous,
Saue he that Hermegild slow with his knife:
This gentle king hath caught a great motife
Of this witnes, & thought he would enquere
Deeper in this case, the trouth to lere.

Alas Custance, thou hast no champion,
Ne fight canst thou not, so welaway:
But he that starke for our redemption
And bond Sathan, and yet lith there he lay,
So be thy strong champion this day:
For but if Christ on thee miracle kithe,
Without gilt thou shalt been slaine alswithe.

She set her doun on knees, & thus she said:
Immortall God, that sauedest Susanne
Fro fals blame, and thou merciful maid,
Marie I meane, doughter to saint Anne,
Before whose child angels sing Osanne,
If I be guiltlesse of this felonie,
My succour be, or els shall I die.

Haue ye not seene sometime a pale face
(Emong a prees) of hem that hath been lad
Toward his deth, wher as hem get no grace,
And such a colour in his face hath had,
That men might know his face ỹ was bistad
Emongs all the faces in that rout,
So standeth Custance, and loketh her about.

O Queenes liuing in prosperity,
Duchesses, and ye ladies euerichone,
Haue some routh on her aduersity,
An Emperours doughter stant alone:
She hath no wight to whō to make her mone,
O blood roiall, that stondeth in this drede,
Fer ost been thy friends at thy greatest nede.

This Alla king, hath such compassioun,
As gentle heart is fulfilled of pite,
That fro his eyen ran the water adoun.
Now hastily doe fet a booke (qd. he)
And if this knight woll swere, how that she,
This woman slow, yet woll we vs auise,
Whom that we woll shall been our iustice.

A Breton booke, written with Euangeles
Was fet, and thereon he swore anone,
She guilty was, and in the meane whiles
An hond him smote vpon the necke bone,
That doune he fell atones as a stone:
And both his eyen brust out of his face
In sight of euery body in that place.

A voice was heard in generall audience
That said: Thou hast disclaundred guiltles
The doughter of holy chirch in high presence,
Thus hast thou doen, and yet I hold my pees.
Of this marueile agast was all the prees,
As dismaide folke they stonden euerichone
For dread of wrecche, saue Custance alone.

Great was the dread and eke the repentance
Of hem that hadden wrought suspection
Vpon this silly innocent Custance,
And for this miracle, in conclusion
And by Custances mediation
The king, and many another in that place
Conuerted was, thanked be Gods grace.

This fals knight was slain for his vntrouth
By iudgement of Alla hastily,
And yet Custance had of his death great routh,
And after this, Jesus of his mercy
Made Alla wedden full solemnely
This holy maid, that is so bright and shene,
And thus hath Christ made Custance a quene.

But who was wofull (if I should not lie)
Of this wedding: but Donegild and no mo,
The kings mother, full of tyrannie,
Her thought her cursed herte brast a two:
She would not that her sonne had doe so,
Her thought a despight, that he should take
So straunge a creature vnto his make.

We list not of the chaffare of the stre,
Make so long a tale, as of the coyne,
What should I tell of the realte
Of ỹ mariage, or which course goth before:
Who blowerth in a trumpe or in an horne,
The fruit of euery tale is for to say,
They eaten and drinken, daunce, and play.

They gon to bed, as it was skill and right,
For though that wiues been ful holy things,
They must take in patience a night
Such manner necessaries, as been pleasings
To folke that han wedded hem with rings,
And lay a little her holinesse aside
As for the time, it may none other betide.

On her he gat a man child anone,
And to a bilhop, and to his conſtable eke
He tooke his wife to keepe, when he is gone
To Scotland ward, his fomen for to ſeke.
Now faire Cuſtance ỹ is ſo humble and meke
So long is gone with child till that ſtill
She halt her chamber, abiding Chriſts will.

The time is come, a man child ſhe bare,
Mauricius at fontſtone they him call,
This conſtable doth forth come a meſſenger,
And wrote to his king that cleaped was Alla,
How that this bliſſull tiding is befall,
And other tidings needfull for to ſay,
He takes the letter, and forth goth his way.

This meſſenger to doen his auauntage,
Unto the kings mother rideth ſwithe,
And ſaluteth her full faire in his language,
Madame (qd. he) ye may be glad and blithe,
And thanked God an hundred thouſand ſith,
My lady queene hath a child, withouten dout
To ioy and bliſſe of all this reigne about.

Lo here the letters ſealed of this thing,
That I mote beare in all the haſt I may:
Yeue ye woll ought vnto your ſonne the king,
I am your ſeruaunt both night and day.
Donegilde anſwerd, as at this time nay,
But here I woll all night thou take thy reſt,
To morrow woll I ſay thee what my leſt.

This meſſenger dronk ſadly both ale & wine,
And ſtollen were his letters priuily
Out of his boxe, while he ſlept as a ſwine:
And counterfeited was full ſubtily
Another letter, wrough full ſinfully
Unto the king direct of this mattere
Fro his Conſtable, as ye ſhall after here.

The letter ſpake the queene deliuered was
Of ſo horrible a fendliſhe creature,
That in the caſtle none ſo hardy was
That any while durſten therein endure:
The mother was an Elfe by aucnture
Icome, by charmes or by ſorcerie,
And euery wight hateth her companie.

Wo was this king when he ỹ letter had ſein,
But to no wight he told his ſorrow ſore,
But with his owne hand he wrote again,
Welcome the ſonde of Chriſt for euermore
To me, that am new learned in his lore:
Lord, welcome be thy luſt and thy pleaſance,
My luſt I put all in thy ordinance.

Keepeth this child, all be it foule or faire,
And eke my wife vnto mine home comming:
Chriſt when him leſt may ſend me an heire,
More agreeable than this to my liking:
This letter he ſealed, priuily weeping.
Which to the meſſenger was taken ſone,
And forth he goth, there is no more to done.

O meſſenger fulfilled of dronkeneſſe,
Strong is thy breth, thy limmes faltren aie,
And thou bewraieſt all ſecretneſſe,
Thy mind is lorne, thou langliſt as a Jaie:
Thy face is tourned in a new array,
There dronkennelle reigneth in any rout,
There nis no counſaile hid withouten dout.

O Donegild, I ne haue non Engliſh digne
Unto thy malice, and thy tirannie:
And therefore to the fende I thee reſigne,
Let him endite of thy traitrie.
Fie mannish fie: O nay by God I lie:
Fie fendiſhe ſpirit, for I dare well tell,
Though thou here walke, thy ſpirit is in hell.

This meſſenger came fro the king againe,
And at the kings mothers houſe he light,
And ſhe was of this meſſenger full faine,
And pleaſed him in all that euer ſhe might:
He dronke, and well his girdle vnder pight,
He ſleepeth, and he snoreth in his guiſe
All night, till the ſunne gan ariſe.

Eft were his letters ſtollen euerichone,
And counterfeited letters in this wiſe,
The king commaundeth his conſtable anone
Upon paine of hanging on an high iewiſe,
That he ne ſhould ſuffren in no wiſe
Cuſtance, within his realme for to abide
Three daies, and a quarter of a tide.

But in the ſame ſhip as he her fond,
Her and her young ſonne, and all her gere
He ſhould crouden, and put fro the lond,
And charge her, that ſhe neuer eft come there:
O Cuſtance, well may thy ghoſt haue fere,
And ſleeping in thy dreame been in pennance,
When Donegild caſt all this ordinance.

This meſſenger on the morow whē he woke,
Unto the caſtle halt the next way:
And to the Conſtable he the letter tooke,
And when that he this pitous letter ſey,
Full oft he ſaied (alas) and welaway,
Lord chriſt qd. he how may this world indure
So full of ſinne is many a creature.

O mighty God, if that it be thy will,
Sin thou art rightful iudge, how may it be
That thou wolt ſuffer innocence to ſpill,
And wicked folke to reigne in proſperite?

O, good Custance (alas) so woe is me,
That I mote be thy turmentour, or els dey
On shames death, there nis none other wey.

Weepen both yong and old in that place,
When that the king this cursed letter sent:
And Custance with a deadly pale face,
The fourth day toward the ship she went:
But natheles she taketh in good intent
The will of Christ, and kneeling in that strond,
She saied lord, aye welcome be thy sond.

He that me kept fro that false blame,
Whiles I was on the lond amongs you,
He can me keepe fro harme and eke fro shame
In the salt sea, although I see not how:
As strong as euer he was, he is now,
In him trust I, and in his mother dere,
That is to me my saile and eke my stere.

Her little child lay weeping in her arme,
And kneeling pitously to him she said,
Peace little sonne, I will do thee none harm:
With that her kercher off her head she braid,
And ouer his little eyen she it laid,
And in her arme she lulleth it full fast,
And into heauen her eyen up she cast.

Mother (quod she) and maiden bright Marie,
Sooth it is, that through womãs eggement
Mankind was lore, and damned aye to die,
For which thy child was on crosse rent:
Thy bitter eyen saw all his turment,
Then is there no comparison betwene
Thy wo, and any wo that man may sustene.

Thou see thy child yslaine before thine eien,
And yet liueth my little child parfay:
Now lady bright, to whom all woful crien,
Thou glory of womanhead, thou faire may,
Thou hauen of refute, bright sterre of day,
Rew on my child of thy gentilnesse,
That rewest on euery rufull in distresse.

O little child (alas) what is thy guilt?
That neuer wrought test sinne, as yet parde,
Why will thine hard father haue thee spilt?
O mercy dear constable (quod she)
As let my little child dwell here with thee:
And if thou darst not sauen him fro blame,
So kisse him once in his fathers name.

Therwith she looketh backward to ỹ lond,
And said: farewell husband routheles:
And up she rist, and walketh doune the strond
Toward the ship, her followeth all the prees:
And aye she praieth her child to hold his pees,
And taketh her leaue, and with an holy entent
She blesseth her, and into the ship she went.

Victailed was the ship it is no drede
Habundantly, for her a full long space:
And other necessaries that should nede
She had ynow, heried by Gods grace:
For wind & weather, almighty God purchace,
And bring her home, I can no better say,
But in the see she driueth forth her way.

Alla the king cometh home soone after this
Unto his castle, of which I told,
And asketh where his wife and his child is,
The constable gan about his heart wax cold,
And plainely all the manner him told
As ye han heard, I can tell it no better,
And shewed the king his seale and his letter.

And said: lord as ye commaunded me
On paine of death, so haue I done certain:
This messenger tormented was, till he
Must be knowne, and tell plat and plain
Fro night to night, in what place he had lain:
And thus by wittie subtill enquiring,
Imagined was by who this harm gan spring.

The hand was knowen ỹ the letter wrot,
And all the venim of this cursed dede:
But in what wise, certainely I not,
The effect is this, that Alla out of drede
His mother slow, that may men plainly rede,
For that she traitour was to her allegeaunce:
Thus endeth old Donegild with mischaunce.

The sorrow that this Alla night and day
Maketh for his child and his wife also,
There is no tongue that it tellen may:
But now will I to Custance go,
That fleeteth in the sea in paine and wo
Fiue yeare and more, as list Christs sonde,
Or that her ship approched vnto londe.

Under an heathen castle at the last,
(Of which the name in my text I not find)
Custance and eke her child the sea vp cast,
Almighty God, that saueth all mankind,
Haue on Custance & on her child some mind,
That fallen is in heathen hond eftsoone,
In point to spill, as I shall tell you soone.

Doun fro ỹ castle cometh ther many a wight
To gauren on this ship and on Custaunce:
But shortly fro the castle on a night,
The lords steward (God yeue him mischaũce)
A theefe, that had renied our creaunce,
Came into the ship alone, and said he should
Her lemman be, whether she would or nold.

But of my tale make an end I shall
The day goeth fast, I will no longer let:
This glad folke to dinner been yset,
In ioy and blisse, at meat I let hem dwell,
A thousand fold well more than I can tell.

This child Maurice was sithen Emperour
Made by the Pope, and lived christenly,
To Christes church he did great honour:
But I let all this storie passen by,
Of Custance is my tale specially,
In old Romane iestes men may find
Maurice life, I beare it not in mind.

This king Alla, when he his time sey
With this Custance, his holy wife so swete,
To England been they come the right wey,
Where as they live in ioy and in quiete.
But little while it lasteth I you hete,
☞ Ioy of this world for time will not abide,
Fro day to night, it chaungeth as the tide.

Who lived ever in such delite a day,
That he ne mewed either in conscience
Ore, ire, or talent of some kin affray,
Envie or pride, or passion, or offence?
I ne say, but for this end and sentence,
That little while in ioy or in pleasance
Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custance.

☞ For death, that taketh of hie and low his rent,
When passed was a yeare, even as I gesse,
Out of this world king Alla gan hent,
For who Custance hath full great heavinesse.
Now let vs praien God his soule to blesse:
And dame Custance, finally to say,
Toward the toune of Rome goth her way.

To Rome is come this holy creature,
And findeth her father whole and sound:
Now is she scaped all her aventure,
And when that she her father hath yfound,
Downe on her knees she goeth to ground
Weeping for tendernesse in her heart blithe,
So she herieth God an hundred thousand sithe.

In vertue and holy almesdede
They liven all, and never asunder wend,
Till death departen hem, this life they lede:
And fareth now well, my tale is at an end.
Now Jesu Christ, that of his might may send
Ioy after wo, governe vs in his grace,
And keepe vs all that been in this place.

¶ The Squiers Prologue.

OVR host on his stirrops stoode anon,
And said: good men hearkeneth everichon,
This was a thriftie tale for the nones:
Sir parish priest (qd. he) for Gods bones,
Tell vs a tale, as was thy forward yore:
I see well that ye learned men in lore,
Can muckle good, by Gods dignitie.
The Parson him answerd, benedicite,
What eileth the man, so sinfully to swere?
Our host answerd, O Jenkin, be ye there?
Now good men (qd. our host) harkneth to me,
I smell a loller in the wind (qd. he)
Abideth for Gods digne passion,
For we shall have a predication:
This loller here will preachen vs somewhat.
Nay by my fathers soule, that shall he nat,
Saied the Squier, here shall he nat preach,
Here shall he no Gospell glosen teach:
We leveth all in the great God (qd. he)
He would sowen some difficultie,
Or springe some cockle in our cleane corne.
And therefore host, I warne thee beforne,
My pilly body shall a tale tell,
And I shall ringen you so merry a bell,
That I shall waken all this compaine:
But it shall not been of Philosophie,
Ne of Phylicke, ne termes queint of law,
There is but little Latine in my maw.

¶ The Squiers Tale.

The King of Arabie sendeth to Cambuscan King of Sarra, an horse and a sword of rare qualitie: and to his daughter Canace a glasse and a ring, by the vertue whereof shee understandeth the language of all foules. Much of this Tale is either lost, or else neuer finished by Chaucer.

AT Sarra, in the lond of Tartarie,
There dwelt a king that warred on Surrie,
Through which there died many a doughtie man:
This noble king was called Cambuscan.
Which in his time was of so great renoun,
That there nas no where in no regioun
So excellent a lord in all thing:
Him lacked nought that longeth to a king,
As of the sect of which he was borne.
He kept his lay to which he was sworne,
And thereto he was hardie, wise, and riche,
And pitous and iust alway yliche:
True of his word, benigne and honourable

Of

Of his cotage, as any centre stable.
Young, fresh, and strong, in armes desirous,
As any batcheler of all his hous,
A faire person he was, and fortunate,
And kept alway so rotall astate,
That there nas no where such another man.
This noble king, this Tartre, this Cãbuscan
Had two sonnes by Elitheta his wife,
Of which the eldest hight Algarsife,
That other was cleaped Camballo.
A doughter had this worthy king also,
That youngest was, and hight Canace:
But for to tell you all her beaute,
It lithe not in my tong, ne in my conning,
I dare not undertake so high a thing:
Mine English eke is unsufficient,
It must been a Rethor excellent,
That couth his colours longing for the art,
If he should discriue here euery part:
I am none such, I mote speake as I can.
And so befell, that this Cambuscan
Hath twenty Winter borne his diademe,
As he was wont fro yeare to yeare I deme
He let the feast of his natiuity
Doen crien, throughout Sarra his city,
The last Idus of March, after the yere.
Phebus the Sunne full iolly was & clere,
For he was nigh his exaltation
In Marces face, and in his mansion
In Aries, the collericke, the hote signe:
Full lustie was the weather and benigne,
For which the foules ayenst the sunne shene
What for the season and the yong grene,
Full louden song her affections:
Hem seemed han getten hem protections
Ayen the swerd of Winter kene and cold.
This Cãbuscan, of which I haue you told
In roiall vestements, sit on his deis
With diademe, full high in his paleis:
And held his feast so rotall and so riche,
That in this world nas there none it liche.
Of which, if I shall tell all the array,
Then would it occupie a Sommers day,
And eke it needeth not to deuise
At euery course the order of seruice.
I wol not tellen as now of her strange sewes,
Ne of her Swans, ne of her Heronsewes.
Eke in that lond, as tellen knights old
There is some meat that is full dainty hold,
That in this lond men retch of it but small:
There is no man that may reporten all.
I will not tarie you, for it is prime,
And for it is no fruit, but losse of time,
Unto my first purpose I woll haue recourse.
And so befell that after the third course,
While that this king sit thus in his noblay,
Hearkening his minstrals her things play,
Before him at his bord deliciously
In at the hall doore all suddainely
There came a knight on a steed of brasse,
And in his hond a broad mirrour of glasse:
Upon his thombe he had of gold a ring,
And by his side a naked sword honging,
And vp he rideth to the high bord.
In all the hall ne was there spoke a word,
For marueile of the knight, him to behold
Full busily they waiten young and old.
This straunge knight ỹ come thus sodenly
All armed saue his head, full rotally
Salued king and queene, and lords all
By order, as they sitten in the hall,
With so high reuerence and obeisaunce,
As well in speech as in countenaunce,
That Gawaine with his old courtesie,
Though he come ayen out of fairie,
Ne could him not amend of no word.
And after this, before the high bord
He with a manly voice saied his message,
After the forme vsed in his language,
Without vice of sillable or of letter.
And for his tale should seeme the better,
Accordant to his words was his chere,
As teacheth art of speech hem that it lere.
All be that I cannot sowne his stile,
Ne I cannot climben so high a stile:
Yet say I thus as to my comen intent,
Thus much amounteth all that euer he ment,
If it so be, that I haue it in my mind.
He saied: The king of Araby and of Inde
My liege lord, on this solemne day
Salueth you, as he best can and may,
And sendeth you in honour of your feest
By me that am readie at your heest
This steed of brasse, that easily and well
Can in the space of a day naturell,
(That is to say, in foure and twenty houres)
Where so ye list, in drought or in shoures
Beren your body into euery place,
Into which your heart willeth to pace,
Without wem of you, through foule or faire.
Or if ye list to flee in the aire,
As doth an Eagle when him list to sore,
This same steed shall beare you euermore
Withouten harme, till you been there you lest,
Though that ye sleepen on his back and rest,
And turne again, with writhing of a pin.
He that it wrought, could full many a gin:
He waited many a constellation,
Or he had doen this operation,
And knew full many a scale and many a bond.
This mirror eke that I haue in mine hond,
Hath such a might, that men may in it see,
What there shall fallen any aduerse tee
Unto your reigne, or to your selfe also:
And openly see, who is your friend and fo:
And ouer all this, if any lady bright

Hath

Hath set her heart on any manner wight,
If he be false, she shall the treason see,
His new loue, and all his subtelte
So openly, that there shall nothing hide.
Wherefore against this lusty Summer tide
This mirrour and this ring, that ye may se,
He hath sent to my lady Canace
Your excellent doughter that is here.
The vertue of this ring, if ye woll here
Is this, that if she list it for to were
Upon her thombe, or in her purse it bere,
There is no foule that fleeth vnder heuen,
That she ne shall vnderstond his steuen,
And know his meaning openly and plaine,
And answere him in his language againe:
And euery grasse that groweth vpon root
She shall wel know, & whom it wol do boot,
All be his wounds neuer so deepe and wide.
This naked sword that hangeth by my side,
Such vertue hath, that what man so ye smite,
Throughout his armure it woll kerue & bite,
Were it as thicke as a braunched oke:
And what man ỹ is wounded with the stroke
Shall neuer be hole, till that you list of grace
To stroken him with the platte in thilk place
There he is hurt, this is as much to saine,
Ye mote with the plat sword againe
Stroken him in the wound, and it woll close:
This is very sooth withouten glose,
It faileth not, whiles it is in your hold.
And whē this knizt hath thus his tale told,
He rideth out of the hall, and doun he light:
His steed, which that shone as Sunne bright
Stant in the court still as any stone:
The knight is in to chamber ladde anone,
He is vnarmed, and to the meat ysette,
And all these presents been full rich yfette,
This is to saine, the sword and eke the mirrour
And borne anon was into the high tour,
With certaine officers ordained therefore:
And to Canace the ring is bore
Solemnely, there she sat at the table.
But sikerly without any fable
The horse of brasse, that may not be remeued,
It stant, as it were to the ground yglewed:
There may no man out of the place it driue
For none engine, or windlas or polliue:
And cause why, for they cannot the craft,
And therefore in the place they han it laft,
Till ỹ the knight hath taught hem ỹ manere
To holden him, as ye shall after here.
Great was ỹ prees, that swarmed to & fro
To gauren on the hors that stondeth so:
For it so high was, and so broad and long,
So well proporcioned for to been strong,
Right as it were a steed of Lumbardie:
Therewith so horsly, and so quicke of eie,
As it a gentle courser of Poile were:
For certes, fro his taile to his eare
Nature ne art coud him not amend
In no degree, as all the people wend.
But euermore her most wonder was,
How that he couth go, and was of bras?
It was of fairie, as the people demed:
Diuers folke diuersly they demed,
As many heads, as many wits there been:
They murmure, as doth a swarme of Been,
And maden skils after her fantasies,
Rehearsing of the old Poetries,
And saied it was like the Pegase
The hors that had wings for to flee,
Or els it was the Grekes hors Sinon,
That brought Troy to destruction,
As men in these old bookes rede.
Mine heart (qd. one) is euermore in drede,
I trow some men of armes been therein,
That shapen hem this citie for to win:
It wer right good ỹ such things were know.
And other rowned to his felaw low,
And saied he lied, for it is rather like
An apparence made by some Magike,
As Iogglours plaien at these feasts great:
Of sundry thoughts thus they iangle & treat,
As leaud people deemeth commonly
Of things that been made more subtilly,
Than they can in her leaudnesse comprehend:
They demen gladly to the badder end.
And some of hem wondren on the mirrour,
(That born was vp to the maister tour)
How men mighten in it such things see.
Another answerd, certes it might well bee
Naturally by compositions
Of Angels and of slie reflections:
And saiden, that in Rome was such on.
They speaken of Alhazen and Vitellion,
And Aristotle that writeth in her lues
Of queint mirrours, and of prospectiues,
As knowen they that han her bookes heard.
And other folk han wondred on the sweard
That would so pierren through euery thing:
And fell in speech of Telephus the king,
And of Achilles for his queint spere,
For he couth with it both heale and dere,
Right in such wise as men may with ỹ sword,
Of which right now ye haue your selue herd.
They speaken of sundry harding of mettail,
And speaken of medicines eke withall,
And how, and when it should hardened be,
Which is vnknow algate to me.
Tho speake they of Canaces ring,
And saiden all, that such a wonder thing
Of craft of rings heard they neuer non,
Saue that Moses and king Salamon
Had a name of cunning of such art:
Thus sain the people, and drawen hem apart
But natheless, some saiden that it was

Wonder

Wonder to make of ferne asshen, glas,
And yet is glas not like asshen of ferne.
But for that they han knowen it so ferne,
Therfore ceaseth her iangling and wonder.
As fore wondren some on cause of thunder,
On ebbe and flood, on gossomer, and on mist,
And on all thing, till the cause is wist.
Thus ianglen they, and demen and deuise,
Till that the king gan fro his boord arise.
Phebus hath left the angle meridionall,
And yet ascending was the beest royall
The gentle Lion with his Aldrean,
When that this Tartre king Cambuscan
Rose from his bord, there as he sat full hie:
Before him goth the loud minstralcie,
Till he came to his chamber of paraments,
There as they sownen diuers instruments,
That is like an heuen for to here.
Now daunceth lusty Venus children dere:
For in the fish her lady sat full hie,
And looketh on hem with a friendly eie.
This noble king is set vpon his trone,
This straunge knight is set him full sone,
And in the daunce he goeth with Canace.
Here is the reuell and the iolite
That is not able a dull man to deuise:
He must han know loue and her seruise
And been a feestliche man, as fresh as May,
That should you deuise such an array.
Who couth tellen you ye form of daunces,
So vncouth, and so fresh countenaunces:
Such subtill lookings and dissimulings
For dread of iealous mens apperceivings:
No man but Launcelot, and he is dead.
Therefore I passe ouer all this lusty head,
I say no more, but in this iollinesse
I lete hem, till men to supper them dresse.
The ster ward biddeth spices for to hie
And eke the wine, in all this melodie
The vshers and the squires been ygone,
The spices and the wine is comen anone:
They eten & dronken, & when this had an end,
Vnto the temple, as reason was, they wend:
The seruice done, they soupen all by day.
What needeth it to rehearsen her array?
Each man wot well, that at a kings feast
Is plenty, to the most and to the least
And daintees mo, than been in my knowing.
And after supper goeth this noble king
To seen this horse of brasse, with all his rout
Of lords and of ladies him about:
Such wondring ther was on this hors of bras,
That sithen the great siege of Troy was,
There as men wondred on an horse also,
Ne was there such a wondring, as was tho.
But finally, the king asketh the knight
The vertue of this horse and the might,
And praied him to tell of his gouernaunce.
The horse anon gan to trip and daunce,
When ye this knight laid hond on his raine,
And said, sir there is no more to saine,
But when you list to riden any where,
Ye mote trill a pin, stant in his ere:
Which I shall tell you betweene vs two.
Ye mote nempne him to what place also,
Or to what countrey you list to ride.
And when ye come there you list abide,
Bid him discend, and trill another pin,
For therein lieth the effect of all the gin:
And he will downe discend & done your will,
And in that place he will abide still:
Though al ye world had the contrary sworne,
He shall not thence be ythrow ne yborne,
Or if you list en bid him thence to gone,
Trill this pin, and he will vanish anone
Out of the sight of euery manner wight,
And come ayen, be it day or night,
When that you list to clepen him againe
In such a guise, as I shall to you saine
Betwixt you and me, and that full sone,
Ride when you list, there nis no more to done.
Enfourmed when ye king was of ye knight,
And hath conceiued in his wit aright
The manner and the forme of all this thing,
Full glad and full blith, the noble king
Repaireth to his reuell, as before:
The bridle is in the toure yborne,
And kept among his iewels lefe and dere:
The horse vanished, I not in what manere
Out of her sight, ye get no more of me:
But thus I lete in lust and iolite
This Cambuscan, and his lords feasting
Till well nigh the day began to spring.

Explicit prima pars: & sequitur pars secunda.

The noyse of digestion, the sleepe
Gan on hem winke, and bad hem take keepe,
That mirth, drink, and labour will haue rest:
And with a galping mouth hem all he kest,
And said it was time to lie aboun,
For blood was in his dominacioun:
Therisheth blood, natures friend (qd. hee)
They thanken him galping, by two by three,
And euery wight gan drawen him to his rest,
As sleepe hem bade, they tooke it for the best.
Her dreames shul not now ben told for me,
Full were her heads of fumositee, (charge,
That causeth dreames, of which there is no
They sleepen soundly, till it was prime large
The most part, but it were Canace:
She was full measurable, as women be.

For

For of her father had she take her leue
To gone to rest, soone after it was eue:
Her list not apalled for to be,
Nor on the morrow, vnkestliche for to see
And slept her first slepe, and then awoke
For such a ioy she in her heart tooke
Both of her queynt ring, and of her mirrour,
That twenty times she chaunged her colour:
And in her slepe, right for impression
Of her mirrour, she had a vision.
Wherfore, or that the sunne vp gan glide,
She cleped her maistresses her beside
And said, that her list for to arise.

These old women that been gladly wise
As is her maistresse, answerd her anon,
And said: Madam whider will ye gon
Thus early? for folke been all in rest.

I will (quoth she arise) for me lest
No lenger to slepe but walken about.

Her maistresse cleped women a great rout,
And vp they risen, well ten or twelue:
Vp riseth fresh Canace her selue
As ioly and bright, as the yong sunne,
That in the Ram is foure degrees vp runne,
No higher was he, whan she ready was:
And forth she walked an easie paas
Arrayed after the lusty season sote,
Lightly for to playen, and walken on foote:
Nought but fiue or sixe of her meyne,
And in a trenche, fer in the parke goeth she.

The vapor which that fro the earth glode,
Maketh the sunne to seem ruddy and brode:
But nathelesse it was so faire a sight,
That it made all her hearts for to light,
What for the season, and for the morowning,
And for the foules that she herde to sing.
For right anon, she wiste what they ment
Right by her song, and knew al her entent.

The knot why, that euery tale is tolde,
If it be taried till lust be colde
Of hem that han it herkened after yore,
The sauour palleth, euer lenger the more,
For fullnumes of prolixite.
And by that same reason thinketh me
I should vnto the same knot condiscende,
And make of her walking soone an ende.

Amidde a tre, for dry as white as chalke,
As Canace was playing in her walke,
There sat a falcon ouer head full hie,
That with a pitious voyce gan to cry,
That all the wood resounded of her cry,
And beaten had her selfe so pitiously
With both her wings, till the reed blood
Ran endlong the tre, there as she stood:
And euer in one she cryed and shright,
And with her becke, her selfen so she pight,
That there nas Tygre, ne cruell beast
That dwelleth in wood, neither in forrest,
That nolde han wept, if that they wepe could,
For sorrow of her, she shright al way so loud.

For there was neuer yet man on liue,
If that he couthe a Falcon well discriue,
That herde of such another of fayrenes
As wel of plumage, as of gentilnes,
Of shape, of all that might reckened be:
A Falcon peregryn than seemed she
Of fremd lond, and euermore as she stood,
She swounded now & now for lacke of blood,
Til wofully she fallen fro the tree.

This faire kings doughter, this Canace,
That on her finger bare the queint ring,
Thrugh which she vnderstood wel euery thing
That any foule may in his leden saine,
And could answere him in his leden againe,
Hath vnderstand, what this Falcon seyd
And wofully for routhe almost she deyd:
And to the tree she goeth full hastily
And on this Falcon can looke pitously,
And held her lap abroad, for well she wist
The Falcon must fallen from the twist
Whan ỹ she swounded next, for lacke of blood,
A long while to waiten there she stood,
Til at the the last she spake in this manere
Vnto the Hauke as ye shallen after here.

What is the cause, if it be for to tell,
That ye ben in this furiall paine of hell?
Quod Canace, vnto this Hauke aboue:
Is this for sorow of death, or losse of loue?
For as I trow, these ben causes two,
That causen most a gentil heart wo:
Of other harme it needeth not to speake,
For ye your selfe vpon your selfe wreake,
Which proueth well, that either ire or dread
Mote ben encheson of your cruel deed.
Syn that I se none other wight you chace,
For the loue of God, so doeth your selfe grace:
Or what may be your helpe? for west or east
Ne saw I neuer er now, no bird ne beast,
That farde with himselue so pitously:
Ye slea me with your sorrow verily,
I haue of you so great compassioun:
For Gods loue come fro the tree adowne.
And as I am a kings daughter trew,
If that I verily the causes knew
Of your disease, if it lay in my might
I would amend it, certes or it be night,
As wisely help me the great God of kind.
And herbes also shall I right ynough find,
To heale with your hurts hastily.

Tho shright this Falcon yet more pitously
Than er she did, and fell to ground anone,
And lyeth a swoune deed as is a stone,
Til Canace had her in her lappe take
Vnto the time she gan of swoune awake:
And after that she of swoune can abreyd,
Right in her Haukes leden thus she seyd.

That

That pitty renneth soone in gentle hert
(Feeling his similitude in paines smert)
Is proued all day, as men may see,
As well by werke as by authorite,
For gentle heart keepeth gentlenesse.
I see well, that ye haue of my distresse
Compassion, my faire Canace
Of very womanly benignite,
That nature in your principles hath set,
But for none hope for to fare the bet.
But for to obey vnto your heart free,
And for to make other beware by mee,
As by the whelpe chastised is the Lion,
Right for that cause, and that conclusion,
While that I haue a leysure and a space,
Mine harme I will confessen or I pace:
And euer while that one her sorrow told,
That other wept, as she to water wold,
Till that the Faucon bad her to be still:
And with a like, thus she said her till.
There I was bred, alas that ilke day,
And fostred in a roche of marble gray
So tenderly, that nothing ailed me,
I ne wist what was aduersite,
Till I could flie, full high vnder the skie.
There dwelt a Tercelet me fast by,
That seemed well of all gentlenesse,
All were he full of treason and of falsenesse,
It was so wrapped vnder humble chere,
And hew of trouth, and in such manere
Vnder pleasaunce, and vnder busie paine,
That no wight could haue wend he could faine:
So deepe in greyne he died his colours,
Right as a serpent hideth him vnder flours,
Till he may see his time for to bite:
Right so, this god of loues hypocrite
Doth so his ceremonies and obeysaunce,
And hath so subtile dissimuling and faire assemblaunce,
That souneth vnto gentlenesse of loue,
As in a tombe is all the faire aboue,
And vnder, the corse, such as ye wote,
Such was this hypocrite cold and hote,
And in this wise he serued his intent,
That saue the fiend, non wist what he ment:
Till he so long had weeped and complained,
And many a yeare his seruice to me fained,
Till that mine hert, too pitous and too nice,
All innocent of his cruell malice,
For ferd of his death, as thought me
Vpon his othes and his surete,
Graunted him loue, vpon this condition,
That euermore mine honour and renoun
Were saued, both preuy and apert,
This is to say, that after his desert,
I yaue him all mine hert and all my thought
God wote, and in none other wise nought:
And tooke his hert in chaunge of mine for aye.
But sooth is said, gone sithen many a day,
A true wight and a theefe thinketh not one.
And when he saw the thing so fer igone,
That I graunted him fully my loue
In such a guise, as I haue said aboue,
And yeuen him my true heart as free
As he swore he yaf his heart to mee.
Anon this tigre, full of doublenesse
Fell on his knees with so deuout humblesse,
With high reuerence, and eke by his chere
So like a gentle louer, as of manere
So rauished, as it seemed for ioy,
That neuer Troylus, ne Paris of Troy,
Iason certes, ne none other man,
Since Lamech was, that alderfirst began
To louen two, as writen folke beforne,
Ne neuer sithen Adam was borne,
Ne couth man by twenty thousand part
Counterfeit the sophimes of his art:
Ne were worthy to vnbocle his galoche,
There doublenesse or faining should approch:
Ne so couth thanke a wight, as he did me,
His manner was an heauen for to see
To any woman, were she neuer so wise:
So painteth he his chere, point deuise,
As well his words, as his countenaunce,
And I so loued him for his obeysaunce,
And for the trouth that I demed in his hert
That if so were that any thing him smert,
Were it neuer so lite, and I it wist,
Me thought I felt death at my hart twist.
And shortly, so ferforth this thing went,
That my will was his wils instrument.
That is to say, my will obeied his will
In all thing, as farre as reason fill,
Keeping the bounds of my worship euer:
Ne neuer had I thing so lefe ne so leuer
As him God wot, ne neuer shall no mo.
This lasteth longer than a yeare or two,
That I supposed of him nothing but good.
But finally, thus at the last it stood,
That fortune would that he must twin
Out of that place, which that I was in:
Whereof me was wo, it is no question,
I cannot make of it description.
For o thing dare I tell boldely,
I know what the paine of death is therby,
Such harme I felt, that he ne might bleue.
So on a day of me he tooke his leue
So sorrowfully eke, that I wend verily,
That he had felt as much harme as I,
When that I heard him speak, and saw his hew.
But natheles, I thought he was so trew,
And eke that he repaire should againe
Within a little while sooth to saine
And reason would eke, that he must go
For his honour, as oft happeth so,
That I made vertue of necessite,
And tooke it well, sith it must needs be:

As I best might, I hid fro him my sorow
And took him by the hond, S. Iohn to borow,
And said him thus: lo I am yours all,
Both such as I haue ben to you and shall.
What, he answerd, it needeth not reherse,
Who can saine bet than he who can do wers:
When he hath al wel said, than hath he done.
Therefore behoueth him a long spoone
That shal eaten with a fiend, thus herd I say.
So at the last he mote forth his way,
And forth he fleeth till he come there him lest
When it come him to purpose for to rest:
I trow he had thilke text in mind,
That all thing repairing to his kind
Gladeth hemselue, thus sain men as I gesse:
Men louen of kind newfangleneſſe
As birds done, that men in cages feed.
For though thou night and day take of hem heed,
And straw her cage faire and soft as silke,
And giue hem sugre, hony, bread and milke,
Yet right anon as his doore is vp,
He with his feet would sporne adoun his cup,
And to the wood he would, and worme seat.
So newfangle ben they of her meat,
And louen nouelries of proper kind,
No gentleneſſe of blood may hem bind:
So ferd this Tercelet, alas the day.
Tho he were gentle borne, fresh and gay
And goodly for to see, and humble and free,
He saw vpon a time a kite flee,
And suddainly he loued this kite so,
That all his loue is cleane fro me go:
And hath his trouth falsed in this wise.
Thus hath the kite my loue in her seruice,
And I am lorne without remedy.
And with ý word this faucon gan to cry,
And swouned oft in Canaces barme:
Great was the sorow for that haukes harme,
That Canace and all her women made,
They nist how they might her faucon glade.
But Canace home beareth her in her lap,
And softly in plaisters gan her wrap,
There as she with her beek had hurt her selue.
Now cannot Canace but herbes delue
Out of the ground and make salues new
Of herbes precious and fine of hew,
To helen with the hauke: fro day to night
She doeth her busineſſe, and all her might.
And by her beds head she made a mew,
And couered it with veluets blew,
In signe of trouth, that is in women seene.
And all without the Mew is painted greene,
In which were painted all these false foules,
As ben these tidefes, tercelets, and owles,
Right for despite were painted hem beside
Pyes fele on hem for to cry and chide.
Thus leaue I Canace her hauke keeping,
I will no more as now speake of her ring,
Till it come eft to purpose for to sain,
How that this faucon got her loue again
Repentaunt, as the story telleth vs,
By mediation of Camballus
The kings sonne, of which I haue of told.
But henceforth I will my processe hold
To speaken of auentures, and of battails,
That yet was neuer herd of so gret maruails.
First will I tell you of Cambuscan,
That in his time many a city wan:
How that he wan Theodora to his wife,
And after will I speake of Algarsife,
For whom full oft in great perill he was,
Ne had he ben holpen by the horse of brass.
And after will I speake of Camballo,
That fought in lists with the brethren two
For Canace, ere that he might her win,
And there I left, I will againe begin.

Explicit secunda pars.

Apollo whirleth vp his chare so hie,
Till that the god Mercurius house he flie.

¶ There can be found no more of this forsaid tale, which hath been sought in diuers places.

¶ Here followeth the words of the Marchaunt to the Squier, and the words of the Host to the Marchaunt.

IN faith Squier thou hast thee well yquit
And gentely to, I praise well thy wit
Quod the Marchaunt, considering thine youth,
So feelingly thou speakest, I thee alouth
As to my doome, there is none that is here
Of eloquence, that shall be thy pere
If ý thou liue, God giue the right good chaunce
And in vertue send thee perseuerance.
For of thy speaking I haue great deinte:
I haue a sonne, and by the Trinite,
I had leuer than twenty pound worth lond
(Though it now were fallen in my hond)
He were a man of such discretion,
As that ye ben: fie on possession,
But if a man be vertuous withall.
I haue my sonne snibbed, and yet shall,
For he to vertue listeth not to intend,
But for to play at dise, and to spend,
And lese all that he hath is his vsage:
And he had leuer talke with a page,
Than to commune with any gentle wight,
Where he might learne gentleneſſe aright.

Straw

Straw for your gentlenesse(qd.our host)
What Marchant,pardy full well thou wost,
That ech of you mote tellen at the lest
A tale or two,or breaken your behest.
That know I well(qd.the Marchāt)certain,
I pray you haue me not in disdain,
Though I to this man speake a word or two.
Tell on thy tale withouten words mo.
Gladly sir host(qd.he) I woll obey
Unto your will,now herkeneth what I sey:
I woll you not contrary in no wise,
As farre as my wits may suffice.
I pray to God that it may pleasen you,
Then wot I well it is good ynow.

The Marchants Prologue.

Weeping and wailing, care and other sorrow
I haue ynow, both euen and eke a morrow
Qd.the Marchant,and so haue other mo,
That wedded be, I trow that it be so:
For well I wot it fareth so by me,
I haue a wife,the worst that may be,
For though the fiend coupled to her were,
She wold him ouermatch I dare wel swere.
What should I rehearse in speciall
Her high mallice? she is a shrew at all.
There is a long and a large difference
Betwixt Grisilds great patience,
And of my wife the passing cruelte:
Were I vnbound, all so mote I thee,
I would neuer eft come in the snare:
We wedded men liue in sorrow and care,
Assay who so woll,and he shall find
That I say sooth,by saint Thomas of Inde,
As for the more part, I say not all,
God shield that it should so befall.
Ah good sir host, I haue wedded be
These moneths two,and more not parde:
And yet I trow,he that all his life
Hath wedded be,though men him rife
Into the heart,ne couth in no manere
Tell so much sorrow,as I now here
Coud tell,of my wiues cursednesse. (blesse,
Now(qd.our host) Marchant so God thee
Since ye ben so much know of that art,
Full heartily I pray you tell vs part.
Gladly(qd. he)but of mine owne sore
For sorry heart I tell may no more.

¶ The Marchants Tale.

Old Ianuarie marrieth young May, and for his vnequall match,receiueth a foule reward.

Whylome there was dwelling in Lumbardie
A worthy knight,that born was at Pauie,
In which he liued in great prosperite,
And sixtie yere a wifelesse man was he:
And followed aye his bodily delite
On women,there as was his appetite,
As done these fooles that ben seculeres.
And when that he was past sixtie yeres,
Were it for holinesse or dotage,
I cannot saine,but such a great corage
Had this knight to ben a wedded man,
That day and night he doth all that he can
To espie,where that he wedded might be:
Praying our lord to graunten him that he
Mighten once knowen of that blissfull life,
That is betwixt an husbond and his wife:
And for to liuen vnder that holy bond,
With which God first man and womā bond.
None other life(said he)is worth a beane:
For wedlocke is so easie and so cleane,
That in this world it is a paradise:
Thus saith this old knight that is so wise.
And certainely,as south as God is king,
To take a wife,it is a glorious thing,
And namely when a man is old and hore,
Then is a wife the fruit of his tresore:
Then should he take a yong wife and a faire,
On which he might engendren him an heire,
And lead his life in ioy and in sollace:
Whereas these batchelers singen alas,
When that they finden any aduersite
In loue,which nis but childs vanite.
And truly it sit well to be so,
That batchelers han oft paine and wo:
On brotell ground they bilden brotelnesse,
They find freelte,whē they wenen seerenesse:
They liue but as liuen birds or bestes,
In liberty,and vnder nice arestes,
There as a wedded man in his estate
Liueth a life blessfully and ordinate,
Under the yoke of mariage ybound:
Well may his heart in ioy and blisse abound.
For who can be so buxome as a wife?
Who is so true and eke so tentife
To keep him sicke and hole,as is his make?
For wele or wo she nill him not forsake:
She nis not weary him to loue and serue,
Though that hee lie bedred till he sterue.
And yet some clerkes sain,that it is not so,
Of which Theophrast is one of tho:
What force though Theophrast list to lie.
Ne take no wife(qd.he)for husbondrie,
As for to spare in houshold thy dispence:
A true seruaunt doeth more diligence

Thy good to keep, than doth thine owne wife,
For she woll claime halfe part all her life.
And if that thou be sick, so God me saue
Thy very owne friends or a true knaue
Woll keep thee better, than he ỳ waiteth aye
After thy good, and hath done many a day.
And if thou take to thee a wife vntrew,
Full oftentime it shall thee sore rew.
This sentence, and an hundred siths worse
Writeth this mã there, God his bones curse.
But take no keepe of such vanite,
Defieth Theophrast, and heark'neth me.
A wife is Gods yeft verely,
All other manner yefts hardely,
As londs, rents, pasture, or commune,
Or mouables, all ben yefts of fortune,
That passen as a shaddow on a wall:
But dread not, if plainely speake I shall,
A wife woll last and in thine house endure,
Well longer than thee list peraduenture.
Mariage is a full great sacrament,
He which hath no wife I hold him shent:
He liueth helpelesse, and all desolate,
I speake of folke in seculer estate.
And herk'neth why, I say not this for nought:
A woman is for mans helpe ywrought.
The high God, when he had Adam maked,
And saw him alone all belly naked,
God of his great goodnesse said than,
Let vs maken an helpe to this man
Like to himselfe, and then he made Eue.
Here may ye see, and hereby may ye preue,
That a wife is mans helpe and comfort,
His paradice terrestre and his disport:
So buxome and so vertuous is she,
They must needs liuen in vnite:
One flesh they ben, and two soules as I gesse,
Nat but one heart in wele and in distresse.
A wife, ah saint Mary, benedicite,
How might a man haue any aduersite
That hath a wife? certes I cannot say,
The blisse that is betwixt hem twey
There may no tongue tellen or heart thinke.
If he be powre, she helpeth him to swinke,
She keepeth his good, & wasteth neuer a dell,
All that her husbond lust, her liketh well.
She saith not once nay, when he saith ye,
Do this (saith he) a ready sir (saith she.)
O blissful order of wedlocke precious,
Thou art so merry, and eke so vertuous,
And so commended, and approued eke,
That euery man that halt him worthy a leke,
Upon his bare knees ought all his life
Thanken God, that him hath sent a wife.
Or pray to God dayly him for to send
A wife, to last vnto his liues end.
For then his life is set in sikernesse,
He may not be deceiued, as I gesse,
So that he werch after his wiues rede:
Then may he boldly bearen vp his hede,
They been euer so true and also wise.
For which, if thou wilt werchen as the wise,
Do alway so, as women woll thee rede.
Lo how that Iacob, as these clerkes rede,
By good counsaile of his mother Rebecke
Bounden the kids skin about his necke:
For which his fathers benefon he wan.
Lo Iudith, as the storie tell can,
By her wise counsaile Gods people kept,
And slue him Holofernes while he slept.
And Abigail by counsaile, how she
Saued her husbond Naball, when that he
Should haue be slain. And looke Hester also
By good counsaile deliuered out of wo
The people of God, & made him Mardochee
Of Assure enhaunsed for to be.
There nis nothing in gree superlatife (As saith Seneck) abouc an humble wife.
Suffer thy wiues tongue, as Caton bit, She shall command, and thou shalt suffer it,
And yet she woll obey of courtesie.
A wife is keeper of thine husbondrie:
Well may the sicke man still waile and weep, There as there nis no wife the house to keep.
I warne thee, if wisely thou wilt werch,
Loue thy wife, as Christ loueth his cherch:
If thou loue thy selfe, thou louest thy wife.
No man hateth his flesh, but in his life
He fostreth it, and therefore bid I thee
Cherish thy wife, or thou shalt neuer thee.
Husbond and wife, what so men yape or play
Of worldly folke hold the seker way:
They be so knit, there may none harm betide,
And namely vpon the wiues side.
For which January, of which I told
Conſidred hath in his dayes old
The lusty life, the vertuous quiete,
That is in mariage hony swete.
And for his friends on a day he sent
To tellen hem the effect of his intent.
With face sad, his tale hath he hem told:
He said good friends, I am hore and old,
And almost (God wot) on the pits brinke,
Upon my soule somewhat must I thinke.
I haue my body folily dispended,
Blessed be God, it shall ben amended:
For I woll ben certain a wedded man
And that anon in all the hast I can,
Unto some maid, faire and tender of age.
I pray you shapeth for my mariage
All suddainly, for I woll not abide:
And I woll fonden to espie on my side,
To whom I may be wedded hastily.
But for as much as ye ben more than I,
Ye shullen rather such a thing espien
Than I, and there me lust best to alien,

But one thing warn I you my friends dere,
I woll none old wife haue in no manere:
She shall not passe fifteen yere certaine.
Old fish and young flesh woll I haue faine:
Better is (qd. he) a Pike than a Pikereell,
And bet than old Beefe is the tender Veell.
I woll no woman of thirtie Winter age,
It nis but Beanstraw and great forage.
And eke these old widdows (God it wote)
They connen so much craft in Wades bote,
So much bröke harm can they whe hem lest,
That with hem should I neuer liue in rest.
For sundry schooles maketh subtill clerkes,
A woman of many schooles halfe a clerke is.
But certainely, a young thing may men gie,
Right as mē may warm wax with hāds plie.
Wherefore I say you plainely in a clause,
I will none old wife haue for this cause.
For if so were I had such mischaunce,
That I in her couth haue no pleasaunce,
Then should I lead my life in aduoutrie,
And so streight to the deuill when I die.
Ne children should I none on her geten:
Yet had I leuer hounds had me eaten,
Than that mine heritage should fall
In straunge honds: and thus I tell you all
I dote not, I woot the cause why
Men should wedden: and furthermore wot I,
There speaketh many a man of mariage,
That wot no more of this thā doth my page:
For which causes man should take a wife,
If he may not liue chast in his life,
Take him a wife with great deuotion,
Because of lefull procreation
Of children, to the honour of God aboue,
And not onely for paramour or for loue:
And for they shoulden Letcherie eschue,
And yeeld his debts when that it is due:
Or for that each man should helpen other
In mischeefe, as a fustre should the brother,
And liue in chastity full heauenly.
But sirs (by your leaue) that am not I,
For God be thanked, I dare make auaunt,
I feele my limbs hole and sufficiaunt
To doen all that a man belongeth to:
I wot my selue best what I may do.
Though I be hore, I fare as doth a tree,
That blossometh ere that fruit ywox bee,
The blossomd tree is neither drie ne dead:
I feele no where hore but on my head.
Mine heart and my limbs been as greene,
As Laurell is through the yeare to seene.
And sithen ye han heard all mine intent,
I pray you to my will ye woll assent.
Diuers men diuersly hem told
Of mariage many ensamples old.
Some blameth it, some praiseth it certaine,
But at the last, shortly for to saine,
(As all day falleth alteration,
Betwixt friends and disputation)
There fell a strife betwixt his brethren two,
Of which that one was cleaped Placebo,
Justinus soothly called was that other.
Placebo saied: O Januarie brother,
Full little need han ye my Lord so dere,
Counsaile to aske of any that is here:
But that ye been so full of sapience,
That you ne liketh for your high prudence,
To waiue fro the word of Salomon:
This word saieth he vnto euerichone,
Worke all thing by counsaile, thus saied hee,
And then shalt thou not repent thee.
But tho that Salomon speake such a word,
Mine owne deare brother and my Lord,
So wisely God my soul bring to ease and rest,
I hold your owne counsaile for the best.
For brother mine, take of me this motike,
I haue been now a court man all my life,
And God wot, though I now vnworthy bee,
I haue stonden in full great degree
Abouten Lords in full great estate:
Yet had I neuer with none of hem debate,
I neuer hem contraried truly.
I wot well that my lord can more than I,
That he saith, I hold it firme and stable,
I say the same, or els thing semblable.
A full great foole is any counsailour,
That serueth any Lord of high honour,
That dare presume, or once thinke it,
That his counsaile should passe his lords wit,
Nay, Lords be no fooles I sweare by my fay,
Ye haue your selfe spoken here to day
So high sentence, so holy, and so well,
That I consent, and confirme euery dell
Your words all, and your opinioun.
By God there nis no man in all this toun
Ne in Italie, coud better haue saied:
Thrist holdeth him of this full well apaied.
And truly it is an high courage
Of any man that is stopen in age,
To taken a young wife, by my father kin:
Your heart hongeth on a iolly pin.
Doth now in this matter right as you lest,
For finally I hold it for the best.
Justinus that ay still sat and herd,
Right in this wise to Placebo answerd.
Now brother mine be patient I you pray,
Sith ye haue said, now herkneth what I say.
Senecke among his other words wise
Saith, that a man ought him well auise,
To whom he geueth his lond or his catell.
And sithens I ought auise me right well,
To whom I giue my goods away fro me,
Well much more I ought auised be,
To whom I giue my bodie: for alway
I warne you well it is childs play

To take a wife without auisement.
Men must inquire (this is mine assent)
Whether he be sober, wise, or dronkelew,
Or proud, or any other waies a shrew,
A chider, or a waster of thy good,
Other rich or poore, or els a man is wood:
☞ All be it so, that no man find shall
None in this world, that trotteth hole in all,
Ne man, ne beast, such as men can deuise.
But natheles, it ought inough suffice
With any wife, if so were that she had
Mo good thewes, than her vices bad:
And all this asketh leisure to enquere.
For God wot I haue wept many a tere
Full priuily, sith I had a wife.
☞ Praise who so woll a wedded mans life,
Certaine I find in it but cost and care,
And obseruaunces of all blisses bare.
And yet God wot my neighbours about
And namely of women many a rout,
Saine that I haue the most stedfast wife,
And eke the meekest one that beareth life.
☞ But I wot best, where wringeth me my shoe.
Ye may for me, right as you list doe,
Auise you, ye been a man of age,
How that ye entren into marriage,
And namely with a yong wife and a faire.
By him that made water, earth, and aire
☞ The yongest man that is in all this rout,
Is busie inow to bring it about
To haue his wife alone, trusteth me:
Ye shall not pleasen her peres thre.
This is to sain, to doen her pleasaunce,
A wife asketh full much obseruaunce:
I pray you that ye be not euill apaid.
Well (qd. this January) and hast thou al said?
Straw for thy Seneck, & for thy prouerbes,
I count it not worth a paunier of herbes
Of schoole termes, wiser men than thou,
As thou hast heard, assenteth it right now
To my purpose: Placebo, what say ye?
☞ I say it is a cursed man (qd. he)
That letteth Matrimonie sekerly:
And with that word they risen suddainly,
And been assented fully, that he should
Be wedded when him list, & where he would.
High fantasie and curiousnesse
Fro day to day gan in the soule empresse
Of January, about his marriage:
Many a faire shap, and many a faire visage
Ther passeth through his hart night by night:
As who so tooke a mirrour polished bright,
And set it in a common market place,
Then should he see many a figure pace
By his mirrour, and in the same wise
Gan January within his thought deuise
Of maidens, which that dwellen beside:
He wist not where he might best abide.
For if that one had beauty in her face,
Another stont so in the peoples grace
For her sadnesse and her benignite,
That of the people greatest voice had she.
And some were rich and had bad name:
But natheles, betwixt earnest and game,
He at last appointed him on one,
And let all other from his heart gone:
And chese her of his owne authoritee,
For loue is blind all day, and may not see. ☞
And when that he was in his bed ybrought,
He purtreid in his heart and in his thought
Her fresh beauty, and her age so tender,
Her middle small, her armes long and slender,
Her wise gouernance, and her gentlenesse,
Her womanly bearing, and her sadnesse.
And when he was on her condiscended,
Him thought his choise might not ben amended.
For when that he himselfe concluded had,
Him thought ech other mens wit so bad:
That impossible it were to replie
Ayenst his choice, this was his fantasie.
His friends sent he to, at his instaunce,
And praieth hem to done him that pleasaunce,
That hastily they would to him come,
He would bredgen her labour all and some:
Needeth no more for him to go ne ride,
He was appointed there he would abide.
Placebo came, and eke his friends soone,
And alderfirst he bad hem all a boone,
That none of hem none arguments make
Ayenst his purpose that he hath ytake:
Which purpose was pleasant to God (said he)
And very ground of his prosperite.
He said there was a maiden in the toune,
Which for her beautie hath great renoune,
All were it so, she were of small degre,
Sufficeth him her youth and her beautie:
Which maid he said he would haue to wife
To liuen in ease and holinesse of life:
And thanketh God, ỹ he might hauen her all,
And that no wight his blisse parten shall:
And praieth hem to labour in this need,
And shapeth that he faile not to speed.
For then he saied, his spirit was at ease,
Then is (qd. he) nothing may me displease,
Saue o thing pricketh in my conscience,
The which I woll rehearse in your presence.
I haue (qd. he) heard say full yore ago, ☞
There may no man haue perfite blisses two:
This is to say, in yearth and eke in heauen.
For though he kept him fro the sinnes seuen,
And eke from euery braunch of thilke tree,
Yet is there so perfit prosperitee
And so great ease and lust in mariage,
That euer I am agast now in mine age,
That I shall lead now so merry a life
So delicate without wo or strife,

That

That I shall haue mine heauen in earth here.
For sithen very heauen is bought so deere
With tribulation and great penaunce,
How should I then liuing in such pleasaunce,
As a wedded men doen with their wiues,
Come to ỹ blisse, ther Christ eterne on liue is.
This is my drede, and ye my brethren tweie
Assoileth me this question I you preie.

Iustinus, which that hated his folly,
Answerd anon right in his paperie:
And for he would his long tale abrege,
He would non authoritie allege,
But saied: sir, so there be non obstacle
Other than this, God of his hie miracle,
And of his mercy may so for you werch,
That er ye han your rights of holy cherch,
Ye may repent of a wedded mans life,
In which ye sain is neither wo ne strife:
☞ And els God forbid, but if he sent
A wedded man grace him to repent
Well after, rather than a single man.
And therefore sir, the best rede that I can
Despeireth you not, but haue in memory,
☞ Paraunenture, she may be your purgatory.
She may be Gods meane and Gods whip,
Then shall your soule vp to heauen skip
Swifter than doth an arrow out of a bow.
I hope to God hereafter ye shall know,
That there nis none so great felicite
In marriage, ne neuer none shall be,
That you shall let of your saluation,
So that ye vse as skil is and reason
The lusts of your wife attemperatly,
And that ye please her nat too amorously:
And that ye keep you eke from other sin.
My tale is done, for my wit is thin:
Beth not agast hereof my deare brether.
But wade we fro this matter to another.
The wife of Bathe, if ye vnderstand
Of marriage, which ye now haue in hand,
Declareth full well in a litle space:
Farewell now well, God haue you in his grace.

And with this word, Iustine & his brother
Han take her leaue, and ech of them of other.
For whan they saw that it must needs be,
They wrought so by wise and slie treate,
That she this faire maide which May did
As hastily as euer that she might (hight,
Shall wedded be to this January.
I trow it were to long to you to tary,
If I you told of euery escrite and bond,
By which she was feoffed in his lond:
Or for to herken of her rich aray.
But finally icomen is the day,
That to the cherch both twayben they went,
For to receiue the holy Sacrament. (necke,
Forth cometh the preist, with stole about his
And bad her be like Sara and Rebeck
In wisedome and truth of marriage:
And saied his orisons, as is the vsage,
And crouched hem, & bad God shuld hem bless,
And made all seker inow with holines.

Thus been they wedded with solemnitie:
And at feast sitteth both he and she
With other worthy folke vpon the deies,
All full of ioy and blisse is the palaies,
And full of instruments and of vitaile,
And that the most deintiest of all Itaile.
Before him stood instruments of such soun,
That Orpheus, ne of Thebes Amphion
Ne made neuer such a melodie.

At euery course came loude minstralcie,
That neuer Ioab tromped for to here,
Neither Theodomas yet half so clere
At Thebes, whan the city was in dout,
Bacchus the wine hem skinketh all about,
And Venus laugheth on euery wight,
For January was become her knight:
And would now both assain his corage
In liberte, and eke in mariage.
And with her firebrond in her hond about,
Daunceth before the bride all the rout:
And certainly, I dare well say right this,
Emenius, that God of wedding is,
Saw neuer so mery a wedded man.

Hold thou thy peace thou poet Marcian,
That writest vs that ilke wedding mery
Of Philologie and him Mercurie,
And of the songs that the Muses song:
To small is both thy pen and eke thy tongue
For to discriuen of this marriage,
whã tẽder youth hath wedded stooping age,
There is such mirth, it may not be written,
Assaieth your selfe, than may ye witten
If that I lie or non in this matere.

May she sit, with so benigne a chere,
That her to behold, it seemed a feire.
Queene Hester looked neuer with such an eie
On Assuere, so meeke a looke hath she.
I may you not deuise all her beautie,
But thus much of her beautie tell I may,
That she was like the bright morow of May
Fulfilde of all beautie, and of pleasaunce.

This January is rauished in a traunce,
And at euer time he looked in her face,
But in his heart he gan her to manace,
That he ỹ night, in his arms would her strein
Harder than euer Paris did Helein.
But natheles yet had he great pittie
That thilke night offenden her must he:
And thought alas, O tender creature,
Now would God ye might well endure
All my corage, it is so sharpe and keene,
I am agast, ye shall it nat sustene.
But God forbid, that I did all my might;
Now would to God that it were waxẽ night,

And that the night would last euer mo,
I would that all these people were ago.
And finally he doth all his labour,
As he best might, sauing his honour,
To hast hem fro the meat in subtill wise,
The time came that reason was to rise,
And after that men daunced, and drinke fast,
And spices all about the house they cast:
And full of ioy and blisse is euery man,
All but a Squire, that hight Damian,
Which carfe before the Knight many a day:
He was so rauisht on his Lady May,
That for very paine he was nie wood,
Almost he swelt, and swounded there he stood:
So sore hath Venus hurt him with her brād,
So fresh she was, and therto so lieand:
And to his bed he went him hastily,
No more of him at this time speake I:
But there I let him weep inow and plaine,
Till the fresh May will rewen on his paine.
O perilous fire, that in ỹ bensraw bredeth,
O familiar foe, that his seruice bedeth.
O seruaunt traytour, false homely hew,
Like to the Adder slie in bosome vntrue.
O January all drunken in pleasaunce,
God shilde vs all from your iniquitaunce
Of mariage, see how this Damian,
Thine owne squire and eke thy borne man
Entendeth to doen thee villanie:
God graunt thee thine homely foe to espie.
For in this world nis wers pestilence,
Than homely foe, all day in thy presence.
Parformed hath the sunne his arke diurne,
No longer may the body of him sojourne
On orisont, as in that latitude:
Night with his mantill, that is darke & rude,
Gan for to spred, the Hemisperie about:
For which departed is the lustie rout
Fro January, with thonke on euery side
Home to her house lustely they ride,
There as they doen her things, as hem lest,
And whā they saw her time they go to rest.
Sone after this lustie Januarie
Will go to bed, he would no longer tary.
He drinketh Ipocras, clarree, and bernage
Of spices hot, to encrease his corage:
And many a lectuarie had he full fine,
Such as the cursed monke dan Constantine
Hath written in his booke of Coitu:
To eten hem al he nolde nothing eschew,
And thus to his priuie friends saied he:
For Gods loue, as sone as it may be,
Let voyd all this house in curteis wise sone.
When drunken and the trauers drue anon,
So hasted January, it must be done:
The bride was brought to bed as stil as ston
And whā the bed was with the priest iblessed
Out of the chamber euery wight hem dressed,
And January hath fast in armes take
His fresh May, his paradise, his make:
He lulleth her, he kisseth her full oft
With thicke bristles of his beard vnsoft,
Like the skin of Hondfish, sharp as brere,
For he was shaue all new in his manere:
He rubbeth her vpon her tender face,
And saied thus: Alas, I mote trespace
To you my spouse, and you greatly offend,
Or time come that I will doune discend.
But natheless, considereth this (quoth he)
There nis no workeman, whatsoeuer he be,
That may both werch well and hastely:
This will be doen at leiser perfectly,
It is no force how long that we play,
In true wedlocke coupled be we tway:
And blessed be the yoke that we been in,
For in our acts we mow do no sin.
A man may do no sin with his wife,
Ne yet hurt himself with his own knife:
For we haue leaue to play vs by the law.
Thus laboureth he, till the day gan daw:
And then he taketh a soppe of fine clarre,
And vpright in his bed then sitteth he
And after he singeth full loud and clere,
And kist his wife, and maketh wanton chere.
He was all coltish, and full of ragerie,
And full of iargon, as is a flecked Pie.
The slacke skin about his necke shaketh,
While that he sang, so chaūteth he & craketh.
But God wot what May thoght in her hert,
When she him saw vp sitting in his shert
In his night cap, with his necke all leane:
She praiseth not his playing worth a Bean.
Then saied he thus: my rest will I take
Now day is come, I may no longer wake,
And down he layed his head & slept til prime:
And afterward, when that he saw his time
Up riseth January, but the fresh May
Holdeth her chamber to the fourth day,
As vsage is of wiues for the best.
For euery labour some time mote haue rest,
Or els long may he not to endure.
This is to say, no liues creature,
Be it fish or beast or bird or man.
Now will I speake of wofull Damian,
That langureth for loue, as ye shall here.
Therefore I speake to him in this manere.
I say, O sely Damian, alas
Answer to this demaund, as in this cas,
How shalt thou to thy Lady fresh May
Tell thy wo? She will alway say nay:
Eke if thou speake, she will thy wo bewray.
God be thine help, I can no better say.
This sicke Damian in Venus fire
So brenneth, that he dieth for desire:
For which he put his life in aduenture,
No longer might he in this wise endure,

But

But priuily a penner gan he borrow,
And in a letter wrote he all his sorrow,
In maner of a complaint or a lay
Unto this faire and fresh Lady May.
And in a purse of silke, hanging on his shert,
He hath it put and layed it at his hert.
The Moone at nonetide that ilke day
(That Januarie had wedded fresh May)
Out of Taure was in the Cankre gleden,
So long hath May in her chamber bidden
As custome is, unto these nobles all:
A bride shall not eaten in the hall
Till dayes foure, or three at the least
Ipassed been, than let her go to feast.
The fourth day complete fro noone to noone,
Whan that the high Masse was now idoon,
In hall sat this January and May,
As fresh as is the bright Somers day.
And so befell, how that this good man
Remembreth him upon his Damian,
And said: Saint Mary, how may this be,
That Damian entendeth not to me?
Is he ate sicke: or how may this betide?
His squires, which that stoden him beside,
Excused him, because of his sickenesse,
Which letted him to doen his businesse:
None other cause might make him tary.
That me forthinketh (qd. this January)
He is a gentle squire by my trouth,
If that he died, it were harme and routh:
He is as wise, discreet, and secree,
As any man that I wote of his degree,
And thereto manly and seruiceable,
And for to be a thrifty man right able.
But after meat as soone as euer I may
I will my selfe visit him, and eke May,
To doen him all the comfort that I can:
And for that word, him blessed euery man,
That of his bounty and his gentlenesse
He would so comforten in his distresse
His squire, for it was a gentle deed.
Dame (qd. this January) take good heed,
That after meat, ye and your women all
(Whan ye haue ben in chãber out of this hall)
That all ye gone to see this Damian:
Doeth him disport, he is a gentleman,
And tellen him that I will him visite,
Haue I nothing but rested me alite:
And speed you fast for I will abide,
Till that ye sleepen fast by my side.
And with that word he gan to him call
A squire, that was Marshall of his hall,
And told him certaine thing that he would.
This fresh May hath streght her way ihold
With all her women, unto this Damian:
And downe by his beds side sat she than
Comforting him as goodly as she may.
This Damian, whan that he his time say
In secret wise, his purse, and eke his bill
(In which he had written all his will)
Hath put in into her honde withouten more,
Saue that he sighed wonderous deep & sore:
And softly, to her right thus sayed he,
Mercie, and that ye discouer nat me:
For I am dead, if that this thing be kid.
This purse hath she in her bosome hid,
And went her way, ye get no more of me,
But unto January is come is she,
And on his beds side she sit full soft,
He taketh her, and kisseth her full oft:
And layed him down to sleep, and that anon.
She fained her, as that she must gon
Ther as ye wote, that euery wight had need:
And whan she of this bill hath taken heed,
She rent it all to clouts, and at last
Into the priuie, softly she it cast.
Who studieth now but faire fresh May?
And adowne by January she lay,
That slept, till the cough hath him awaked:
Anon he prayed her to strip her all naked,
He would of her (he said) haue some pleasance:
He said her clothes did him encombrance,
And she obeieth be she leke or loth.
But lest that precious folk be with me wroth,
How that he wrought, I dare nat to you tell,
Or whether she thought it paradise or hell:
But I let hem worch in her wise
Till euensong ring, that they must arise.
Were it by destenie or by aduenture,
Were it by influence, or by nature,
Or constellation that in such estate
The heauen stood, that time fortunate,
(As for to put a bill of Venus werkes)
For all thing hath time, as saien clerkes
To any woman for to get her loue:
I cannot say, but the great God aboue
That knoweth, that non act is causeles,
He deme all, for I will hold my pes.
But soth is this, how that this fresh May
Hath take such impression that day
Of pitie, on this sicke Damian,
That fro her heart she driuen ne can
The remembrance for to doen him ease.
Certain (thought she) whõ this thing displease
I recke not, for this I him assure,
I loue him best of any creature,
Though he no more had than his shert.
Lo pitie renneth soone in gentle hert,
Here may ye see, how excellent franchise
In women is whan they hem narow auise.
Some tyraunt is, as there be many a one,
That hath an heart as hard as any stone,
Which would haue letten sterue in the place
Well rather thã haue granted him her grace:
And her reioyced in her cruell pride,
And not haue recked to been an homicide.

This

This gentle Maie, fulfilled of pitie,
Right so of her hond a letter made she,
In which she graunted him her very grace,
There lacked nought, but onely time & place,
Where that she might to his lust suffice:
For it shall be, right as he woll deuise.
And whan she saw her time vpon a day,
To visit this Damian goth this faire Maie,
And subtilly this letter downe she thrust
Under his pillow, read it if him lust.
She taketh him by the hõd, & hard him twist
So secretly, that no wight of it wist,
And bad him been all whole, and forth she wẽt
To January, when that he for her sent.
Up riseth Damian the next morow,
All passed was his sickneſſe and his sorowe:
He kẽbeth him and proineth him and piketh,
And doth all that his Lady lust and liketh:
And eke to January he goeth as low,
As euer did a dog for the bow.
He is so pleasaunt to euery man
(For craft is all, who that it can)
That euery wight is fain to spekẽ him good,
And fully in his Ladies grace he stood.
Thus let I Damian about his need,
And in my tale, forth I woll proceed.
Some clerkes holden that felicite
Stont in delite, and therefore certaine he
This noble January, with all his might
In honest wise as longeth to a knight,
Shope him to liue full deliciously,
His housing, his array, as honestly
To his degree, was made as a kings.
Among other of his honest things
He had a garden walled all with stone,
So fayre a garden was there neuer none.
For out of doubt, I verily suppose,
That he that wrote the Romant of the Rose,
Ne couth of it the beautie well deuise:
Ne Priapus, ne might not suffise,
Though he be god of gardens, for to tell
The beautie of the garden, and of the well,
That stont vnder a laurer alway green:
Full oft time king Pluto and his queen
Proserpina, and all her fayrie
Disporten hem and maken melodie
About that well, and dauneed as men told.
This noble knight, this January the old
Such deinte hath, in it to walke and play,
That he woll suffer no wight to bear ỹ kay,
Saue he himselfe for the small wicket
He bare alway of siluer a clicket,
With which when ỹ him list he would vnshet
And when that he would pay his wife her det
In summer season thider would he go,
And Maie his wife, & no wight but they two:
And thinges which that weren not done a bed,
He in the garden performed hem and sped.
And in this wise, many a mery day
Liued this January and this fresh May.
But worldly toy may not alway endure
To January, ne to no liuing creature.
O sudden hap, O thou fortune vnstable,
Like to the Scorpion disceiuable, (sting:
That flatterest with thy head when thou wolt
Thy taile is deth, thrugh thine enuenoming.
O brotell toy, O sweet poyson queint,
O monster, that so suddenly canst peint
Thy gifts, vnder the hew of stedfastnesse,
That thou deceiuest both more and lesse.
Why hast thou January thus deceiued,
And haddest him for thy friend receiued?
And now thou hast beraft him both his eyen,
For sorow of which desireth he to dyen.
Alas, this noble January that so free,
Amidde his lust and his prosperitie
Is woxen blind, and all suddenly,
His death therefore desireth he vtterly.
And therewithall, the fire of ielousie
(Lest that his wife should fall in some folly)
So brent his heart, that he would full faine,
That some man, both him and her had slaine.
For neuer after his death, ne in his life
Ne would he that she were loue ne wife:
But euer liue a widdow in clothes blacke,
Sole as the turtle doth ỹ hath lost her make.
But at the last, after a moneth or tway
His sorow gan to swage, soth to say.
For whan he wist it might non other be,
He patiently tooke his aduersite:
Saue out of doubt may he nat forgone,
That he nas ielous euer more in one:
Which ielousie, it was so outragious,
That neither in hall ne in none other house,
Ne in none other place neuer mo
He nolde suffer her neither ride ne go,
But if that he had honde on her alway.
For which full often wepeth fresh May,
That loued Damian so benignely,
That she mote either die sodainely,
Or she mote haue him all at her lest:
She waiteth whan her heart should to brest.
Upon that other side, Damian
Become is the sorowfullest man
That euer was, for neither night ne day
Ne might he speake a word to fresh May,
As to his purpose of no such matere,
But if that January must it here,
That had an hand vpon her euermo.
But natheles, by writing to and fro,
And priuie signes, wist he what she ment,
And she knew all the signes of his entent.
O January, what might thee it auaile?
Tho thou mightest see, as far as ships saile:
For as good is a blind man disceiued be,
As to be disceiued, when that he may see.

Lo Argus, which had an hundred eien,
For all that euer he couth poze and pzien,
Yet was he blent, and God wot so ben mo,
That wenen wisely that it is not so:
Passe ouer is an ease, I say no moze.
The fresh May, of which I spake of poze
In warme waxe hath pzinted this clicket,
That January bare of that small wicket,
By which vnto his garden oft he went.
And Damian that knew all her intent
The clicket counterfeited pziuily:
There nis no moze to say, but hastily
Some wonder by this clicket shall betide,
Which ye shall heren, if ye woll abide.
O noble Ouid, sooth sayest thou God wote,
What sight is it, if loue be long and hote,
That he nill find it out in some manere:
By Pyzamus and Thisbe may men lere,
Thogh they were kept ful long streit ouer all,
They ben accozded, rowning through a wall:
There nis no wight couth find such a sleight,
But now to purpose, ere the daies eight
Were passed, ere the month July befill,
That January hath caught so great a will
Through egging of his wife him foz to play,
In his garden, and no wight but they tway,
That in a mozrow, vnto this May said hee,
Rise vp my wife, my loue, my lady free:
The turtle voice is heard my lady swete,
The winter is gone, with all his raines wete,
Come forth now with thine eyen columbine,
Now fairer been thy brests than is wine.
The garden is enclosed all about,
Come forth my white spouse out of all dout,
Thou hast me wounded in my hert, O wife:
No spot in thee nas in all thy life.
Come forth and let vs taken our dispoze,
I chese thee foz my wife and my comfoz.
Such old leaud wozds then used he.
Unto Damian a signe made she,
That he should go befoze with his clicket:
This Damian hath opened this wicket,
And in he stert, and that in such manere,
That no wight might it see ne here,
And still he sat vnder a bush anone.
This January, as blind as is a stone
With May in his hand, and no wight mo,
Into his fresh garden is he go,
And clapt to the wicket suddainly.
Now wife (qd. he) here nis but thou and I,
That art the creature that I best loue:
For by that lozd that sit vs all aboue,
I had leuer dien on a knife,
Than thee offend my dere true wife.
For Gods sake thinke how I thee chees,
Not foz couetise, ne other good doubtles,
But only foz the loue I had to thee.
And though that I be old and may not see,
Be to me true, and I woll tell you why,
Certes three things shall ye win thereby.
First loue of Christ, & to your selfe honour,
And all mine heritage, toune and tour
I giue it you, maketh charters as ye list:
This shall be done to mozrow ere sunne rist
So wisely God my soule bring to blisse:
I pray you on couenaunt that ye me kisse.
And though that I be iclous, wite me nought,
Ye been so deepe impzinted in my thought,
That when I consider your beaute,
And withall, the vnlikely elde of me,
I may not certes, though I should die
Forbeare to ben out of your companie
For very loue, this is without en dout:
Now kisse me wife, and let vs rome about:
This fresh May when she these wozds herd,
Benignely to January answerd,
But first and forward she began to weepe:
I haue (qd. she) a soule foz to keepe
As well as ye, and also mine honour,
And of wifehood like tender flour,
Which that I haue ensured in your hond,
When that the priest to you my body bond,
Wherefoze I woll answere in this manere
By the leaue of you my lozd so dere.
I pray God that neuer daw that day,
That I ne sterue, as foule as woman may,
If euer I do to my kin that shame,
Oz els that I empaire so my name,
That I be false, and if I do that lacke,
Do strip me and put me in a sacke,
And in the next riuer do me dzench:
I am a gentlewoman, and no wench.
Why speke ye thus, but men ben euer vntrew,
And women haue repzoofe of you, aye new.
Ye can none other communing, I leue,
But speake to vs of vntrust and repzeue.
And with ỹ wozd she saw where Damian
Sat in the bush, and knecle he began:
And with her finger signes made she,
That Damian should climbe vpon a tre,
That charged was with fruite, & vp he went:
For verily he knew all her intent,
And euery signe that she couth make,
Well bet than January her owne make,
For in a letter she had told him all
Of this matter, how that he wozch shall.
And thus I let him sit in the pery,
And January and May roming full mery.
Bzight was the day, & blew the firmament,
Phebus of gold doun hath his streames sent
To gladen euery flour with his warmenesse:
He was that time in Gemini, as I gesse,
But little fro his declination,
The causer of Joues exaltation.
And so befell that bzight mozow tide,
That in the garden, on the further side

Pluto

Pluto, that is the king of Fayrie
And many a lady in his compaine
Following his wife, the queene Proserpine
Ech after other right as a line,
Whilom he gadred flowres in a mead:
In Claudian ye may the story read,
How in his grisely cart he her fet.
This king of Fayrie adowne him set
Upon a bench of turues fresh and greene,
And right anon thus said he to his queene:
My wife (qd. he) that may nat say nay
Experience so proueth every day
The treason which that women doth to man,
Ten hundred thousand stories tell I can,
Notable, of your untrouth and brotelnesse.
O Salomon, richest of all richesse,
Fulfild of sapience, and of worldly glory,
Full worthy ben thy wordes in memory
To every wight, that wit and reason can:
Thus praiseth he the bounty of man.
Among a thousand men yet found I one,
But of all women found I neuer none:
Thus saith ỳ king, ỳ knoweth your wickednesse,
And Ecclus Filius Sirach, as I gesse,
Ne speaketh of you but selde reuerence:
A wilde fire, a corrupt pestilence
So fall upon your bodies yet to night:
See ye not this honourable knight?
Because (alas) that he is blind and old,
His owne man shall maken him cuckold.
Lo where he sit, the lechour in the tree.
Now will I graunt of my maiestie
Unto this old blind worthy knight,
That he shall haue again his eye sight:
Whan that his wife would done him vilanie,
Then shall he know all her harlotrie,
Both in reproefe of her and other mo.
Ye shall (qd. Proserpine) and will ye so?
Now by my mothers soule sir I swere,
That I shall yeuen her sufficient answere.
And all women after for her sake:
That though they been in any gilt ytake
With face bolde, they shullen hemselue excuse
And bear hem down that would hem accuse.
For lacke of answere, non of hem shall dien,
All had he see a thing with both his eyen,
Yet should we women so visage it hardely,
And weepe and swere and chide subtilly,
That ye shall been as leude as are geese,
What recketh me of your authoritees?
I wote well this Jewe, this Salomon,
Found of us women, fooles many one:
But though he ne found no good woman,
Yet there hath found many an other man
Women full true, full good, and vertuous;
Witnes of hem that dwell in Christes house,
With Martyrdom they preued her constance.
The Romain gests eke make remembrance,
Of many a very true wife also.
But sir, be not wroth though it be so,
Though that he said he found no good woman
I pray you take the sentence of the man:
He meant thus, That in soueraign bounte
Nis none but God, that sitteth in trinite.
Eye, for very God that nis but one.
What make ye so much of Salomon?
What though hee made a tẽple, Gods house?
What though he were rich and glorious?
So made he a temple of false godis,
How might he don a thing ỳ more fore forbod
Parde as faire as ye his name emplaster, (is:
He was a lechour, and an idolaster,
And in his elde, very God forsoke.
And if that God had (as saith the booke)
Vspared him for his fathers sake, he should
Haue lost his reigne soner than he would.
I set nat of all the villanie,
That ye of women write, a butterflie.
I am a woman, nedis mote I speake
Or elis to swell till that mine heart breake.
For sithen he said that we been iangleresses
As euer mote I hole broke my tresses,
I shall nat spare for no curtesie
To speak hem harm, that would vs villanie.
Dame (qd. this Pluto) be no lenger wroth,
I giue it up: but sith I swore mine oth,
That I would graunt him his sight ayen,
My word shall stand, ỳ warne I you certeine:
I am a king it set me not to lie.
And I (quoth she) queen am of Fairie.
Her answere she shall haue I vndertake,
Let vs no mo wordes hereof make:
For sothe I will no longer you contrary.
Now let vs turne againe to Januarie,
That in the garden with this faire Maie
Singeth merier than the Popingay:
You loue I best, and shall, and other non.
So long about the alleyes is he gon,
Till he was commen ayenst thilke pery,
Where as this Damian sitteth full mery
On high, among these fresh ieues green.
This fresh Maie, that is so bright & shene
Gan for to sike, and said: alas my side:
Now sir (qd. she) for ought that may betide
I must haue of these peers that here I see
Or I mote die, so sore longeth me
To eten some of the small peers greene:
Help for hir loue that is heauens queene.
I tell you well a woman in my plite,
May haue to fruite so great an appetite,
That she may dyen, but she it haue.
Alas (qd. he) that I ne had here a knaue,
That couth climbe, alas, alas (qd. he)
For I am blinde, ye sir no force (qd. she)
But would ye vouchsafe for Gods sake,
The pery in your armes for to take:

For

For well I wot that ye mistrust me,
Then would I climbe well ynough (qd. she)
So I my foote might set vpon your backe.
For sooth said he, in me shall be no lacke,
Might I you helpe all with mine hart blood:
He stoupeth down, & on his back she stood,
And caught her by a twist, an vp she goth.
Ladies I pray you that ye be not wroth,
I can nat glose, I am a rude man:
And sodainely anon this Damian
Gan pullen vp the smocke, and in the throng
A great tent, a thrifty and a long.
She said it was the meriest fit,
That euer in her life she was at yet:
My lords tent serueth me nothing thus
It foldeth twifold by sweet Iesus,
He may nat swinge not worth a leke:
And yet he is full gentill and full meke.
This is leuer to me than an euensong.
And when that Pluto saw this wrong,
To January he gaue againe his sight,
And made him see as well as euer he might:
And whan he had caught his sight againe,
Ne was there neuer man of thing so faine:
But on his wife his thought was euer mo.
Up to the tree he cast his eyen two,
And saw how Damian his wife had dressed
In such mannere, it may not be expressed,
But if I would speak vncurtesly.
And vp he pak a roring and a cry,
As doth the mother when the child shall die:
Out helpe, alas, harow) he gan to cry:
For sorrow almost he gan to die,
That his wife was swined in the pery.
O strong lady whore what doest thou?
And she answered: sir what ayleth you?
Haue patience and reason in your minde,
I haue you holpen of both your eyen blinde.
Up peril of my soule I shall nat lien
As me was taught to help your eyen.
Was nothing bet for to make you see,
Than strogle with a man vpon a tree:
God wot I did it in full good entent.
Strogle (qd. he) ye algate in it went
As stiffe and as round as any bell:
It is no wonder though thy belly swell.
Thy smocke on his breast it lay so thech,
That stil me thought he pointed on the brech.
God giue you both on shames death to dien,
He swined thee, I saw it with mine eyen,
Or els I be honged by the halse.
Then is (qd. she) my medicine false,
For certainely, if that ye might see,
Ye would not say these words vnto me,
Ye haue some glimsing, and no perfit sight.
I see (qd. he) as well as euer I might,
Thanked be God, with both mine eyen two,
And by my trouth me thought he did so.
Ye male ye male, good sir (quoth she)
This thanke haue I for that I made you see:
Alas (quoth she) that euer I was so kind.
Now dame (qd. he) let al passe out of mind:
Come down my life, and if I haue missaid,
God helpe me so, as I am euill apaid.
But by my fathers soule, I wende haue seyn,
How that this Damian had by thee lyen,
And that thy smocke had lyen vpon his brest.
Ye sir (qd. she) ye may wene as ye lest:
But sir, a man that waketh out of his sleep,
He may not suddenly well taken kepe
Upon a thing, ne se it perfectly
Till that he be adawed verily.
Right so a man that long hath blind be,
Ne may not saddainly so well yse
First when the sight is new comen again,
As he that hath a day or two ysain.
Till that your sight istabled be a while,
There may full many a sight you begile.
Beware I pray you, for by heauen king
Full many a man weneth to see a thing,
And it is all another than it semeth:
He that misconceiueth oft misdemeth.
And with that word she lept down fro ꝑ tree:
This January who is glad but he?
He kisseth her, he clippeth her full oft,
And on her wombe he stroketh her full soft:
And to his paleis home he hath her lad.
Now good men I pray you beth ye all glad.
Thus endeth here my tale of Ianuarie,
God blesse vs all, and his mother Marie.

The wife of Bathes Prologue.

EXperience, though none authoritie
Were in this world, is right ynow for me
To speak of wo that is in mariage:
For lordings, sith I twelue yeres was of age,
Thanked be God that is eterne on liue,
Husbonds at chirche dore haue I had fiue
For I so often haue ywedded be,
And all were worthy men in her degree.
But me was told not long ago iwis,
That sithen Christ went neuer but onis
To wedding in the Cane of Galilee,
That by thilke ensample taught he me,
That I ne should wedded be but onis.
Lo here, which a sharpe word for the nones,
Beside a well, Iesu God and man
Spake in reprefe of the Samaritan:
Thou hast had fiue husbonds (quoth he)
And that ilke man that now hath thee,
Is not thyn husbond: thus said he certain,
What he meant hereby, I can not sain,
But that I aske a point, why the fift man
Was nat husbond to the Samaritan:

How many might she haue in marriage?
Yet herd I neuer tellen in mine age
Upon this number true definitioun,
Men may deuine, and glosen vp and down.
But well I wot expresse without lie,
God bad vs for to wex and multiplie,
That gentle text can I well vnderstond:
Eke wel I wot (he sayd) mine husbond
Should leaue father & mother, & take to me,
But of number no mention made he
Of bigamie or of octogamie,
Why should men speak of it villany?
Lo he the wise king Dan Salomon
I trow had wiues many mo than on,
As would God it lefull were to me
To be refreshed halfe so oft as he.
Which a gift of God had he, for his wyues?
No mã hath such, that in this world a liue is.
God wot this noble king, as to my wit
The first night had many a merry fit
With each of hem, so well was him aliue.
Blessed be God, I haue wedded fiue,
Welcome the sixth when euer he shall,
For soth I will not keep me chaste in all:
When mine husbond is fro the world ygon,
Some christen man shall wed me anon.
For then the Apostle saith, that I am free
To wed a goddelaike where it liketh me:
He saith, that to be wedded is no sinne,
Better is to be wedded than to brinne.
What reketh me though folke say villany
Of shrewd Lamech, and of his bigamy?
I wot well Abraham was an holy man,
And Iacob eke, as fer as euer I heare can,
And each of hem had wiues mo than two,
And many another holy man also.
Where can you say in any manner age
That euer God defended mariage
By expresse words, I pray you tell me?
Or where commaunded he virginite?
I wot as well as ye, it is no dread,
The Apostle, when he spake of maidenhead,
He said, thereof precept had he none:
Men may counsaile a woman to be one,
But counselling is no commaundement,
He put it wholly in our owne iudgement.
For had God commaunded maidenhead,
Then had he damned wedding out of dread.
And certes, if there were no seed ysow,
Virginity then whereof should it grow?
Poule ne durst not commaund at the lest
A thing of which his master pate none hest:
The dart is set vp for virginite,
Catch who so may, who renneth best let see.
But this word is not taken of euery wight,
But there as God list yeue it of his might.
I wot well that the Apostle was a maid,
But natheles, though that he wrote and said
He would that euery wight were such as he,
All nis but counsaile to virginite.
And for to wen a wife he yaue me leue,
Of indulgence, so nis it to repreue
To wed me, if that my make die
Without exception of bigamie:
All were it good no woman for to touch,
He ment as in his bed or in his couch.
For perill is, both fire and tow to assemble,
Ye know what this ensample may resemble.
This is all and some, he held virginite
More perfit than wedding in freelte.
Freelte clepe I, but if that he and she
Would lead her life all in chastite.
I graunt it well, I haue none enuie,
Though maidenhead preferre bigamie,
It liketh hem to be clean in body and ghost:
Of mine estate I will make no bost.
For well ye know, a lord in his houshold
Hath nat euery vessell all of gold:
Some been of tre, and don her lord seruice
God clepeth folke to him in sundry wise,
And euerich hath of God a proper gift,
Some this, some that, as him liketh shift.
Virgintie is great perfection,
And continence eke with deuotion:
But Christ, that of perfection is well,
Bad not euery wight he should go sell
All that he had, and giue it to the poore,
And in such wise folow him and his lore:
He spake to hem that would liue perfectly,
And lordings (by your leaue) that am nat I,
I will bestow the floure of all myn age
In the acts and fruit of marriage.
Tell me also, to what conclusion
Were members made of generation?
And of so perfit wise a wight iwrought?
Trusteth well, they were nat made for nought,
Glose who so will, and say vp and down
That they were made for purgation
Of vrine, and other things smale,
And eke to know a female from a male,
And for none other cause, what say ye no?
The experience wot well it is not so:
So that the clerks be not with me wroth,
I say that they were maked for both,
This is to saien, for office, and for ease
Of engendrure, there we not God displease.
Or why should men elis in her bookes set,
That man should yeld to his wife her det?
Now wherwith should he pay his payment
If he ne vsed his sely instrument?
Then were they made vpon a creature
To purge vrine, and eke for engendrure.
But I say not that euery wight is hold,
That hath such harneis as I to you told,
To go and vsen hem in engendrure,
Then should men take of chastitie no cure.

Christ

Christ was a maide, and shapen as a man,
And many a saint, sithen the world began,
Yet liued they euer in perfit charitie:
I nill enuy no virginitie.
Let hem with bread of pure wheat be fed,
And let vs wiues eat barley bread,
And yet with barley bread, Marke tell can,
Our lord Iesu refreshed many a man.
In such a state as God hath cleped vs,
I woll persever, I nam not precious,
In wifehood woll I vse mine instrument
As freely as my maker hath it sent.
If I be dangerous, god giue me sorow,
Mine husbōd shal it haue both euin & morow,
when that him list come forth & pay his det.
An husbond wol I haue I wol not let,
which shall be both my debtour & my thrall,
And haue his tribulation withall
Upon his flesh, while that I am his wife.
I haue the power during all my life
Upon his proper body, and nat he,
Right thus the Apostle told to me,
And bad our husbonds for to loue vs well,
All this sentence me liketh euery dell.

Up stert the Pardoner, and that anon,
Now dame qd. he, by God & by saint John,
Ye been a noble preacher in this caas:
I was about to wed a wife, alas
what, should I bie it on my flesh so deare?
Yet had I leuer wed no wife to yeare.

Abide qd. she, my tale is not begon:
Nay, thou shalt drinke of another ton
Er that I go, shall sauer worse than ale,
And when that I haue told forth my tale
Of tribulation that is in marriage,
Of which I am expert in all mine age,
This is to say, my selfe hath been the whip,
Then maiest thou chese whether thou wolt sip
Of thilke ton, that I shall set abroch:
Beware of it, er thou to nere aproch.
For I shall tell ensamples mo than ten:
Who so woll not beware by other men
By him shall other men corrected be:
These same wordes writeth Dan Ptholome,
Read in his almagest, and take it there.

Dame I woll pray you, if your will were,
Said this Pardoner, as ye began,
Tell forth your tale, spareth for no man,
And teach vs yong men of your practike.

Gladly (qd. she) if it may you like.
But that I pray to all this company,
If that I speake after my fantasy,
As taketh not a griefe of that I say,
For mine entent is not but to play.

Now sirs, then shall I tell forth my tale:
As euer might I drinke wine or ale
I shall say sooth. Tho husbonds that I had
Three of hem were good, and two were bad:
The three good men were rich and old,
Unnethes might they the statute hold,
In which they were bounden vnto me.
Ye wot well what I meane of this parde:
As God me helpe, I laugh when I thinke,
How pitiously a night I made hem swinke,
But by my fay, I told of it no store:
They had me yeue her lond and her tresore,
Me neded no lenger to doe diligence
To win her loue, and do hem reuerence.
They loued me so well by God aboue,
That I ne tolde no deinte of her loue.
A wise woman woll bisie her euer in one
To get her loue there as she hath none.
But sithen I had hem holly in mine hond,
And that they had giue me all her lond,
what should I take keep hem for to please,
But it were for my profit and mine ease?
I set hem so a worke by my fay,
That many a night they songen well away:
The bacon was not fet for hem I trow,
That some men haue in Essex at Dunmow,
I gouerned hem so well after my law,
That ech of hem full blisful was and faw
To bring me gay things home fro the fayre.
They were full fain when I spake hem faire:
For God it wot, I chid hem spitously.
Now herkeneth how I bere me properly.

Ye wise wiues that can vnderstond,
Thus shul ye speak, and bere hem on hond,
For halfe so boldly there can no man
Swere and lie, as a woman can:
I say not this by wiues that been wise,
But if it be when they him misse anise.
A wise wife shall if that she can her good,
Bere hem in hond that the cow is wood,
And taken witnesse of her owne maid
Of her assent: but herkeneth how I said.

Sir old keynard, is this thine aray,
Why is my neighbours wife so gay?
She is honoured ouer all where she goth,
I sit at home, and haue no thriftie cloth.
What dost thou sirha at my neighbors house?
Is she so faire? art thou so amorous? (cite
What rownest thou with our maid? benedi=
Sir old lechour, let thy japes be.
And if I haue a Gossip or a friend
(Without gilt) thou chidest as a fiend,
If that I walke or play vnto his house:
Thou cōmest home as drunken as Mouse,
And preachest on thy bench with euill prefe:
Thou sayest to me it is a great mischiefe
To wed a poore woman, for costage:
And if that she be rich of high parage,
Then saiest thou, it is a very tourmentrie
To suffer her pride and her Melancoly.
And if that she be faire, thou very knaue,
Thou saiest that euery holour woll her haue.

She may no while in chastitie abide,
That is assailed on euery side.
Thou saist some folke desiren vs for richesse,
Some for our shape, & some for our fairnesse,
And some, for she can either sing or dance,
And some for gentlenesse or for daliance,
Some for her hondes and her armes smale:
Thus goeth all to the deuill by thy tale.
Thou saist men may not keep a castle wal,
It may so long assailed be ouer all.
And if that she be foule, thou saiest that she
Coueteth euery man that she may see.
For as a Spaniell, she woll on him lepe,
Til that she find some mã that wol her chepe:
Ne none so gray Gose goth there in the lake
(As saist thou) ỹ woll been without her make.
And saiest, it is a hard thing for to welde
A wight, that no man woll his thonke helde.
Thus saist thou lorell, whã thou goest to bed,
That no wise man needeth for to wed,
Ne no man that entendeth vnto heuin.
With wild thunder dint and fire leuin
Mote thy wicked necke be all to broke.
Thou saist, dropping houses, & eke smoke,
And chiding wiues maken men to flee
Out of her owne house, ah, Benedicitie,
What aileth such an old man for to chide?
Thou saiest, we wiues woll our vices hide,
Till we be wedded, & than we wol hem shew.
Well may this be a prouerbe of a shrew.
Thou saist, that oxẽ, horses, asses, & houds,
They ben assaied at diuers stounds:
Basins lauers, or that men hem bie,
Spones stooles, and all such husbondrie,
And so be pots, clothes, and araies,
But folke of wiues maken non assaies,
Till they been wedded, old dotard shrew,
And saiest, how we woll than our vices shew.
Thou saiest also, that it displeaseth me,
But if that thou wilt praise my beaute,
And but thou poze alway on my face,
And clepe me faire dame in euery place:
And but thou makẽ a feast on that ilke day
That I was borne, & make me fresh and gay:
And but thou doen to my norice honour,
And to my chamber within my bour:
And to my fathers folke, and his alies,
Thus saiest thou old barell full of lies.
And again of our prentise Jenkin,
For his crispe heer, shining as gold fine,
And for he squireth me both vp and down,
Hast thou caught a false suspection:
I woll him nat, tho thou wer ded to morow.
But tell me this why hidest thou with so-
The keies of thy chest away fro me? (row
It is my good as well as thine parde.
What, wenest thou make an idiot of our dame
Now by that Lord that called is saint Jame
Thou shalt nat both although thou wer wood
Be master of my body and of my good,
That one thou shalt forgon maugre thin yẽ.
What helpeth it of me to enquere and spien?
I trow thou wouldest locke me in thy chist?
Thou shouldest say, Wife, go where thou list,
Take your disport, I woll leue no tales,
I know you for a true wife dame Ales.
We loue no man, ỹ taketh keep or charge
Where that we go, we woll be at our large.
Of all men iblessed mote he be
The wise Astrologien Dan Ptholome,
That saieth this prouerbe in his almagest,
Of all men his wisedome is the best,
That recketh not who hath the world in hõd.
By this prouerb thou shalt vnderstond,
Haue thou inow, what need thee recke or care
How merely that other folke do fare.
For certes, old dotarde by your leue,
Ye shallen haue queint inow at eue.
He is too great a nigard that woll werne
A man to light a candle at his Lanterne:
He shall haue neuer the lesse light parde.
Haue thou inow, thou darst not plain thee:
Thou saiest also, that if we make vs gaie
With clothes or with precious array,
That it is perill of our chastitie:
And yet with sorow, thou must enforcen thee,
And say these words in the Apostles name:
In habite made with chastitie and shame
Ye women should apparele you (qd. he)
And nat in tressed heere, and gay peere
As perle, ne with gold, ne clothes rich.
After the text, ne after thy rubriche
I nill not worche as much as a Gnat.
Thou saiest also, I was like a Cat:
But who so would senge the Cats skin,
Than would the Cat dwellen in his Inne:
And if the Cats skin be slicke and gay,
She nill nat dwell in house halfe a day,
But forth she woll or any day be dawed
To shew her skin, and gon a catrewawed.
Thus thou saiest, if I be gaie, sir shrew,
I woll ren out, my borell for to shew.
Sir old foole what helpeth thee to spien?
Though thou play Argus with his C. eyen
To be my wardecors, as he can best,
In faith he shall not keep me but my lest:
Yet couth I make his beard so mote I thee.
Thou saiest eke ỹ there been things three
The which greatly troublen all the earth,
And that no wight may endure the ferth:
O, lefe sir shrew, Jesu shorte thy life.
Yet preachest thou, & saiest, an hateful wife
Rekened is, for one of these mischances:
Been there non other resemblances
That ye may liken your parables to
But if a sely wife be one of tho?

Thou

Thou likeneſt eke womans loue to hell,
To barren lond, there water may not dwell:
Thou likeneſt it alſo to wild fire,
The more it brenneth, the more it hath deſire
To conſume any thing, that brent would be.
Thou ſaieſt, right as wormes ſhendē a tre,
Right ſo a wife deſtroieth her huſbond,
This knowen they that ben to wiues bond.
Lordings, right thus as ye haue vnderſtōd
Bare I ſtiffely mine old huſbond on hond,
That thus they ſaiden in her dronkenneſſe,
And all was falſe, but as I tooke witneſſe
Of Jenkin, and of my neece alſo:
O Lord the paine I did hem, and the wo,
And that full giltles by Gods ſweet pine:
For as an horſe, I couth both bite and whine,
I couth plain, though I were in the gilt,
Or elſ oftentime I had been ſpilt.
Who ſo firſt to Mill commeth, firſt grint,
I plained firſt, and ſo was our war ſtint:
They were full glad to excuſen hem blithe
Of thing, that they a gilt neuer in her life.
Of wenches would I beare hem on hond,
Whē that for ſick, vnneths might they ſtond,
Yet tickled it his heart for that he
Wend I had of him ſo great cheerte:
I ſwore that all my walking out by night,
Was for to eſpie wenches that he dight:
Under that coulour had I much mirth,
For all ſuch wit, is giuen vs in our birth,
Deceipt, weeping, ſpinning, God haue giue
To women kindly while that they liue.
And thus of one thing I may auaunt mee,
At thende I had the beſt in each degree,
By ſleight or force, or by ſome manner thing,
As by continuall murmure or grudging.
Namely a bed had they muckle miſchance,
There would I chide, and don no pleaſance:
I would no lenger in the bed abide
(If I felt his arme ouer my ſide)
Till he had made his raunſom vnto me,
Then would I ſuffer him doe his nicete.
And therefore, euery man this tale I tell,
Wine who ſo may, all been for to ſell:
With empty hondes mē may no hawkes lure,
For winning would I all his luſt indure,
And make me then a fained appetite,
And yet in Bacon had I neuer delite:
That made me euer that I would hē chide.
For though the Pope had ſitten hem beſide,
I would not ſpare hem at her owne bord,
For by my truth I quit him word for word,
As helpe me verey God omnipotent,
Tho I right now ſhould make my teſtament,
I ne owe hem a word, but it is quit,
I brought it ſo about by my wit,
That they muſt giue it vp, as for the beſt,
Or elſ had we neuer been in reſt.
For though he looked as wood as a Lyon,
Yet ſhould he faile of his concluſion.
Then would I ſay (good leefe) take keep,
How meekly looketh wilken our ſheep:
Com neer my ſpouſe, & let me baſſe your cheek,
Ye ſhould be all patient and meek,
And haue a ſweet ſpiced conſcience,
Sith ye ſo preach of Jobs patience,
Suffreth alway ſith ye ſo well can preach:
And but if ye do, we ſhall you teach,
That it is faire to haue a wife in pees,
One of vs two muſte obeien doubteleſs:
And ſith a man is more reaſonable
That a woman is, ye muſt been ſufferable.
What aileth you to grutch thus and grone?
Is it for ye would haue my queint alone?
Why take it all: lo, haue it euery del,
Peter I ſhrew you but ye loue it wel.
For if I would ſell my belchoſe,
I couth walke as freſh as any roſe,
But I woll keep it for your owne tooth:
Ye be to blame by God, I ſay you ſooth.
Such maner words had we often on hond.
And now will I ſpeake of my fourth huſbond.
My fourth huſbond was a reuellour,
This is to ſay, he had a Paramour,
And I was yong and full of ragarie,
Stubburne and ſtrong, and toly as a Pie,
Well could I daunce to an Harpe ſmale,
And ſing iwis as a Nightingale,
Whē I had dronkē a draught of ſweet wine,
Metellius, the foul churle and the ſwine,
That with a ſtaffe bireft his wife her life
For ſhe dronk wine: though I had be his wife,
Ne ſhould he not haue daunted me fro drinke:
And after wine, of Venus muſt I thinke.
For all ſo ſeker, as cold engendreth haile,
A licorous mouth muſt haue a lecherous taile.
In women vinolent is no defence,
This know lechours by experience.
But lord Chriſt, when it remembreth me
Upon my youth, and my iolite,
It tickleth me about the hart roote,
Unto this day it doth my hart boote,
That I haue had my worldes in my time:
But age alas, that all woll enuenime
Hath me bireft my beauty and my pith:
Let go, farewell, the deuill goe therewith.
The flower is gon, there nis no more to tell,
The bran (as I beſt can) now mote I ſell.
But yet to be right mery woll I fond,
Now forth to tell of my fourth huſbond.
I ſay I had in hert great diſpite,
That he of any other had delite:
But he was quit by God and ſaint Joce,
I made him of the ſame wood a croce,
Not of my body in no foule manere,
But certainly, I made folke ſuch chere,

That in his owne greace I made him frie
For anger, and for very iclousie.
By God, in earth I was his purgatorie,
For which I hope is soule bene in glorie.
For God it wote, he sate full oft and song,
When that his shooe full bitterly him wrong.
There was none, saue God and he, that wist
In many wise, how sore that I him twist.
He died when I came fro Hierusalem,
And lyeth in graue vnder the Rode beem.
All nis not his tombe so curious
As was the sepulture of Darius.
Which that Appelles wrought so subtilly:
It is but wast to bury him preciously.
Let him farewel, God giue his soule good rest,
He is now in his graue and in his chest.

Now of my fifth husband woll I tell,
God let neuer his soule come in hell.
And yet was he to me the most shrew,
That feele I on my ribbes all by rew,
And euer shall, vnto mine ending day.
But in our bed he was so fresh and gay,
And therewithall, he couth so well me glose,
When that he would haue my belly chose,
That though he had me beat on euery bone,
He couth win ayen my loue anone.
I trow I loued him the bet, for that he
Was of his loue so dangerous to me.
We women haue, if that I shall not lie
In this mattere a queint fantasie.
Waite what thing we may nat lightly haue,
Thereafter woll we all day cry and craue.
Forbid vs thing, and that desiren we:
Prese on vs fast, and then woll we flee.
With danger vttren we all our chaffare,
Great prees at market maketh deere ware.
And to great cheap is hold at to little prise,
This knoweth euery woman that is wise

My fifth husbonde, God his soule blesse,
Which I tooke for loue and no richesse,
He sometime was a clerke in Oxenford,
And had left schole, a went at home to borde
With my Gossip dwelling in our town:
God haue her soule, her name was Alisoun.
She knew my heart and eke my priuite,
Bet than our parish prest so mote I thee.
To her bewrayed I my counsell all,
For had my husbond pist againe the wall,
Or done a thing that should haue cost his life,
To her, and to another worthy wife,
And to my nece, which that I loued well.
I would haue told his counsell euery dell,
And so I did full often God it wote
That made his face full oft red and hote
For very shame, and blamed himselfe, for he
Had told to me so great a priuite.

And so befell that ones in a Lent
So oft time I to my Gossip went.
For euer yet I loued to go gaie
And for to walke in March, April, and Maie
Fro house to house, to heark en sundry tales,
That Ienkin clerk, and my Gossip dame Ales
And I my selfe, into the fields went:
My husbond was at London all that Lent,
I had the better leasure for to plete,
And for to see, and eke for to be seie
Of lustie folke, what wist I where my grace
Was shapen for to been, or in what place?
Therefore made I my visitations
To Villages, and to processions,
To preachings eke, and to pilgrimages,
To playes of miracles, and to marriages,
And wered on my gaie scarlet gites:
These wormes, these moughts, ne these mites
Upon my parell fret hem neuer a dell,
And wost thou why? for they were vsed well.

Now woll I tell forth what happed me:
I say, that in the fields walked we,
Till truely we had such daliance
This clerke and I, that of my purueyance
I speake to him, and said how that he,
If I were widow, should wedden me.
For certainely, I say for no boastance,
Yet was I neuer without purueiance
Of marriage, ne of other things eke:
I hold a Mouses wit not worth a leke,
That hath but one hole to sterten to,
And if that faile, then is all idoe.
I bare him on hand he had enchanted me:
My Dame taught me forsoth that subtiltie.
And eke I said, I met of him all night,
He would a slaine me, as I lay vpright,
And all my bed was full of very blood,
But yet I hope truely he should doe me good:
For blood betokeneth gold, as I was taught,
And al was falle, I dremed of him right nauzt,
But as I followed aye my Dames loze,
As well of that as of other things moze.

But now sir let me see, what shall I sain:
A ha, by God I haue my tale againe.
When that my fourth husband was on bere,
I wept algate and made heauy chere,
As wiues moten, for it is vsage:
And with my kerchefe couered my visage.
But for that I was purueyed of a make,
I wept but small, and that I vndertake.
To church was my husbond borne on morow
With neighbours that for him maden sorow,
And Ienkin our clerke was one of tho:
As helpe me God, when that I saw him go
After the bere, me thought he had a paire
Of legs and of feet, so cleane and so faire,
That all my heart I yaue vnto his hold,
He was I trow twentie Winter old,
And I was fortie, if I shall say sooth,
But yet I had alway a Colts tooth:

Gap=

Gaptothed I was, and that became me wele,
I had the print of dame Venus seale.
As helpe me God, I was a lustie one,
And faire, rich, and yong, and well bigone:
And truly, as mine husbond told me
I had the best queint that might be.
For certes I am all fully Venerian
In feeling, and my heart is Marcian:
Venus me yaue my lust and my licorousnesse,
And Mars yaue me my sturdie hardinesse.
Mine ascendent was Taure, & Mars therin:
Alas, alas, that euer loue was sin.
I followed aye mine inclination
By vertue of my constellation:
That made me I couth neuer withdraw
My chamber of Venus from a good fellaw.
Yet haue I Martes marke vpon my face,
And also in another priuie place.
For God so wisely be my saluation,
I loued neuer by no discretion,
But euer followed mine appetite,
All were he short, long, blacke, or white,
I tooke no keepe, so that he liked mee,
How poore he was, ne eke of what degree.
What should I say? but at the monthes end
This iolly clerke Jenken, that was so hend,
Hath wedded me with great solemnitee,
And to him yaue I all the lond and fee,
That euer was yeuen me here before:
But afterward repented me full sore,
He nold suffer nothing of my list.
By God he smote me once with his fist,
For that I rent out of his booke a leafe
That of that stroke my eares wex deafe.
Stubborne I was, as is a Lioneſſe,
And of my tongue a very iangleresse.
And walke I would, as I had doen before
Fro hous to hous, although he had it sworn:
For which full oftentime would he preach,
And me of old Romane iests teach.
How he Sulpitius Gallus lett his wife,
And her forlooke for tearme of his life,
Not but for open hede he her seie
Looking out at his doore on a daie.
Another Romane told he me by name,
That for his wife was at a Summer game
Without his weting, he forlooke her eke.
And then would he vpon his Bible seke
That ilke prouerbe of Ecclesiast,
Where he commaundeth, and forbiddeth fast,
A man shall not suffer his wife rome about.
Then would he say right thus out of dout:
Who so buildeth his house all of sallowes,
And pricketh his blind hors ouer the fallowes,
And suffereth his wife for to seche hallowes,
Is worthy to be honged on the gallowes.
But all for nought, I set not an haw
Of his prouerbes, ne of his old saw:
Ne I would not of him corrected be,
I hate him that my vices telleth me,
And so doe mo (God it wote) than I.
This made him wood with me all vtterly,
I nold not forbeare him in no caas.
Now will I say you sooth by S. Thomas,
Why that I rent out of his booke a lefe,
For which he smote me, that I was deafe.
He had a booke, that gladly night and day
For his disport, he would read alway:
He cleped it Valerie, and Theophrast,
At which booke he lough alway full fast.
And eke there was a clerke somtime at Rome,
A Cardinall, that hight saint Jerome,
That made a booke ayenst Jouinian,
In which booke there was eke Tertulian,
Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowis,
That was Abbesse not ferre fro Paris:
And eke the parables of Salomon,
Ouids art, and bookes many one,
And all these were bounden in one volume,
And euery night and day was his custome
(When he had leisure and vacatioun
From other worldly occupatioun)
To readen in this booke of wicked wiues:
He knew of hem mo legends and liues,
Than been of good women in the Bible.
For trusteth well, it is an impossible,
That any clerke would speak good of wiues,
But if it been of holy saints liues,
Ne of none other woman nere the mo
Who painteth the Lion, tell me who?
By God, if women had written stories,
As clerkes han, within her oratories,
they wold haue writ of mē more wickednesse,
Than all the marke of Adam may redresse.
The children of Mercurie and Venus
Been in her working full contrarious.
Mercurie loueth wisdome and science,
And Venus loueth riot and dispence.
And for her diuers disposition,
Ech falleth in others exaltation.
And thus God wote, Mercurie is desolate
In Pisces, where Venus is exaltate,
And Venus falleth where Mercurie is reised.
Therefore no woman of no clerke is preised.
The clerke whē he is old, and may nought do
Of Venus werkes, not worth his old sho,
Then sit he downe, and writ in his dotage,
That women cannot keepe her mariage.
But now to purpose, why I told thee,
That I was beaten for a booke parde.
Upon a night Jenken, that was our sire,
Red vpon his booke, as he sate by the fire,
Of Eue first, that for her wickednesse,
Was all mankind brought to wretchednesse:
For which ỹ Jesu Christ himselfe was slaine,
That bought vs with his hart blood againe.

Lo here expresse of women may ye find,
That all woman was the losse of all mankind.
Tho rad he me how Sampson lost his heres
Slepyng, his lēman cut hem with her sheres,
Through which treason lost he both his eyen.
Tho rad he me, if that I shall not lien,
Of Hercules, and of his Dianire,
That caused him to set himselfe a fire.
Nothing forgot he the care and the wo,
That Socrates had with his wiues two:
How that Xantippe cast pisse on his head,
This silly man sat still, as he were dead,
He wiped his head, no more durst he saine,
But er the thunder stint there commeth raine.
Of Paliphae, that was queene of Crete,
For shrewednesse him thoght ẏ tale was swete,
Fie, speake no more, it is a grisely thing,
Of her horrible lust and her liking.
Of Clitemnestra for her letcherie,
That falsely made her husbond for to die,
He rad it with well good deuotion.
He told me eke, for what occasion
Amphiaraus at Thebes lost his life:
My husbond had a legend of his life.
Eriphilem, that for an ouche of gold
Hath prively vnto the Grekes told,
Where that her husbond hid him in a place,
For which he had at Thebes sorry grace.
Of Lima told he me, and of Lucie:
They both made her husbonds for to die,
That one for loue, that other was for hate:
Lima her husbond on an euen late
Empoysoned had, for that she was his fo:
Lucia likerous loued her husbond so,
That for he should alway vpon her thinke,
She gaue him such a loue maner drinke,
That he were dead ere it were morrow:
And thus algates husbonds han sorrow.
Then told he me, how one Latumeus
Complained to his fellow Arius,
That in his garden growed such a tree,
On which (he said) that his wiues three
Honged hemselfe for harts despitous:
O lefe brother (qd. this Arius)
Geue me a plant of this blissful tree,
And in my garden planted shall it bee.
Of latter date of wiues hath he red,
That some han slain her husbands in bed,
And let her lechour dight hem all the night,
Whiles that the corse lay in floore vpright.
And some had driuen nailes in her brain,
Whiles they slept, and thus they haue hem slain.
Some haue geue hem poyson in her drink:
He spake more harm thā any hart may think,
And therwithall he knew mo prouerbes,
Than in this world there groweth grasse or herbes.
Bet is (qd. he) thine habitation
Be with a Lion, or a foule Dragon,
Than with a woman vsing for to chide.
Bet is (qd. he) high in the roofe to abide,
Than with an angry wife doun in an hous,
They ben so wicked and so contrarious:
They hate, that their husbonds loue ate.
He said, a woman cast her shame away,
When she cast off her smocke: and farther mo,
A faire woman, but she be chast also,
Is like a gold ring on a Sowes nose.
Who could wene, or who could suppose
The wo that in mine hart was and pine.
And when I saw he would neuer fine
To reden on this cursed booke all night,
All suddainly three leaues haue I plight
Out of his booke, right as he radde, and eke
I with my fist so tooke him on the cheke,
That in the fire he fell backward adoun:
And vp he start, as doth a wood Lioun,
And with his fist he smote me on mine head,
That in the floore I lay as I were dead.
And when he sele how still that I lay,
He was agast, and would haue fled away,
Till at the last out of my swoun I braied:
Oh, hast thou slaine me false theefe I said,
For my lond thus hast thou murdred mee?
Ere I be dead, yet will I once kisse thee,
And neere he came, and kneeled faire adoun,
And said: deere suster, sweet Alisoun
As helpe me God I shall thee neuer smite:
That I haue doen it is thy selfe to wite,
Forgeue it me, and that I thee beseke.
And yet eftsoones I hit him on the cheke,
And said: theefe, thus much am I bewreke,
Now will I die, I may no longer speke.
But at the last, with mokell care and wo
We fell accorded within our selues two:
He gaue me all the bridle in mine hond
To haue the gouernaunce of hous and lond,
And of his tongue, and of his hond also,
And I made hem bren his booke anon tho.
And when I had gotten vnto me
By maistrie, all the souereignte,
And that he said: mine owne true wife,
Do as thou list, the tearme of all thy life,
Keepe thine honour, and eke mine estate,
After that day we had neuer debate.
God helpe me so, I was to him as kinde,
As any wife fro Denmarke vnto Inde,
And also true, and so was he to me.
I pray to God that sit in Maiestie
So blisse his soule, for his mercy deare,
Now will I say my tale if ye will heare.
The frere lough whē he had heard all this:
Now dame (qd. he) so haue I ioy or blis,
This is a long preamble of a tale.
And whē the Sompner herd the frere gale,
Lo (qd. this Sompner) by Gods armes two,
A Frere will entermete him euermo:

Lo good men, a flie and eke a Frere
Woll fall in euery dish and eke matere.
What speakest thou of prcambulatioun?
What amble or trot? either peace or sit adoun:
Thou lettest our disport in this mattere.
Ye wolt thou so sir Sompner (qd. ỳ Frere)
Now by my fay I shall, ere that I go,
Tell of a Sompner such a tale or two,
That all the folke shull laugh in this place.
Now do, els Frere I beshrew thy face
(Qd. this Sompner) and I beshrew mee,
But if I tell tales two or three
Of Freres, ere I come to Sittingburne,
That I shall make thine hart for to murne:
For well I wot thy patience is gone.
Our host cried peace, and that anone,
And saied: let the woman tell her tale,
Ye faren as folke that dronken been of ale:
Do dame, tell forth your tale, and that is best.
All ready sir (qd. she) right as you lest,
If I haue licence of this worthy Frere.
Yes dame, tell forth your tale, I woll it here.

¶ The wife of Bathes Tale.

A batcheler of king Arthurs Court, is enjoined by the Queene to tell what thing it is that women most desire. At length hee is taught it by an old woman, who for that cause hee is enforced to marrie.

IN the old dayes of King Artour,
(Of which the Bretons speaken great honour)
All was this lond fulfilled of Fairie,
The Elfe queene, with hir jolly companie
Daunced full oft in many a greene mead:
This was the old opinion as I read.
I speake of many an hundred yeare ago,
But now can no man see none elfes mo,
For now the great charity and prayeres
Of limitours and other holy Freres,
That searchen euery land and euery streame,
As thicke as motes in the Sunne beame,
Blissing hals, chambers, kitchens, & boures,
Cities, boroughes, castles, and hie toures,
Thropes, Bernes, Shepens, and Dairies,
This maketh that there been no Fairies:
For there as wont to walke was an Elfe,
There walketh now the limitour himselfe
In vndermeles, and in mornings,
And saieth his Mattins and his holy things
As he goeth in his limitatioun:
Women may go safely vp and doun
In euery bush, and vnder euery tree,
There nis none other incubus but hee,
And he ne will doen hem no dishonour.
And so fell it, that this king Artour
Had in his house a lustie batcheler,
That on a day came riding fro the riuer:
And happed, that alone as he was borne,
He saw a maid walking him before,
Of which maid anon, maugre her head,
(By very force) he reft her maidenhead:
For which oppression was such clamour,
And such pursute vnto king Artour,
That damned was this knight to be dead
By course of law, & should haue lost his head,
Peraventure such was the statute tho:
But that the Queene and other ladies mo
So long praiden the king of his grace,
Till he his life graunted in that place,
And gaue him to the queene, all at her will
To chese whether ỳ she would him saue or spill.
The queen thãketh ỳ king with al hir might
And after this, thus spake she to the knight,
When she sey her time on a certaine day.
Thou standeth yet (qd. she) in such array,
That of thy life yet hast thou no suretie:
I graunt thee thy life, if thou canst tell me,
What thing is it that women most desiren:
Beware, and keepe thy necke bone from yren.
And if thou canst not tell it me anon,
Yet woll I yeue thee leaue for to gon
A twelue month and a day, to seeke and lere
An answere sufficient in this matere.
And suertie woll I haue, ere that thou passe,
Thy body for to yelde in this place.
Wo was the knight, and sorrowfully siketh
But what? he may not doen all as him liketh.
And at last he chese him for to wend,
And come ayen right at the yeares end
With such answer, as God wold him purvay:
And taketh his leue, & wendeth forth his way.
He seeketh euery house and euery place,
Where as he hopeth for to find grace,
To learne what thing women louen most:
But he ne couth arriuen in no coost,
Where as he might find in this matere
Two creatures according ylere.
Some said, women loued best richesse,
Some said honour, some said iollinesse,
Some said rich array, some said lust a bed,
And oft time to been widdow and wed.
Some said, that our heart is most y eased
When that we been flatered and ypraised.
He goeth full nie the sooth, I woll not lie,
A man shall win vs best with flatterie,
And with attendaunce, and with busines
Been we ylimed both more and lesse.
And some men sain, how that we louen best
For to been free, and do right as vs lest:
And that no man repreue vs of our vice,

But

But say that we be wise, and nothing nice.
For truly there nis none of vs all,
If any wight woll claw vs on the gall,
That we nill like, for that he saith vs sooth:
Assay, and he shall find it, that so dooth.
For be we neuer so vicious within,
We woll be holden wise and cleane of sin.
And some mē sain, that great delite haue we
For to been hold stable and eke secre,
And in o purpose stedfastly to dwell,
And not bewray thing that men vs tell.
But that tale is not worth a rake stele,
Parde we women can nothing hele,
Witnesse of Midas, woll ye here the tale?
Ouid, among other things smale
Said, Midas had vnder his long haires
Growing on his head two asses eares:
The which vice he hid, as he best might,
Full subtilly from euery mans sight:
That saue his wife, there wist of it no mo,
He loued her most, and trusted her also,
He prayed her, that to no creature
She nold tellen of his disfigure.
She swore him, not for all ỹ world to win,
She nold do that villany, ne that sin,
To maken her husbond haue so foule a name:
She nold not tell it for her owne shame.
But natheles, her thought that she dide,
That she so long should a counsaile hide,
Her thought it swoll so sore about her hert,
That needely some word she must asert:
And sith she durst tellen it to no man,
Doun to a marris fast by she ran,
Till she came there, her hert was on a fire:
And as a bittour bumbeth in the mire,
She laid her mouth vnto the water adoun.
Bewray me not thou water with thy soun
Quod she, to thee I tell it, and to no mo,
Mine husbond hath long Asses eares two.
Now is mine heart all hole, now it is out,
I might no lenger keepe it out of dout.
Here mow ye see, though we a time abide,
Yet out it mote, we can no counsaile hide.
The remnaunt of the tale, if ye will here,
Readeth Ouid, and there ye may it lere.
This knight, of which my tale is specially,
When that he saw he might not come therby,
This is to say, what women louen most:
Within his heart sorrowfull was his ghost.
But home he goth, he might not sojourne,
The day was come, he must home returne.
And in his way, it happed him to ride
In all his care, vnder a forrest side,
Whereas he saw vpon a daunce go
Of ladies foure and twenty, and yet mo:
Toward the daunce he drow him full yerne,
In hope that some wisdome should he lerne.
But certainly, ere that he came fully there,
Vanished was the daunce, he nist not where.
No creature saw he that bare life,
Saue in the greene sitting an old wife:
A fouler wight there may no man deuise.
Againe the knight the old wife gan arise,
And said: sir knight, here forth lieth no way,
Tell me what ye seeken by your fay,
Peraduenture it may the better be:
These old folke con much thing (qd. she.)
My leefe mother (qd. this knight) certaine,
I nam but dead, but if that I can saine,
What thing it is that women most desire:
Could ye me wisse, I would quite wel your hire.
Plight me thy trouth here in my hand (qd. she)
The next thing that I require of thee
Thou shalt it do, if it be in thy might,
And I woll tell it you or it be night.
Haue here my troth (qd. ỹ knight) I graunt.
Then (qd. she) I may me well auaunt,
Thy life is safe, for I woll stond therby,
Upon my life the queene will say as I:
Let see, which is the prowdest of hem all
That weareth on a kerchefe or a call,
That dare say nay, of that I shall you teach,
Let vs go forth without lenger speche.
Tho rowned she a pistell in his care,
And bad him to be glad, and haue no feare.
Whē they ben comen to ỹ court, this knight
Said, he had hold his day, as he had hight,
And ready was his answere, as he said:
Full many a noble wife, and many a maid
And many a widdow, for that they be wise,
(The queen her selfe sitting as a iustice)
Assembled ben, his answere for to heare,
And afterward this knight was bode appeare.
To euery wight commanded was silence,
And that the knight should tell in audience,
What thing that worldly women loued best:
This knight ne stood not still as doth a beast,
But to his question anon answerd
With manly voice, that all the court it herd.
My liege lady: generally (qd. he)
Women desiren to haue soueraignte
As well ouer her husbonds as her loue,
And for to ben in maistrie hem aboue.
This is your most desire, though ye me kill,
Doth as you list, I am here at your will.
In all the court nas there wife ne maid
Ne widdow, that contraried that he said,
But said, he was worthy han his life.
And with that word, vp start the old wife,
Which ỹ the knight found sitting on ỹ green:
Mercy (qd. she) my soueraigne lady queen,
Ere that your court depart do me right:
I taught this answere vnto this knight,
For which he plight me his trouth there,
The first thing I would of him requere,
He would it do, if it lay in his might:

Before

Before the court then pray I thee sir knight,
(Qd. she) that thou me take vnto thy wife,
For well thou wost, that I haue kept thy life:
If I say faise, say nay vpon thy fay.
This knight answerd, alas and welaway:
I wot right well that such was my behest,
For Gods loue chese a new request:
Take all my good, and let my body go.
Nay (qd. she) then I shrew vs both two.
For though that I be foule, old, and poze,
I nold for all the mettall ne the oze,
That vnder yerth is graue, oz liethe aboue,
But if I thy wife were and thy loue.
My loue (qd. he) nay my damnation:
Alas that any of my nation
Should euer so foule disparaged be.
But all for nought, the end is this, that he
Cõstrained was, that needs must he her wed,
And taketh this old wife, and goth to bed.
Now woulden some men say peraventure
That for my negligence, I do no cure
To tellen you the ioy and the array,
That at the feast was that like day.
To the which thing answer shozely I shall:
I say there nas no ioy ne feast at all,
There nas but heauinesse and much sozrow:
For priuily he wedded her on a mozrow,
And all day after hid him as an oule,
So wo was him, his wife looked so foule.
Gret was ỹ sozow ỹ knizt had in his thought
When he was with his wife a bed ybrought,
He wallowcth, and turneth to and fro.
His old wife lay smiling euermo,
And said: O deare husbond, O benedicite,
Fareth euery knight thus as do ye?
Is this the law of king Artours hous?
Is euery knight of his so daungerous?
I am your owne loue, and eke your wife,
I am she, which that saued hath your life,
And certes yet did I neuer you vnright.
Why fare ye thus with me the first night?
Ye faren like a man that had lost his wit.
Fie, what is my gilt? for Gods loue tell me it,
And it shall be amended if I may.
Amended (qd. this knight) alas nay nay:
That will not been amended neuer mo,
Thou art so loathly, and so old also,
And thereto comen of so low a kind,
That little wõder is though I wallow & wind,
So would God (qd. he) mine hert would brest.
Is this (qd. she) the cause of your vnrest?
Ye certainely (qd. he) no wonder nis.
Now sir (qd. she) I couth amend all this,
If that me list, ere it were dayes three,
So well ye might beare you vnto me.
But for ye speake of such gentlenesse,
As is discended out of old richesse,
That therefore shullen ye be gentlemen:
Such erogaunce is not worth an hen.
Lo who that is most vertuous alway,
Priuy and apert, and most intendeth aye
To do the gentle deeds that he can,
Take him for the greatest gentleman.
Christ wold we claimed of him our gẽtlenesse,
Not of our elders for our old richesse.
For though they yeue vs all her heritage,
For which we claimen to ben of high parage,
Yet may they not bequeath, for nothing,
To none of vs, her vertuous liuing,
That made hem gentlemen yealled be,
And bad vs follower hem in such degre.
Full well can the wise poet of Florence,
That hight Dantes, speake in this sentence:
Lo in such manner rime is Dantes tale.
Ful selde vp riseth by his braunches smale
Prowesse of man, for God of his goodnesse
Woll that we claime of him our gentlenesse:
For of our elders may we nothing claime
But tẽporal thing, ỹ men may hurt & maime.
Eke euery wight wot this as well as I,
If gentlenesse were planted naturally
Vnto a certaine linage doun the line,
Priuy and apert, then would they neuer fine
To done of gentlenesse the faire office,
They might done no villany ne vice.
Take fire and beare it into the derkest hous
Betwixt this and the mount Caucasus,
And let men shut the doores, and go thenne,
Yet will the fire as faire lie and brenne
As twenty thousand men might it behold:
His office naturall aye will it hold
Vpon perill of my life, till that it die.
Here may ye see well, how that gentrie
Is not annexed to possession,
Sithen folke do not her operation
Alway as doth the fire, lo in his kind:
For God it wot, men may full often find
A lordes sonne done shame and villany.
And he that will haue prise of his gentry,
For he was borne of a gentle hous,
And had his elders noble and vertuous,
And will himselfe don no gentle deedes,
Ne follow his gentle auncetre, that dead is,
He nis not gentle, be he duke or erle.
For villaines sinfull deeds maketh a cherle.
For gentlenesse nis but the renomie
Of thine auncestres, for her high bountie,
Which is a strong thing to thy persone:
Thy gentlenesse commeth fro God alone.
Then commeth our very gentlenesse of grace,
It was nothing bequeath vs with our place.
Thinketh how noble, as saith Valerius,
Was thilke Tullius Hostilius,
That out of pouerty rose to high noblesse:
Readeth Seneck, and readeth eke Boece,
There shall ye seene expresse, no dread is,

That

☞ That he is gentle that doth gentle deedis.
And therfore deare husbond, I thus conclude,
All were it that mine auncetors were rude,
Yet may that high God, and so hope I,
Graunt me grace to liue vertuously:
☞ Then am I gentle, when I begin
To liue vertuously, and leauen sin.
And there as ye of pouertie me repreue,
The high God, on whom that we beleue,
In wilfull pouerte chese to lead his life:
And certes, euery man, maid, and wife
May vnderstond, Jesu heauen king
Ne would not chese a vicious liuing.
☞ Glad pouert is an honest thing certaine,
This woll Seneck and other clerkes saine.
☞ Who so would hold him paid of his pouert,
I hold him rich, all had he not a shert.
☞ He that coueteth is a full poore wight,
For he would han that is not in his might.
☞ But who ỹ nought hath, ne coueteth to haue,
Is rich, although ye hold him but a knaue.
Very pouert is sinne properly.
Juuenall saith of pouert merrily:
☞ The poore man when he goeth by the way
Before the theues, he may sing and play.
☞ Pouert is hatefull good: and as I gesse,
A full great bringer out of busines:
A great amender eke of sapience,
To him that taketh it in patience.
Pouert is, although it seeme elenge,
Possession that no wight woll challenge.
☞ Pouerte full often, when a man is low,
Maketh him God and eke himselfe to know.
☞ Pouert a spectacle is, as thinketh me,
Through which one may his very friends see.
And therfore, since that I you not greue,
Of my pouert no more me repreue.
Now sir, eke of olde ye repreued me:
And certes sir, though none authorite
Were in no booke, ye gentles of honour
Sain, that men should an old wight honour,
And cleape hem father for her gentlenesse,
And authors shall I find, as I gesse.
Now there as ye sain ỹ I am foule and old,
Then drede you not to been a cokewold.
☞ For filth, elthe, and foule, all so mote I thee,
Ben great wardeins vpon chastite.
But natheles, since I know your delite,
I shall fulfill your worldly appetite.
Chese now (qd. she) one of these things twey,
To haue me foul, and old till that I dey,
And be to you a true humble wife,
And neuer you displease in all my life:
Or elis woll you haue me yong and faire,
And take your auenture of the repaire,
That shall come to your house because of me,
Or in some other place may well be:
Now chese your selue whether ỹ you liketh.

This knight auiseth him, and sore siketh,
But at the last he said in this manere:
My lady and my loue, and wife so dere,
I put me in your wise gouernaunce,
Chuseth your selfe which may bee more plea=
And most honour to you and me also, (saunce
I do no force whether of the two:
For as you liketh, it sufficeth me.
Then haue I got of you the mastry (qd. she)
Since I may chese and gouerne as my lest:
Ye certes wife (qd. he) I hold it for the best.
Kisse me (qd. she) we be no lenger wroth:
For by my truth, I woll be to you both,
This is to say, to be both faire and good,
I pray to God that I mote sterue wood,
But I to you be also good and trew,
As euer was wife, sithen the world was new:
And but I be to morrow as faire to seene,
As any Lady, Empresse, or Queene,
That is between East and eke the West,
Doth with my life right as you lest.
Cast vp the courtein, and looke how it is.
And when this knight saw verily all this,
That she so faire was, and so young thereto,
For ioy he hent her in his armes two:
His hart bathed in the bath of blisse,
A thousand times a row he gan her kisse:
And she obeyed him in euery thing,
That mought done him pleasure or liking.
And thus they liued vnto her liues end
In perfit ioy, and Jesu Christ vs send
Husbonds meeke and yong, and fresh abed,
And grace to ouerliue hem that we wed.
And I pray to God to short her liues,
That will not be gouerned by her wiues.
And old and angry niggards of dispence,
God send hem soone a very pestilence.

¶ The Friers Prologue.

This worthy limitour, this noble Frere
He made alway a maner louring chere
Upon the Sompner, but for honeste
No villaines word as yet to him spake he:
But at the last he said to the wife,
Dame, God yeue you right good life,
Ye haue touched here, all so mote I thee,
In schole matter, a full great difficulte,
Ye haue said much thing right well I say:
But dame, here as we riden by the way
Us needeth not to speaken but of game,
And let authorities a Gods name
To preaching, and to schoole of clergie.
But if it like vnto this companie,
I woll you of a Sompner tell a game,

Parde

Parde ye may well know by the name,
That of a Sompner may no good be said.
I pray that none of you be euil apaid:
A Sompner is a reuner vp and doun
With maundements, for fornicatioun,
And is ybeat at euery townes end.
Tho spake our host & said: sir ye should ben
And curteis, as a man of your estate, (hend
In this company we woll no debate:
Telleth your tale, and let the Sompner be.
Nay (qd. the Sompner) let him say to me
What so him list: whē it commeth to my lote,
By God I shall him quite euery grote,
I shall him tell which a great honour
It is to be a flattering limitour,
And eke of many another manner crime,
Which needeth not to rehearse at this time,
And of his office I shall him tell ywis.
Our host answerd: peace no more of this,
And afterward he said vnto the Frere,
Tell forth your tale mine owne maister dere.

¶ The Freres Tale.

The Sompner and the Deuill meeting on the way, after conference, become sworne brethren, and to hell they goe together. A couert inuectiue against the briberie of the spirituall Courts in those dayes.

Whylome there was dwelling in my countree
An Archdeacon, a man of high degre,
That boldly did execution
In punishing of fornication,
Of witchcraft, and eke of baudrie,
Of defamation, and aduoutrie,
Of church reues, and of testaments,
Of contracts, and lacke of sacraments,
Of vsurie, and of simonie also:
But certes lecherours did he much wo,
They shoulden sing, if they weren hent,
And small tythers they were foule yshent,
If any person would vpon hem plaine,
There might astert hem no pecunial paine
For small tithes, and small offering,
He made the people petously to sing:
For ere the bishop caught hem with his hooke
They weren in the Archdeacons booke,
And then had he (through his iurdiction)
Power to done on hem correction.
He had a Sompner ready to his hond,
A slier boy was there none in England:
For subtilly he had his espiaile,
That taught him where he might auaile.
He couth spare of lechours one or two,
To teachen him to foure and twenty mo:
For though this sompner wood were as an hase,
To tell his harlotry I woll not spare,
For we ben out of his correction,
They haue of vs no iurdiction,
Ne neuer shullen, teatme of all her lines.
Peter so ben women of the stewes,
(Qd. this Sompner) yput out of our cure.
Peace with mischance & with misaduenture
Said our host, and let him tell his tale,
Now telleth forth and let the Sompner gale,
Ne spareth not mine owne maister dere.
This false theef, this sompner (qd. the frere)
Had alway bauds ready to his hond,
As any hauke to lure in England,
That telleth him all the secre they knew,
For her acquaintance was not come anew,
They weren his approuers priuely,
He tooke himselfe a great profit thereby,
His maister knew not alway what he wan:
Without maundement, a leaud man
He could summon, on paine of Christs curse,
And they were glad to fillen his purse,
And maden him great feasts at the nale.
And right as Judas had purses smale
And was a theefe, right such a theefe was he.
His maister had but halfe his dutie,
He was (if I shall yeue him his laud)
A theefe, a sompner, and eke a baud.
He had eke wenches of his retinue,
That whether sir Robert or sir Hue,
Or Iohn, or Rafe, or who so that it were
That lay by hem, they told it in his eare.
Thus were the wenches and he of one assent,
And he would fetch a fained maundement,
And summon hem to the chapiter both two,
And pill the man, and let the wench go:
Then would he say, friend I shall for thy sake
Do striken thee out of our letters blake,
Thou dare no more as in this case trauaile:
I am thy friend there I may thee auaile.
Certaine he knew of bribries mo,
Than possible is to tell in yeares two:
For in this world nis dog for the bow,
That can an hurt deere from an whole know,
Bet than the Sompner knew a false lechour,
Or auouter, or els any paramour:
For that was the fruit of all his rent,
Therefore on it he set all his intent.
And so befell, that once on a day
This Sompner waiting euer on his pray,
Rode to summon an old widdow a ribibe,
Fayning a cause, for he would haue a bribe,
And happed that he saw before him ride
A gay yeoman vnder a forrest side:
A bow he bare, and arrows bright and shene,
He had vpon him a courtpie of greene,
An hat vpon his head with strings blake.

Sir (qd. this Sompner) haile & well it take.
Welcome (qd. he) and euery good fellaw,
Whider ridest thou vnder ỳ green wood shaw
Said this yeoman, wolt thou ferre to day?
This Sompner him answerd, and said: nay,
Here fast by (qd. he) is mine intent
To riden for to reysen vp a rent
That longeth vnto my lords dutte.
Art thou then a baylie? Yea (qd. he.)
He durst not then for very filth and shame
Say that he was a Sompner, for the name.
Depardieux, qd. this yeoman lefe brother,
Thou art a bayly, and I am another,
I am vnknowne, as in this countre,
Of thine acquaintance I woll pray thee,
And eke of brotherhead, if that thou list,
I haue gold and siluer in my chist:
If that ye hap to come in our shire,
All shall be thine, right as thou wolt desire.
Grantmercy (qd. this sompner) by my faith.
Eucrich in other his truth laith,
For to be sworne brethren till they dey,
And with that word they riden forth her wey.
This sompner with ỳ was as ful of iangles,
As full of venome, as ben these waryangles,
And euer requiring vpon euery thing.
Brother qd. he, where is your dwelling,
Another day if that I should you seech?
This yeoman him answerd in soft speech:
Brother qd. he, ferre in the North countre,
Whereas I hope sometime I shall thee see,
Or we depart I shall thee so well wisse,
That of mine house thou shalt neuer misse.
Now brother qd. the sompner, I you pray
Teach me, while we riden by the way,
(Sith that ye ben a bayly as am I)
Some subtelte, tell me faithfully
In mine office how I may most win,
And spare not for conscience ne for sin,
But as my brother, tell me how done ye.
Now by my trouth brother deare said he,
As I shall tellen thee a faithfull tale,
My wages been full strait and full smale,
My lord is hard to me and daungerous,
And mine office full laborious:
And therefore by extortion I leue
Forsooth by all that men will me yeue,
Algate by sleight or by violence:
From yeare to yeare I win all my dispence,
I can no better tellen faithfully.
Now certes (qd. the Sompnour) so fare I,
I spare not to taken God it wote:
But if it be too heauy or too hote,
That I may getten in counsaile priuily,
No manner conscience of that haue I,
Nere mine extortion, I might not liuen,
Of such japes will I not be shriuen:
Stomacke ne conscience know I none,
I shrew all these shrift fathers euerychone,
Well be we met by God and sweet S. Iame,
But leue brother, tell me thy name
Qd. this Sompner: in this meane while
This yeoman gan a little for to smile.
Brother qd. he, wolt thou that I thee tell?
I am a fiend, my dwelling is in hell,
And here I ride about my purchasing,
To wete where I may get any thing:
My purchase is theffect of all my rent,
Looke how thou rydest for the same intent
To win good, thou reckest neuer how,
Right so fare I, for ride woll I now
Vnto the worlds end for a pray.
Ah (qd. this sompner) what do ye say,
I wend ye were a yeoman truly,
Ye haue a mans shape as well as I,
Haue ye a figure then determinate
In hell, there ye ben in your estate?
Nay certainly (qd. he) there haue we none,
But when vs liketh we can take vs one,
Or elis make to you seeme: we ben shape
Sometime like a man, or like an ape,
Or like an Angell can I ride or go:
It is no wonder thing though it be so,
A lousie iugler can deceiue thee,
And parde yet can I more craft than hee.
Why qd. the Sompner, ride ye then or gone
In sundry shape, and not alway in one?
For we (qd. he) will vs such forme make,
As most able is our pray es for to take.
What maketh you to haue al this labour?
Full many a cause lefe sir Sompnour
Said this fiend, But all thing hath time.
The day is short, and it is passed prime,
And yet ne got I nothing in this day,
I will entend to winning, if I may,
And not entend our wits to declare:
For brother mine, thy wits ben all too bare
To vnderstand all, though I would tell thee,
But for thou askest why labouren we:
For sometime be we Gods instruments
And meanes to done his commaundements
When that him list, on his creatures,
In diuers art and in diuers figures:
Withouten him we haue no might certaine,
If that him list to stonden thereagaine,
And sometime at our prayer haue we leue,
Only the body, and not the soule to greue:
Witnesse of Job, whom we deden wo.
And sometime haue we might of both two,
This is to saine, of body and soule eke,
And sometime we ben suffered for to seeke
Vpon a man, and done his soule vnrest,
And not his body, and all is for the best
When he withstandeth our temptation,
It is a cause of his saluation,
Albeit that it was not our intent

He ſhould be ſafe, but that we wold him hent,
And ſometime be we ſeruaunts vnto man,
As to the archbiſhop ſaint Dunſtan
And to the Apoſtle eke ſeruaunt was I.
Yet tell me (qd. this Sompner) faithfully,
Make ye you new bodies thus alway
Of elements? the fiend anſwerd nay:
Sometime we faine, and ſometime we ariſe
With dead bodies, and that in ſundry wiſe,
And ſpeake as reuably, faire, and well,
As the Phitonelle did to Samuell:
And yet would ſome men ſay it was not he.
I do not force of your diuinitie,
But o thing I warne thee, I woll not nape,
Thou wolt algates wete how we be ſhape:
Thou ſhalt hereafterward (my brother dere)
Come, where thee needeth not of me to lere,
For thou ſhalt by thine owne experience
Conne in the chare the rede of this ſentence
Bet than Virgill, while he was on liue,
Or Dant alſo. Now let vs ride blithe,
For I woll hold company with thee,
Till it be ſo that thou forſake mee.
Nay (qd. this Sompner) ỹ ſhall not betide,
I am a yeoman knowen full wide:
My trouth wol I hold to the, as in this caas.
For though thou were the deuill Sathanas,
My trouth woll I hold to my brother
As I am ſworne, and each of vs to other,
For to be true brother in this caas,
And brother, we gone to our purchaas.
Take thou thy part, that men woll thee yeue,
And I ſhal mine, and thus ſhall we both leue.
And if that any of vs haue more than other,
Let him be true, and part it with his brother.
I graunt (qd. the deuill) by my fay,
And with that word they riden forth her way,
And right at the entring of the tounes end
(To which ỹ ſompner ſhope him for to wend)
They ſaw a cart that charged was with hay,
Which that a carter droue forth on his way,
Deepe was the way, for which the cart ſtood:
This carter ſmote, & ſtriued as he were wood,
Heit ſcot, heit brok, what ſpare ye for ỹ ſtones,
The fiend (qd. he) you fetch body and bones,
As ferforth as euer ye were yfoled,
So much wo as I haue for you tholed,
The deuill haue al, both hors, cart, and hay.
Qd. this Sompner here ſhal we haue a pray
And nere the fiend he drew, as nought ne were
Full priuily, and rouned in his eare:
Hearken brother, hearken, by thy faith,
Heareſt not thou what the carter ſaith?
Hent it anon, for he hath yeue it thee,
Both hay and cart, and eke his caples three.
Nay (qd. the deuill) God wot neuer a dele,
It is not his intent trust me wele,
Aſke him thy ſelfe, if thou troweſt not mee,
Or elſ ſtint a while and thou ſhalt ſee.
This carter thacked his hors on the croupe,
And they begun to draw and to ſtoupe.
Heit now (qd. he) that Ieſus Chriſt you bleſſe,
And all his handy worke, both more and leſſe:
That was well twight mine owen liard boy,
I pray God ſaue thee and ſaint Loy,
Now is my cart out of the ſlow parde.
Lo brother (qd. the fiend) what told I thee,
Here may ye ſeene mine owne deare brother
The carle ſpake o thing but he thoght another
Let vs goe forth about our voyage,
Here win we nothing vpon carriage.
When they comen ſom what out of the toun,
This Sompner to his brother gan to roune:
Brother (qd. he) here wonneth an old rebecke,
That had almoſt as leefe to leſe her necke,
As for to yeue a penny of her good,
I woll haue xii. d. tho that ſhe were wood,
Or I woll ſompne her to our office,
And yet God wot of her I know no vice:
But for thou canſt not, as in this countre
Win thy coſt, take here enſample of me.
This Sõpner clappeth at ỹ widdows gate,
Come out he ſaied thou old verrytrate:
I trow thou haſt ſome frere or prieſt with thee.
Who clappeth there ſaid this wife, benedicite,
God ſaue you ſir, what is your ſweet will?
I haue (qd. he) in ſummons of thee a bill,
Vp paine of curſing, looke that thou bee
To morrow before our Archdeacons knee,
To anſwere to the court, of certaine things.
Now lord (qd. ſhe) Ieſu king of kings
So wiſely helpe me, as I ne may,
I haue ben ſicke, and that full many a day.
I may not goe ſo ferre (qd. ſhe) ne ride,
But I be dead, ſo pricketh it in my ſide,
May I not aſke a libell ſir Sompnour,
And anſwere there by my proctour
To ſuch thing as men would appoſen me.
Yes qd. this Sompner, pay anon let ſee
Twelue pence to me, and I will thee acquite,
I ſhall no profit haue hereof but lite.
My maiſter hath the profit and not I,
Come of, and let me ridden haſtily:
Giue me xii. pence, I may no lenger tary.
Twelue pence qd. ſhe, lady ſaint Mary,
So wiſely helpe me out of care and ſin,
This wide world though I ſhould it win,
Ne haue I not xii. d. within my hold:
Ye know well that I am poore and old,
Kith your almeſſe on me poore wretch.
Nay then qd. he, the foule fiend me fetch,
If I thee excuſe, thogh thou ſhouldeſt be ſpilt.
Alas qd. ſhe, God wot haue I no guilt.
Pay me qd. he, or by ſweet ſaint Anne
I woll ſtreight beare away the new panne
For debt, which thou oweſt me of old,

When thou madest thy husbond cokold,
I paied at home for thy correction.
Thou liest (qd. she) by my saluation,
Ne was I neuer ere now, widdowe ne wife,
Sompned vnto your court in all my life:
Ne neuer I nas but of body trew,
Vnto the deuill blacke and rough of hew
Geue I thy body and my panne also.
And when the deuill heard her curse so
Upon her knees, he saied in this manere:
Now Mably, mine owne mother dere
Is this your will in earnest that ye sey?
The deuill (qd. she) set him ere he dey,
And pan and all, but he woll him repent.
Nay old stotte, that is not mine intent,
Qd. this Sompner, for to repent mee
For any thing that I haue had of thee,
I would I had thy smocke and euery cloth.
Now brother (qd. the deuill) be not wroth:
Thy body and this pan is mine by right,
Thou shalt with me to hell yet to night,
Where thou shalt knowen of our priuitie
More than a maister of diuinitie.
And with that word ỹ foule fiend him hent
Body and soule, he with the deuill went,
Where that Sompners haue their heritage,
And God that made after his image
Mankind, saue and guide vs all and some,
And leaue the Sompner good mã to become.
Lordings I coud haue told you (qd. this frere)
Had I had leisure, of this Sompner here,
After the text of Christ, Poule, and Iohn
And of other doctours many one,
Such paines, as your hearts might agrise,
Albeit so, that no tongue may deuise,
Though that I might a thousand winter tell
The paines of that cursed hous of hell,
But for to keepe vs from that cursed place,
Wake we, and pray Iesu of his grace,
So keepe he vs from the tempter Sathanas
Hearkneth this word, beware as in this caas
☞ The Lion sitteth in await alway
To slea the innocent, if that he may.
Dispose ye aye your hearts to withstond
The fiend, that you would make thral & bond.
☞ He may not tempt you ouer your might,
For Christ woll be your champiõ and knight,
And prayeth, that the Sompner him repent
Of his misdeed, ere that the fiend him hent.

¶ The Sompners Prologue.

This Sompner in his stirrops high stood,
Upon this Frere his hert was so wood,
That like an Aspen leafe hee quoke for ire:
Lordings (qd. he) but one thing I desire,
I you beseech, that of your courtesie,
Sithens ye han heard this false Frere lie,
As suffereth me I may my tale tell.
This Frere boasteth that he knoweth hell,
And God wot that is little wonder,
Freres and fiends ben but little asunder.
For pardee, ye han oft time heard tell,
How that a Frere rauished was to hell
In spirit once by a visioun,
And as an Angell led him vp and doun,
To shewen him the paines that there were:
In all the place saw he not a Frere,
Of other folke he saw inow in woe.
Unto the Angell spake the Frere tho:
Now sir (qd. he) han Freres such a grace,
That none of hem shall come in this place?
Yes (qd. this Angell) many a millioun:
And vnto Sathanas lad he him adoun.
And now hath Sathanas such a taile
Broader than of a Caricke is the saile:
Hold vp thy taile thou Sathanas (qd. he)
Shew forth thine ers, and let the Frere see
Wherefore is the nest of Freres in this place.
And ere that halfe a furlong way of space
(Right as Bees swarmen out of an Hiue)
Out of the Deuils ers they gan driue
Twenty thousand Freres all on a rout,
And throughout hell swarmed all about,
And come ayen, as fast as they might gone,
And into his ers they crepten euerichone:
He clapt his tale ayen, and lay still.
This Frere, when he looked had his fill
Upon the turments of this sorry place,
His spirit God restored of his grace
Unto his body ayen, and he awoke,
But natheless, yet for feare he quoke,
So was the deuils ers aye in his mind:
That is his heritage of very kind.
God saue you all, saue this cursed frere,
My Prologue woll I end in this manere.

¶ The Sompners Tale.

A begging Fryer comming to a Farmars house, who lay sicke, obtaineth of him a certaine legacie, which must bee equally deuided among his Couent. A requitall to the Frier, shewing their couſenage, loytering, impudent begging, and hypocriticall praying.

Lordings there is in Yorkshire as I gesse,
A marish countrey called Holdernesse,
In which there went a Limitour about
To preach, and eke to beg it is no doubt:

And so befell that on a day this Frere
Had preached in a church in his manere,
And specially aboue euery thing
Exited he the people in his preaching
To trentals, and to yeuen for Gods sake,
Wherewith men mighten holy houses make,
There as diuine seruice is honoured,
Not there as it is wasted and deuoured,
Ne there it needeth not to be yeuen,
As to possessioners that mowen els leuen,
Thonked be God, in wele and aboundance:
Trentals deliuereth (qd. he) fro pennance
Her friends soules, as well old as yong,
If that they be hastily ysong,
Not for to hold a Priest iolly and gay,
(He singeth not but one Messe a day)
Deliuereth out (qd. he) anon the soules.
Full hard it is, with fleshhooke or with oules
To be yclawed, or to bren or bake:
Now speedeth you hastily for Christs sake.
And when this Frere had said all his intent,
With qui cum patre, forth his way he went.
Whē folk in church had yeue him what hē lest
He went his way, no lenger would he rest,
With scrip and tipped staffe, ytucked hie:
In euery hous he gan to pore and prie,
And begged meale and cheese, or els corne:
His fellow had a staffe tipped with horne,
A paire of tables all of Iuory,
A pointell ypolished fetously,
And wrote alway the names as he stood
Of all folke that yaue hem any good,
Askaunce that he woulden for hem prey.
Yeue vs a bushell wheat, Malt, or Rey,
A Gods kichell, or a trippe or Chese,
Or els what ye list, I may not chese:
A Gods halfepenny, or a Masse peny,
Or yeue vs of your Brawne, if ye haue any,
A dagon of your blanket, leue dame,
Our suster deare, lo here I write your name,
Bacon or Beefe, or such thing as ye finde.
A sturdy harlot went him aye behind,
That was her hostes man, and bare a sacke,
And that men yaue hem, laid it on his backe.
And when he was out at the dore, anone
He plained away the names euerichone,
That he before had written in his tables:
He serued hem with nifles and with fables.
May there thou liest Sompner (qd. ỹ Frere)
Peace (qd. our host) for Christs mother dere,
Tell forth thy tale, and spare it not at all.
So thriue I (qd. the Sompner) so I shall.
So long he went fro hous to hous, till he
Came to an hous, there as he was wont to be
Refreshed more than in a hundred placis:
Sicke lay the good man, whose the place is,
Bedred vpon a couch low he lay:
Deus hic (qd. he) O Thomas friend good day,
Said this Frere all courteously and soft,
Thomas God yeld it you: for full oft
Haue I vpon this bench faren full weale,
Here haue I eaten many a merry meale.
And fro the bench he droue away the cat,
And laid adoune his potent and his hat,
And eke his scrip, and set him soft adoune:
His fellow was go walked into the toune
Forth with his knaue into that hostelrie,
Where as he shope him that ilke night to lie.
O deare maister (qd. this sicke man)
How haue ye faren sithen March began,
I saw you not this fourtenight and more.
God wot (qd. he) laboured haue I full sore,
And specially for thy saluation
Haue I said many a precious oraison,
And for our other friends God hem blesse.
I haue this day ben at your church at messe,
And said a sermon after my simple wit,
Not all after the text of holy writ,
For it is hard to you, as I suppose,
And therfore I will teach you all the glose.
Glosing is a glorious thing certain
For letter slayeth, as we clerkes sain.
There haue I hem taught to ben charitable,
And spend her good there as it is reasonable.
And there I saw our dame, ah where is she?
Ponder in the yard I trow she be
Said this man, and she will come anon.
Eye maister, welcome ye be by saint Iohn
Said this wife, how fare ye heartily?
This Frere ariseth vp full courteously,
And her imbraceth in his armes narrow,
And kisseth her sweet, & chirketh as a sparrow
With his lips: dame (qd. he) I fare right wele,
As he that is your seruaunt euery dele.
Thanked be God that you haue soul and life,
Yet saw I not this day so faire a wife
In all the whole church, so God saue me.
Yea God amend all faults sir (qd. she)
Algates welcome ye be, by my fay:
Graunt mercy dame, ỹ haue I found alway.
But of your great goodnesse, by your leue
I will pray you that ye not you greue,
I will with Thomas speake a little throw:
These curates ben full negligent and slow
To gropen tenderly a mans conscience.
In shrift, and in preaching is my diligence,
And to studie on Peters words and Poules,
I walke to fisshen Christen mens soules,
To yeeld Iesu Christ his proper rent,
To spread his words is all mine intent.
Now by your leaue deare maister (qd. she)
Chideth him well for saint Charite:
He is aye angry as a pissemire.
Though that he haue all that he can desire,
Though I him wrie a night, & make hī warm,
And ouer him lay my leg or mine arm,

He groneth as our boze that lieth in the ſtie:
Other diſpoꝛt of him right none haue I,
I may not pleaſe him in no manner caas.
O Thomas, ie vous die, Thomas Thomas:
This maketh ỹ fiend, this muſt ben amended.
Ire is a thing that God highly defended,
And thereof woll I ſpeake a woꝛd oꝛ two.
Now maiſter (qd. the wife) ere that I go,
What woll ye dine? I woll go thereabout.
Now dame (qd. he) ie vous die ſanz dout
Haue I of a Capon but the liuer,
And of your white bꝛead but a ſhiuer,
And after that a roſted Pigs head
(But I nold not foꝛ me no beaſt were dead)
Then had I ynow foꝛ my ſuffiſaunce:
I am a man of little ſuſtenaunce.
My ſpirit hath his foſtring in the Bible,
My body is aye ſo ready and ſo penible
To wake, that my body is deſtroied.
I pꝛay you dame, be ye nought annoied,
Though I ſo friendly you my counſaile ſhew,
By God I nold haue told it but a few.
Now ſir (qd. ſhe) but one woꝛd ere you go,
My child is dead within theſe weekes two,
Soone after that ye went out of this toun.
His death ſaw I by reuelatioun,
Saied this Frere, at home in our Doꝛtour
I dare well ſaine, ere that halfe an hour
After his death, I ſaw him boꝛne to bliſſe
In mine auiſion, God me ſo wiſſe,
So did our Sexten, and our Fermerere,
That han been true Freres this fiftie pere:
They may now, God be thanked of his lone,
Waken her Jubelie, and walken alone.
And vp I aroſe, and all our couent eke,
With many a teare trilling on our cheeke:
Without en noiſe oꝛ clattering of bels,
Te deum was our ſong, and nothing els,
Saue that to Chꝛiſt I ſaied an oꝛiſon,
Thanking him of my reuelation:
Foꝛ ſir and dame, truſteth me right well,
Our oꝛiſons been moꝛe effectuell,
And moꝛe we ſeene of Chꝛiſts ſecret things,
Than boꝛell folke, although they were kings.
We liue in pouerte, and in abſtinence,
And boꝛell folke in richeſſe and diſpence,
In meat and dꝛinke, and in her foule delite:
We han this woꝛldly luſt all in deſpite.
Lazar and Dines liueden diuerſely,
And diuers guerdons had they thereby.
Who ſo woll pꝛay, he muſt faſt and be cleane,
And fat his ſoule, and make his body leane.
We fare as ſaieth the Apoſtle, cloth and food
Sufficeth vs, though they be not full good:
The cleanenelle and the faſting of vs Freres,
Maketh that Chꝛiſt accepteth our pꝛayeres.
Lo Moiſes, foꝛtie daies and foꝛtie night
Faſted, ere that the high God of his might
Spake with him in the mount of Sinay:
With empty wombe, faſting many a day,
Receiued he the law, that was wꝛitten
With Gods finger, and Holy well wꝛiten:
In mount Oreb, ere he had any ſpeech
With the high God, that is our ſoules leech,
He faſted long, and was in contemplaunce.
Aaron, that had the temple in gouernaunce,
And eke the other pꝛieſts euerichone
Into the temple when they ſhould gone
To pꝛaien foꝛ the people, and doen ſeruice,
They nold dꝛinke in no manner wiſe
No dꝛinke, that dꝛonke might hem make,
But there in abſtinence pꝛay and wake,
Leaſt that they deiden: take heed what I ſay,
But they be ſober that foꝛ the people pꝛay,
Ware that I ſay no moꝛe: foꝛ it ſufficeth.
Our Loꝛd Jeſu, as holy wꝛit deuiſeth,
Laue vs enſaumple of faſting and pꝛayeres:
Therefoꝛe we Mendicantes, we lilly Freres
Ben wedded to pouert and continence,
To charity, humbleneſſe, and abſtinence,
To perſecution foꝛ rightwiſneſſe,
To weeping, miſericoꝛde, and cleanenelle.
And therfoꝛe may ye ſee that our pꝛayeres
(I ſpeake of vs mendicants, we Freres)
Ben to the high God moꝛe acceptable
Than yours, with your feaſt at your table.
Fro Paradice firſt, if I ſhall not lie,
Was man chaſed out foꝛ his gluttonie,
And chaſt was man in Paradice certain.
But herken now Thomas what I ſhall ſain,
I haue no text thereof, as I ſuppoſe,
But I find it in manner of a gloſe,
That ſpecially our ſweet Loꝛd Jeſus
Spake this by Freres, when he ſaied thus.
Bleſſed be they that pooꝛe in ſpirit been:
And ſo foꝛth all the Goſpell may ye ſeen,
Whether it be liker our perfection,
Oꝛ hers that ſwimmen in poſſeſſion.
Fie on her pompe, and on her gluttonie,
And on her leaudneſſe, I hem defie.
Me thinketh they ben like Iouinian,
Fat as a Whale, and walking as a Swan,
As vinolent as bottle in the ſpence,
Her pꝛayer is of full little reuerence:
Whē they foꝛ ſouls ſay the Pſalme of Dauid
Lo bouffe they ſain (Coꝛ meum eructauit.)
Who ſo'lo weth Chꝛiſts Goſpell & his loꝛe
But we? that humble be, chaſt, and pooꝛe.
Woꝛkers of Gods woꝛd, and not auditours.
Therfoꝛe right as an hauke at a ſours
Up ſpꝛingeth into the aire, ſo pꝛayeres
Of charitable and chaſt buſie Freres,
Maken her ſours vp to Gods eares two.
Thomas Thomas, ſo mote I ride oꝛ go,
And by that loꝛd that cleaped is ſaint Yue,
Ne thou our bꝛoder wer, ỹ ſhouldſt not thꝛiue.

Foꝛ

For in our Chapiter pray we day and night
To Christ, that he thee send health and might
Thy body for to welden hastily.
God wot (qd. he) nothing therof feele I
As help me Christ: for within few years
Have I spended vpon diuers maner Freres
Well many a pound, yet fare I neuer the bet,
Certain my good have I almost beset:
Farewell my good, for it is almost ago.
The frere answerd, o Thomas dost thou so?
What needeth thee diuers Freres to seech?
What needeth him that hath a perfit leech,
To seechen other leches in the town?
Your inconstance is your confusion,
Hold ye me then, or els our Couent,
To prayen for you, insufficient?
Thomas, that tape nis not worth a Mite,
Your maladie is for we have to lite.
A, yeue that couent halfe a quarter Otes:
And yeue that couent four and twenty grotes,
And yeue that Frere a penny, and let him go:
Nay, nay Thomas, it may nothing be so.
What is a farthing worth parted in twelue?
Lo, eche thing that is oned in himselue
Is more strong than when it is so scattered.
Thomas, of me thou shalt not be iflattered,
Thou wolst have all our labour for nought.
The hie God, ỹ all this world hath wrought
Saith, that the workmã is worthy his hire.
Thomas, naught of your treasure I desire
As for my self, but that all our couent
To pray for you is aie so diligent:
And holy for to builden Christ owne chirch.
Thomas, if ye woll learne for to wirch,
Of building vp of Chirches may ye finde
If it be good, in Thomas life of Inde.
Ye liggen here full of anger and ire
With which the deuil set your heart on fire.
And chiden here this holy innocent
Your wife, that is so good and patient.
And therfore trow me Thomas if ye lest,
Ne chide not with thy wife, as for the best:
And beare this word away by thy faith.
Touching such thing lo what the wise saith:
Within thy house be thou no Lion:
To thy subiects do thou none oppression:
Ne make not thine acquaintance to flee.
And yet Thomas, eftsones charge I thee,
Beware of her that in thy bosom sleepeth,
Ware of the serpent, that so slily creepeth
Under the grasse, and stingeth full subtilly:
Beware my sonne, and hearken patiently,
That twenty thousand mẽ han lost her liues
For striuing with her lemmans & her wiues,
Now since you haue so holy and meek a wife,
What needeth you Thomas to make strife?
There nis iwis no serpent so cruell
(When men treden on his taile) ne halfe so fel,
As a women is, when she hath caught an ire,
Vengeance is then all her desire.
Ire is a sinne, one of the greatest of seuen,
Abhominable vnto the high God of heuen,
And to himself it is destruction,
This euery lewd Vicar and Parson
Can say, how ire engendreth homicide,
Ire is in sooth the executour of pride.
I could of ire say so much sorrow,
That my tale should last till to morrow.
And therfore I pray God both day and night,
That to an irous man he send little might.
It is great harme, and eke great pitee
To see an irous man in high degree.
Whiledom ther was an irous potestate,
As saith Senek, that during his estate
Upon a day out ridden knights two,
And as fortune would it should be so,
That one of hem came home, ỹ other nought:
Anon the knight before the iudge is brought,
That said thus: thou hast thy fellow slain,
For which I deme thee to the death certain.
And to another knight commanded he,
Go, lead him to the death I charge thee.
And happed as they went by the wey
Toward the place ther as he should dey,
The knight came, which mẽ wend had be ded,
Then thought they that it was the best reed
To lede hem both to the Judge again:
They saiden lord, the knight hath not slain
His fellow, here he stant hole aliue.
Ye shullen be dead (qd. he) so mot I thriue:
That is to say, both one, two, and three,
And to the first knight, right thus spake he.
I damned thee, thou must algat be dead:
And thou must also leese needs thyn head,
For thou art cause why thy fellow dieth.
And to the third knight, right thus he sayeth,
Thou hast not don that I commanded thee,
And thus he lete do slee hem all three.

Irous Cambises was eke drunkelew,
And ate delighted him to been a shrew.
And so befell, a lord of his meine,
That loued well vertuous morality,
Sayd on a day betwixt hem two right thus:
A lord is lost, if he be aught vicious,
And dronkennesse eke is a foule record
Of any man, and namely of a lord.
There is many an ey and many an eare
A waiting on a lord, he not whear.
For Gods loue drinketh temperatly:
Wine maketh a man to lese wretchedly.
His mind, and his limbes euerichone.
The reuers shalt thou see (qd. he) anon,
And preue it by thyn own experience,
That wine ne doth to folke no such offence.
There nis no wine bereaueth me my might

Of hond, of foote, ne of mine eyesight.
And for despite he drunke mochell more
An hundred times than he did before,
And right ay, this cursed irous wretch
Let this knights son before him fetch
Commanding him he shuld before him stond:
And suddenly he took his bow in hond,
And vp the string he plucked to his eare,
And with an arrow he slough the child thear.
Now wither haue I a siker hond or none,
Qd. he? Is all my might and minde agon?
Hath wine bereuen me mine eyen sight?
What shuld I tel thee answer of ỹ knight:
His sonne was slain, ther is no more to say,
Beware therefore, with lords how ye play.
Sing Placebo, and I shall if I can,
But if it be vnto a poore man:
To a poore man one should his vices tell,
But not to a lord, though he should go to hell.

Lo irous Cirus, thilke Persien,
How destroyed he the riuer of Gisen?
For that an horse of his was dreint therein,
When as he went Babilon to win:
He made that the riuer was so small,
That men might ride and waden ouer all.
Lo, what said he, that so well teach can,
Ne be no fellow to none irous man,
Ne with no wood man walke by the way,
Lest thou repent, I will no farther say.
Now Thomas leue brother, leaue thin ire,
Thou shalt me find as iust, as is a squire:
Hold not the deuils knife aie in thine heart,
Thine anger doeth thee all to sore smart,
But shew to me all thy confession.
Nay, (qd. the sicke man) by saint Simon
I haue be shriue this day of my Curate
I haue told him wholy mine estate.
It needeth no more to speake of it, saieth he,
But if me list of mine humilitie.
Yeue me then of thy gold to make our cloister,
qd. he, for many a mussle and many an Oister,
When other men haue been full well at ease,
Hath been our food, our cloister for to reise:
And yet God wot, vnneath the foundament
Parformed is, ne of our pauement
Is not a tile yet within our wones:
By God we owen fourty pound for stones.
Now help Thomas, for him ỹ harrowed hell,
For elis mote we needs al our books sell,
And if you lacke our predication,
Then goeth this world all to destruction.
For who so woll fro this world vs bereue,
So God me saue, Thomas by your leue,
He would bereaue out of this world the son,
For who can techen or worchen as we con?
And that is not of little time (qd. he)
But sith Helie was, or Helise,
Han freres been, that find I of record
In charitie, ithonked be our Lord.
Now Thomas, help for saint Charitie:
And down anon he sitteth on is kne.
This sicke man waxeth nie wood for ire
He would the frere had been on a fire
With his false dissimulation.
Such things as been in my possession
(Qd. he) that may I giue, and none other:
Ye sain me thus, how ỹ I am your brother.
Ye certes (qd. this frere) trusteth me wele,
I tooke our dame our letter and our sele.
Now (qd. he) wel, and somwhat shal I yeue
Unto your holy conuent while I liue:
And in thine hond thou shalt it haue anone
On this condition, and other none,
That you depart it so, my leue brother,
That euery frere haue as much as another:
This shalt thou sweare on thy profession
Without fraud or cauilation.
I sweare it (qd. the frere) by my faith:
And therwithall his hond in his he layth,
Lo here my faith, in me shall be no lacke.
Then put thine hond adowne by my backe
Said this man, and grope well behind,
Beneath my buttock there thou shalt find
A thing, that I haue hid in priuitie:
Ah, thought the frere, that shall goe with me.
Adown he shoueth his hond to the clift,
In hope to find there some good gift.
And when this sicke man felt this frere
About his tewell, groping here and there,
Amid his hond he let the frere a fart,
There nis no capell drawing in a cart,
That might haue let a fart of such a soun.
The frere vp start, as doth a wood Lioun:
A false churle (qd. the frere) for Gods bones,
This hast thou in dispite doe, for the nones:
Thou shalt abie this fart, if I may.
His meinie that heard of this affray,
Came leaping in, and chased out the frere,
And forth he goeth with a full angry chere,
And fet his fellow, there as lay his store:
He looked as he were a wilde Bore,
He grinted his teeth, so was he wroth
A sturdie pace down to the court he goth
Whereas wonned a man of great honour
To whom that he was alway confessour:
This worthy man was lord of that village.
This frere came, as he were in a rage,
Where as this lord sat eating at his bord:
Unnethes might the frere to speake a word,
Till at the last he said, God you see.
This lord gan looke, and said Benedicite
What frere I hon, what maner world is this?
I see well that something is amis,
Ye look as though ỹ wood wer full of theuis:
Sit downe, and tell me what your griefe is,

And

And it shall be amended, if that I may.
I haue (qd. he) had a dispite to day,
God yeeld it you, adown in your village,
That in this world is none so poore a page,
That he nolde haue abhominatioun
Of that I haue receiued in your town:
And yet me grieueth nothing so sore,
As that the old churle, with locks hore
Blaspheined hath our holy couent eke.
Now maister (qd. this lord) I you beseke.
No maister sir (qd. he) but seruitour,
Though I haue had in schoole that honour.
God liketh not, that men vs Rabie call
Neither in market, ne in your large hall.
No force (qd. he) but tell me of your grieefe.
Sir (qd. this Frere) an odious mischiefe
This day is betide, to mine order, and to me,
And so per consequens to each degree
Of holy church, God amend it sone.
Sir (qd. the lord) ye wot what is to done:
Distemper you not, you be my confessour.
Ye be the salt of the earth, and the sauour,
For Gods loue your patience now hold,
Telleth me your grieefe: and he anon him told
As ye han heard before, ye wot well what.
The ladie of the house, aie still sat
Till she had heard fully what the Frere said.
Eye gods mother (qd. she) and blisful maid:
Is there nought els, tell me faithfully?
Madame (qd. he) how thinketh ye therby?
How that me thinketh? so God me speed,
I say a churle hath done a churles deed:
What should I say, God let him neuer the,
His sicke head is full of vanite:
I hold him in a manner of frenesie.
Madam (qd. he) by God I shall not lye,
But I in any wise, may been on him awreke,
I shall saunder him ouer all, where I speke:
That false blaspheinour that charged me
To part it that might not departed be,
To euery man ilicke, with mischance.
The lord sat still, as he were in a trance,
And in his heart he roled vp and down,
How that this churle had imaginatioun
To shew such a probleme to the frere.
Neuer erst or now heard I such a matere,
I trow the Deuill put it in his mind.
In all Arsmetricke there shall no man find
Before this day of such a question.
Who should make a demonstration,
That euery man should haue like his part
Of a sowne or sauour of a farte:
O nice proud churle, I beshrew thy face.
Lo sirs (qd. the lord) with hard grace,
Who euer heard of such a thing or now?
To euery man ilike, tell me how?
It is an impossible, it may not be,
Eye nice churle, God let hem neuer the.
The rombling of a fart, and euery soun,
Nys but of eyre reuerberatioun,
And euer it wasteth little and little away:
There is no man can demen, by my fay,
If that it were departed equally.
What? lo my churle: lo, how shrewdly
Unto my confessour to day he spake,
I hold him certain a demoniake.
Now eteth your meat, & let the churle go play,
Let him go hongen him selfe a Deuil way.
Now stood the the lords squire at the bord,
That carf his meat, and heard word by word
Of all thing, of which I haue you sayd.
My lord (qd. he) be not not euill apaid:
I couth tell for a gowne cloth
To you sir frere, so that ye been not wroth,
How that this fart should euen dealed be
Amonges your couent, if it liketh thee.
Tel on (qd ỹ lord) and thou shalt haue anon
A gown cloth, by God and by saint Iohn.
My lord (qd. he) when the weder is faire
Without en winde, or perturbing of eyre,
Let bring a cart wheele here into this hall,
But looke well that he haue his spokes all,
Twelue spokes hath a cart whele commonly:
And bring me then xii. freres, wot ye why?
For thirteene is a couent as I gesse:
Your confessour here for his worthinesse
Shall performe vp the number of his couent.
Then shull̄e they knelen adoun by one assent,
And to euery spokes end in this manere
Full sadly lay his nose shall a frere:
Your noble confessour there, God him saue,
Shall hold his nose vpright vnder the naue,
Thē shal this churle with bely stiffe & tought
As any tabour, hither been ibrought,
And set him on the whele right of this cart
Upon the naue, and make him let a fart,
And ye shullen see, vp perill of my life,
By good preefe which is demonstratife,
That equally the sowne of it will wend,
And eke the stinke, vnto the spokes end.
Saue that this worthy man your confessour
(Because he is a man of great honour)
Shall haue the first fruits as reason is:
The noble vsage of freres yet is this,
The worthest man of hem shul first be serued:
And certainly, he hath it well deserued,
He hath to day taught vs so much good,
With preaching in the pulpet there he stood,
That I may vouchsafe, I say for mee,
He had the first smell of farts three,
And so would all his brethren hardely,
He bereth him so faire and holyly.
The lord, ỹ lady, & each man saue the frere,
Said that Ienkin spake in this matere
As well as Euclide did, or Ptholome,
Touching the churles sayd subtiltie,

And

And hie wit made him speake as he spake,
He nis no foole,ne no demoniake:
And Jenkin hath iwonne a new gowne,
My tale is done,we been almost at towne.

¶ The Clerke of Oxenfords Prologue.

SIr Clerke of Oxenford our host said,
Ye ride as still and coy, as doth a maid
Were new spoused, sitting at the bord:
This day ne heard I of your mouth a word.
I trow that ye studie about some sophime:
But Salomon saith,all thing hath time.
For Gods sake beth of better chere,
It is no time now to studie here.
Tell vs some merry tale by your fay:
For what man is entred into a play,
He needs mot vnto that play assent.
But preacheth not, as Freres done in Lent,
To make vs for our old sinnes to weep,
Ne that thy tale make vs not to sleep.
Tell vs some merry thing of auentures,
Your termes,your figures,and your colours
Keep hem in store,till so be that ye endite
Hie stile,as when men to kings do write.
Speake so plaine at this time,I you pray,
That we may vnderstond what ye say.
This worthy Clerke benignly answerd,
Host (qd.he) I am vnder your yerde,
Ye haue of vs as now the gouernance,
And therefore will I do you obeysance,
As farre as reason asketh hardely:
I will you tell a tale,which that I
Learned at Padow,of a worthy clerke,
As preued is by his words and his werke.
He is now dead, and nailed in his chest,
I pray to God send his soule good rest.
Fraunces Petrarke,the laureat poet
Hight this ilke clerke,whose Rethorike sweet
Enlumined all Italie of poetrie,
As Liuian did of Philosophy,
Or law or other art perticulere:
But death that wol not suffer vs dwellē here,
But as it were the twinkling of an eye,
Hem both hath slaine,and all we shall dye.
But for to tellen of this worthy man,
That taught me this tale,as I first began
I say that he first with hie stile enditeth
(Or he the body of his tale writeth)
A proheme,in which discriueth he
Piemont,and of Saluce the countre,
And speaketh of Apenniny the hilles hye,
That been the bounds of west Lumbardie:
And of mount Vesulus in speciall,
where as the Poo,out of a well small
Taketh his first springing and his sours,
That Eastward euer increaseth in his cours
To Emelle ward,to Ferare,and to Venise.
The which a long time were to deuise.
And truly,as to my iudgement,
Me thinketh it a thing impartinent,
Saue that him list conueyen his matere:
But this is his tale as ye shullen here.

¶ The Clerke of Oxenfords tale.

Walter the Marquesse of Saluce prooueth the patience of his wife Grisill, by three most sharpe trials.

THere is in the west side of Italie
Downe at the rote of Vesulus the cold,
A lustie plaine,habundaunt of vitaile, (hold,
where many a town & tower thou maist be=
That founded were,in time of fathers old,
And many another delectable sight:
And Saluce this noble countre hight.

A marques whilom was in that lond,
As were his worthy elders him before,
And obeysant aye redy to his hond
Were all his lieges,both lesse and more:
Thus in delite he liued, and hath done yore
Beloued & dread,through fauour of fortune
Both of his lords,and of his commune.

Therwith he was,as to speak of linage
The gentilest iborne of all Lombardy,
A faire person,and strong,and yong of age,
And full of honour and curtesie:
Discreet inow,his countre for to gye
Saue that in some things he was to blame,
And Walter was this yong lords name.

I blame him thus,that he cōsidred nought
In time comming,what him might betide,
But on his lust present was all his thought,
And for to hauke and hunt on euery side:
Welny all other cures let he slide,
And eke he ne would(that was worst of all)
Wed no wife for ought that might befall.

Only that point his people bare so sore,
That flockmele on a day to him they went,
And one of hem,that wisest was of lore
(Or els that the lord would best assent
That he should tel him what his people mēt,
Or els coud he well shew such matere)
He to the Marques said as ye shullen here.

O noble Marques, your humanite
Assureth vs and yeueth vs hardinesse,
As oft time as is necessite,
That we may to you tell our heuinesse:
Accepteth lord of your gentilnesse,
That we to you with pitous hert plaine,
And let your eares nat my voice disdaine.

All haue I not to done in this matere
More than another hath in this place,
Yet for as much, as ye my lord so dere
Haue alway shewed me fauour and grace,
I dare the better aske of you a space
Of audience, to shewen our request,
And ye my lord to done right as you lest.

For certes lord: so well vs liketh you
And all your werkes, that euer haue don, that we
Ne could our owne selfe deuisen how
We might more liuen in felicite:
Saue one thing lord, if it your will be,
That for to be a wedded man, you lest,
Then were your people in souerain herts rest.

Boweth your necke vnder the blisful yoke
Of souerainte, and not of seruise,
Which men clepen spousaile or wedlocke:
And thinketh lord, among your thowts wise,
For though we sleepe or wake, ronne, or ride,
Ay fleeth the time, it wol no man abide.

And though your grene youth floure as yet,
In crepeth age alway as still as stone,
And death manaseth euery age, and smite
In ech estate, for there escapeth none:
And also certaine, as we knowne echone,
That we shul die, and vncertaine we all
Ben of that day that death shall on vs fall.

Accepteth then of vs the true entent,
That neuer yet refused your hest,
And we wol all lord, if ye wol assent,
Chese you a wife in short time, at the lest
Borne of the gentillest and the best
Of all this lond, so that it ought seme
Honour to god & you, as nere as we can deme

Deliuer vs out of all this busie dred,
And take a wife, for hie Gods sake:
For if it so befell, as god forbed,
That thorow death your linage should slake,
And that a strange successour should take
Your heritage, O wo were vs on liue:
Wherefore we pray you hastely to wiue.

Her meeke prayer and her pitious chere
Made the Marques for to haue pite.
Wol ye (qd. he) mine owne people dere
To that I neuer erst thought, constraine me?
I me reioyced of my libertie,
That seldom time is found in marriage,
There I was free, I mote ben in seruage.

But natheles, I see your true entent,
And trust vpon your wit, and haue done aye:
Wherefore of my free will I woll assent
To wedden me, as sone as euer I may.
But there, as ye haue profred me to day
To chese me a wife, I you release
That choice, and pray you of that profer cease.

For God it wot, that children oft been
Vnlike her worthy eldes hem before,
Bounte commeth of God, and not of the streen,
Of which they be engendred and ibore:
I trust in gods bounte, and therefore
My marriage, mine estate, and rest
I him betake, he may don as him lest.

Let me alone in chesing of my wife,
That charge vpon my backe I woll endure:
But I you pray, and charge vpon your life,
That what wife I take, ye me ensure
To worship her whiles her life may dure,
In word and werke both, here and els where,
As she an Emperours doughter were.

And furthermore, thus shal ye swere, that ye
Against my choice shall neuer grutch ne striue,
For sith I shall forgo my liberte
At your request, as euer mote I thriue,
There as mine hert is set, there wol I wiue:
And but ye woll assent, in such manere,
I pray you speake no more in this matere.

With hearty will they swore and assent
To all this thing, there said no wight nay:
Beseeching him of grace ere they went,
That he would hem graunt a certaine day
Of his spousaile, as soone as euer he may,
For yet alway the people somwhat dred,
Lest this Marques would no wife wed.

He graunted hem a day, such as him lest,
On which he wold be wedded sekerly:
And said he did all this at her request,
And they with humble entent full buxumely
Kneeling vpon her knees full reuerently
Him thonked all, and thus they han an end
Of her entent, and home ayen they wend.

And herevpon he tooke his officers
Commaunding for the feast to puruey,
And to his priuie knights and squires
Such charge hee yaue, as hee list on hem lay:
And they to his commandement obey,

And

And ech of hem doth his diligence
To done to the feast all reuerence.

Explicit prima pars, & sequitur pars secunda.

NOught ferre fro thilke place honorable,
Where this Marques shope his marriage,
There stood a thrope, of sight full delectable,
In which that poore folke of that village
Hadden her beasts and her herbigage,
And of her labour tooke her sustenance,
After that the earth yaue hem habundance.

Among this poore folke there dwell a man,
Which that was holden poorest of hem all:
But the high God sometime senden can
His grace vnto a little ore stall:
Janicola men of that thrope him call.
A doughter had he, faire ynough to sight,
And Grisilde this yong maiden hight.

But for to speake of vertuous beaute,
Then was she one the fairest vnder sonne:
And full poorely ifostred was she:
No licorous lust was in her heart ironne:
Well ofter of the well than of the tonne
She dronke, and for she would vertue plese,
She knew well labour, but not idle ease.

But though this mayd was tender of age,
Yet in the brest of her virginite
There was enclosed sad and ripe corage:
And in great reuerence of charite
Her old poore father fostred she:
A few sheep spinning on the field she kept,
She would not ben idle til she slept.

And whē she homward came, she wold bring
Wortes and other herbes times full oft,
Which she shred and sethe for her living,
And made her bed full hard, & nothing soft:
And ay she kept her fathers life on loft
With euery obeisance and diligence,
That child might do to the fathers reuerence.

Upon Grisilde the poore creature,
Well oft hath the Marques set his eye,
As he a hunting went paraduenture:
And when it fell that he might her espie
He (not with wanton looking of folie)
His eyen cast vpon her, but in sad wise,
Upon her chere he would him oft auise.

Commending in his hert her womanhede,
And eke her vertue, passing euery wight
Of so yong age, as wel in chere as in dede.
For though the people haue no great insight
In vertue: he considered full right
Her bounte, and disposed that he would
Her wed, if he euer wedden should.

The day of wedding come, but no wight
Tell, what maner woman it should be, (can
For which meruaile, wondred many a man
And saiden, when they were in their prime,
Will not our Lord leaue his vanite.
Will he not wed, alas, alas, the while,
Why will he thus himselfe and vs begile.

But natheles this Marques hath do make
Of iemmes, set in gold and in asure,
Broches and rings, all for Grisildes sake,
And of her clothing tooke he the measure
Of a maiden like to her stature,
And eke of other ornaments all,
That vnto such a wedding should fall.

The time vndren, in the same day
Approched, that the wedding should be,
And all the paleis put was in array,
Both hall and chamber, ech in his degre,
Houses of office stuffed with great plente:
There maiest thou see all dainteous vitaile,
That may be found, as ferre as lasteth Itaile.

This royall Marques richly araide,
Lords and ladies in his companie,
The which that to the feast weren praide
And of his retinue the bachelerie,
With many a soun of sondrie melodie,
Unto the village of which I told,
In this aray the right way hath hold.

Grisilde (God wot of this full innocent,
That for her was shape all this aray)
To fetch water at a well is went,
And cometh home as sone as euer she may.
For well she heard say, that full ilke day
The Marques should wed, and if she might,
She would faine seen some of that sight.

She thought I will with other maidens stond,
That been my fellowes in our doze and see
The Marques, and thereto wol I fond
To haue done at home as soone as it may be,
The labour which that longeth to me,
And then may I at leasure it behold,
If he this way to the castle hold.

And as she wold ouer the dreshold gon,
The Marques came and gan her for to call,
And she set downe her water pot anon

And

Beside the threshold of the oxe stall,
And downe vpon her knees she gan to fall,
And with sad countenance she kneeled still,
Till she had herd what was the lords will.

This thoughtful Marques spake to ỳ maid
Wel soberly, and said in this manere:
Where is your father Grisilde, he said?
And she with reuerence and meeke chere
Answered, lord he is all ready here,
And in she goeth without lenger lette,
And to the Marques she her father fette.

He by the hond then tooke this old man,
And said thus, when he had him aside:
Janicola, I neither may ne can
Lenger the pleasance of mine hert hide,
If that thou vouchsafe, whatsoeuer betide
Thy doughter woll I take or that I wend
As for my wife, vnto my liues end.

Thou louest me, I wot well certaine,
And art my faithfull liegeman ibore,
And all that liketh me, I dare well saine
It liketh thee, and specially therefore
Tell me that point, that I haue said before,
If that thou wolt to this purpose draw,
To take me as for thy sonne in law?

This sudden case the man astoned so,
That red he wext abashed, and all quaking
He stood, ne vnneth said he words mo,
But only thus (quod he) Lord my willing
Is as ye woll, ne ayenst your liking
I woll nothing, ye be my lord so dere,
Right as you list, gouerne this matere.

Thẽ wol I thus (quod this Marques) sothly,
That in thy chamber, I, you, and she,
Haue a collation, and wotest thou why?
For I woll aske her, if her will be
To be my wife, and rule her after me:
And all this shall she done in thy presence,
I woll not speke out of thine audience.

And in the chamber, while they were about
The treties, which ye shall after heare,
The people came into the house without
And wondred hem, in how honest manere
So tentifly she kept her father dere:
But vtterly Grisild wonder might,
For neuer erst saw she such a sight.

No wonder is though she be astoned,
To see so great a gest come into that place,
She was neuer to such gestes woned,
For which she looked with full pale face.
But shortly fro this matter for to pace,
These weren the words ỳ the Marques said
To this benigne and very faithfull maid.

Grisilde he said, ye shall well vnderstond,
It liketh vnto your father and me,
That I you wed, and eke it may so stond
As I suppose, that ye woll it so be:
But these demaunds I aske first (quod he)
That sithen it shall be done in hastie wise,
Woll ye thereto assent, or els you auise?

I say thus, be ye redy with good hert
To all my lust, and that I freely may
As me best liketh, though ye laugh or smert,
And neuer ye to grutch, night ne day:
And when I say yea, that yee say not ones nay,
Neither in word, ne by frowning countenance?
Swere this, and here I swere our aliance.

Wondring vpon these words, quaking for
She said: lord, indigne and vnworthy (dred
Am I, to thilke honour, that ye me bede,
But right as you woll, euen so woll I:
And here I swere, that neuer willingly
In word, werke, ne thought, I nill you disobie
For to be deed, though me were loth to die.

This is inough Grisilde mine (quod he)
And forth he goeth with a sober chere
Out at the doore, and after came she,
And to the people he said in this manere:
This is my wife, (quod he) that standeth here,
Honoureth her, and loueth her, I you pray,
Who so me loueth, there nis no more to say.

And for that nothing of her old gere
She should bring into his house, he bad
That women should dispoilen her there,
Of which these ladies were nothing glad
To handle her clothes in which she was clad:
But natheles this maiden bright of hew
Fro foot to head they clothed han all new.

Her heer han they kembe, that lay vntressed
Full rudely, and with her fingers small
A crowne on her head they han idressed,
And set it full of ouches great and small
Of her arraie what should I make a tale,
Vnneath the people her knew for her fairnes,
When she transformed was in such riches.

This Marques hath her spoused with a ring
Brought for the same cause, and then her set
Vpon an horse snow white, well ambling,
And to his palais, or he lenger let
(With ioyfull people, that her lad and met)
Conueyed her, and thus the day they spende
In reuell, till the sunne gan descende,

And shortly forth this tale for to chace,
I say, that to this new Marquesse
God hath sent such fauour of his grace,
That it seemed not, as by her likelinesse
That she was borne and fed in rudenesse,
As in a cote, or in an oxe stall,
But nourished in an Emperours hall.

To euery wight she woxen is so dere,
And worshipful, þ folke there as she was boxe,
And fro her birth knew her yere by yere,
Unneth trowed they, but durst haue swoxe,
That to Janicola, of which I spake before,
She doughter nas, for as by coniecture
Hem thought she was another creature.

For though that euer vertuous was she,
She was encreased in such excellence
Of thewes good, set in high bounte,
And so discrete, and faire of eloquence,
So benigne, and digne of reuerence,
And coude the peoples hearts so enbrace,
That eche her loued that looked in her face.

Not onely of Saluce in the towne
Published was the bounte of her name,
But eke beside, in many a regioun,
If one said well, another said the same:
So spradd of her hie bountie the fame,
That men and women, both yong and old
Gone to Saluces her for to behold.

Thus Walter lowly, and full royally,
Wedded hath with fortunate honestie,
In Gods peace he liueth full easily:
At home, and outward, grace inough had he:
And for he saw that vnder low degree
Was honest vertue hid, the people him held
A prudent man, and that is seene well seld.

Not only this Grisild, through her wit
Couth all the feate of wifely humblenesse,
But eke when the cause required it,
The commen profit could she redresse:
There nas discord, rancor ne heauinesse
In all the lond, that she ne couth apese,
And bring hem all wisely in rest and ese.

Though her husbond absent were or none,
If gentlemen, or other of that countre
Were wroth, she would bring hem all at one,
So wise counsaile and ripe wordes had she,
And iudgement of so great equitie,
That she from heuen sent was, as men wend,
People to saue, and euery wrong to mend.

Not long time after this faire Grisilde
Was wedded, she a doughter had ibore,
All had she leuer haue borne a man childe:
Glad was the Marques & his folke therfore,
For though a maide childe came all before
She may to a man child after attaine
By likelyhood, sithens she is not baraine.

Explicit secunda pars, & incipit pars tertia.

Here fell, as it befalleth oft times mo,
when that this childe had sucked but a throwe,
This Marques in his heart longed so
To tempt his wife, her sadnesse to know,
That he ne might out of his heart throw
This maruellous desire, his wife to assay,
Needlesse God wot, he thought her to affray.

He had assaied her ynough before,
And found her euer good, what needeth it
Her for to tempt? And alway more and more
Though some man praise it for a subtill wit,
But as for me, I say full euill it sit
To assay a wife when it is no nede,
And put her in anguish and in drede.

For which this Marques wrought in this manere came alone a night there as she lay
With full sterne face, and right vgly chere,
And said thus: Grisilde (quod he) that day
That I tooke thee out of thy poore aray,
And put thee in estate of high noblesse,
Thou hast not that forgotten, as I gesse.

I say Grisilde, the present dignite
In which I haue put thee, as I trow,
Maketh not thee forgetfull for to be,
That I thee tooke in poore estate full low,
For any wele thou must thy selfe know.
Take heed of euery word what I say,
There is no wight that hereth but we tway.

Thou wotest thy self how þ thou came here
Into this house, it is not long ago,
And though to me thou be both lefe and dere,
Unto my Gentiles thou art nothing so:
They say, to hem it is great shame and wo
For to been subiect, and been in seruage
To thee, that borne art in so small a village.

And namely sith thy doughter was ybore,
These words often haue they spoken doutles,
But I desire, as I haue doen before,
To lead my life with hem in rest and pees:
I may not in this case be recheles,

I mote doen with thy doughter for the best.
Not as I wold, but as my gentils lest.

And yet God wote, this is full loth to me:
But natheles without thy witting
I woll nought do, but this I woll (qd. he)
That thou to me assent, as in this thing,
Shew now thy patience in the werking,
That thou me highte and swore in our village
That day that maked was our marriage.

When she had heard all this, she not ameued
Neither in word, in chere, ne countenance,
(For as it seemed, she was not agreeued)
She saied lord, all lyeth in your pleasance,
My child and I, with heartely obeisance
Been yours all, and ye may saue or spill, (will,
With your own therfore worketh your owne

There may nothing so God my soule saue,
Liken to you, that may displease me:
Ne I desire nothing for to haue
Ne drede for to lese, saue only ye:
This will is in my heart, and aye shall be,
No length of time, or death it may deface,
Neither chãge my corage into an other place.

Glad was the Marques of her answering,
But yet he fained as he were not so,
All dreery was his chere and his looking.
When that he should out of the chamber go
Sone after this, a forlong way or two
He priuily had told all his entent
Unto a man, and to his wife him sent.

In maner of a sergeant was this priuy man
The which he faithfull often found had
In things great, and eke such folke well can
Doen execution of things bad:
The lord knew well, he him loued and drad.
And when this sergeant wist his lords will.
Into the chamber he stalked him full still.

Madame he saied, ye mote forgeue it me,
Though I do thing, which I am constrained:
Ye be full wise, and full well know ye,
That great lords hestes may not be fained,
They may well be wailed and complained,
But men must needs unto her lust obey,
And so woll I, there nis no more to say.

This child I am commanded to take.
And spake no more, but vp the child he hent
Dispitously, and gan a chere to make,
As though he would haue slain it or he went.
Griselde must all suffer and consent:
And as a lambe, she sitteth meeke and still,
And let this cruell Sergeant doe his will.

Suspect was the fame of this like man,
Suspect his face, suspect his word also,
Suspect the time in which he this began:
Alas her doughter, that she loued so,
She wende he would haue slain it right tho,
But natheles she neither wept ne siked,
Confirming her to that the Marques liked.

But at the last to speake she began,
And full meekely she the sergeant praid
(So as he was a worthy gentell man)
That she might kisse her child ere that it deid:
And in her arme, this little child she leid,
With full sad face, and gan the child bisse,
And lulled it, and after gan it kisse.

And thus she saied in her benigne voyce:
Farwell my child, I shall thee neuer see,
But sithen I haue marked thee with ỹ croice,
Of thilke father iblessed mote thou be,
That for vs died vpon the Roode tree:
Thy soule litle child I him betake,
For this night shalt thou dien for my sake.

I trow that to a norice in this caas
It had been hard this routh for to see:
Well might a mother then cry alas,
But natheles so sad and stedfast was she,
That she endured all her aduersite,
And to the sergeant meekely she said,
Haue here ayen your little yong maid.

And go thou now (qd. she) and doth my lords hest:
And o thing would I pray you of your grace,
But if my lord forbid it you at the lest,
Buriethy this litle bodie in some place,
That no beasts ne birds it to race.
But he no word to that purpose would saie,
But tooke the child and went anon his waie.

This sergeant came to the lorde againe,
And of Griseldis words and of her chere,
He told him word by word, short and plaine,
And him presented with his daughter dere.
Somwhat this lord had routh in his maner,
But natheles his purpose held he still,
As lords doen, when they woll haue their wil.

And bad the sergeant that full priuily
He should this child wel soft wind and wrap,
With all the circumstance tenderly,
And carry it in a cofer, or in a lap:
But on paine of his hed off to swap,
That no man should know of his entent,
Ne whens he came ne whither he went.

But at Boleine, to his sister dere,
That thilke time of Pauie was Countesse,

He should it take, and shew her this matere,
Beseeching her to doen her busines
This child to fostre in all gentlenesse,
And whose child that it was he bad her hide
From every wight, for ought ỹ might betide.

This sergeãt goth, & hath fulfilde this thing.
But to this Marques now returne we,
For now goeth he full oft imagining
If by his wiues chere, he might ought see
Or els by her wordes, perceiue that she
Were changed, but he neuer could finde,
But euer in one ilike sad and kinde.

As glad, as humble, as busie in seruice
And eke in loue, as she was wont to be,
Was she to him, in every maner wise,
Ne of her doughter one word spake she:
None accident for none aduersite (name
Was seene in her, ne neuer her doughters
Nempned she, for ernest ne for game.

Explicit tertia pars, & incipit pars quarta.

IN this estate, passed ben foure yeere.
Er she with child was, but as God would, (Walters
A man child she bare by this wel gracious, and faire to be-
And when folke it to the father told, (hold:
Not only he, but all the countey mery
Was for the child, & God they thonke & hery.

When it was two yere old, and frõ the brest
Departed from his norice, on a day
This Marques cought yet another lest
To tempten his wife eftsones, if he may.
O needles was she tempted, I dare say.
But wedded men ne conne no measure,
When they finde a patient creature.

Wife (qd. this Marques) ye haue heard or
My people heauily bereth our mariage, (this
And namely sithen my sonne borne is,
Now is it worse than euer in our age:
The murmure slaieth my heart & my corage,
For to my eares commeth the voice so smart,
That it well nie destroyed hath my hart.

Now say they thus, whẽ Walter is agon,
Then shall the blood of Janicola succede,
And beene our lord, for other haue we non:
Such words say my people, it is no drede.
Well ought I of such murmure take hede,
For certainely I dread such sentence, (ence.
Though they not plainly speke in myn audi-

I would liue in peace, if that I might:
Wherefore I am disposed vtterly,
As I his suster serued by night,
Right so I thinke to serue him priuily.
Thus warne I you, that ye not sodainly
Out of your selfe, for no wo should outraie,
Beth patient, and therof I you praie.

I haue (qd. she) said, and euer shall,
I woll ne nill nothing for certain,
But as you list: nought greueth me at all,
Though that my doughter & my son be slain
At your commandement: this is to sain,
I haue had no part of children twain,
But first sickenesse, and after wo and pain.

Ye ben our lord, doth with your own thing
Right as you list, and taketh no rede of me:
For as I left at home my clothing
When I came first to you, right so (qd. she)
Left I my will and all my libertie,
And toke your clothing: wherfore I you pray,
Doe your will, I woll to it obay.

And certes, if I had prescience
Your will to know, ere ye your lust me told,
I would it doen without negligence:
But now I wote your lust, & what ye would,
All your pleasance firme and stable I hold,
For wist I that my deth would doen you ese,
Gladly would I suffer it, you to plese.

Death may not make no comparisoun
Unto your loue: & when this Marques sei
The constance of his wife, he cast adown
His yen two, and wondred how she may
In such patience suffer all this array:
And fourth he goth with drery countenaunce,
But to his hert it was full great pleasaunce.

This eiger sergeant in the same wise
That he her doughter caught, right so he
For worse, if that he coud wers deuise,
Hath hent her sonne, that was full of beaute:
And euer in one so patient was she,
That she no chere made of heuinesse,
But kisseth her child and after gan him blesse.

Saue this she praied him, if that he might,
Her litle sonne he would in earth graue,
His tender limmes, delicate to sight,
Fro foules and fro noysom beasts to saue.
But she none answer of him might haue,
He went his way, as he nothing rought,
But to Bolcine he tenderly it brought.

This Marques wondred euer lenger the
Upon her pacience, and if that he (more

Ne

He had soothly knowen there before,
That perfectly her children loued she,
He would haue wend that for some subtilte
And of malice, or cruell corage,
She had suffered this with sad visage.

But he knew wel, that next himself, certain
She loued her children best in euery wise.
But now of women would I aske fain,
If these assaies mighten not suffise,
What coud a sturdie husbond more deuise
To preue her wifehood, and her stedfastnesse:
But be continuing euer in sturdinesse.

But there be folke of that condition,
That when they han a certain purpose take,
They couth not stint of her entention,
But as they were bounden to a stake
They woll not of that purpose to slake:
Right so this Marques hath fully purposed
To tempt his wife, as he was first disposed.

He waiteth, if by words or countenance
She were to him changed of her corage:
But neuer could he find variance,
She was aie in one heart and visage,
And euer the further that she was in age,
The more truer (if it were possible)
She was to him in loue, and more penible.

For which it semeth thus, that of hem two
There nas but one will: for as Walter lest,
The same lust was her pleasance also:
And God be thonked, all fell for the best,
She shewed well, for no worldly vnrest
A wife, as for her selfe, nothing should
Willen in effect, but as her husbond would.

The slander of Walter, wonder wide spread,
That of cruell heart, full wretchedly,
(For he a poore woman wedded had)
Hath murdred both his children priuily:
Which murmure was among hem comonly.
No wonder was: for to the peoples ere
Ther came no word, but ỹ they murdred wer

For which where as his people ther before
Had loued him well, the slander of his fame
Made hem that they hated him therefore:
To been a murtherer is an hatefull name.
But natheles, for earnest ne for game
He of his cruel purpose would not stent,
To tempt his wife was all his entent.

Whan ỹ his doughter, xii. yere was of age,
He to the court of Rome, in subtill wise
(Enformed of his will) sent his message
Comanding hem, such billes to deuise,
As to his cruell purpose may suffise,
How that the Pope, for his peoples rest
Bad him wed another, if that him lest.

I say he bad, they should counterfete
The Popes bull, making mention
That he hath leaue his first wife to lete
As by the Popes dispensacion,
To stint rancor and discencion
Betwixt his people & him: thus spake the bul,
The which they han published at the full.

The rude people, as no wonder nis
Weenden full well, it had been right so:
But when these tidings come to Griseldis
I deeme, that her heart was full of wo
But she was still lech sad euermo:
Disposed was this humble creature
The aduersite of fortune to endure.

Abiding euer his list and his pleasance
To whom she was yeuen, heart and all,
As to her verey worldly sufficance:
But certainly, if I this storie tell shall,
This Marques written hath in speciall
A letter, in which he shewd his intent
And priuely, he it to Bologne hath sent.

To the Erle of Panie, which that had tho
Wedden his suster: he prayed specially
To bringen him ayen his children two
In honourable estate all openly:
But one thing he prayed all vtterly,
That he to no wight, though men would enquere
Should tell whose children that they were.

But say that the maiden should wedded be
Unto the Marques of Saluce anon:
And as the Earle was prayed, so did he,
For at a day set, he on his way is gon
Toward Saluce, and lords many one
In rich araie, this maiden for to gide,
Her yong brother riding by her side.

Arraied was toward hyr marriage
This maiden fresh, full of gemmes clere,
And her brother, that seuen yeer was of age
Arraied was eke freshly in his manere:
And thus in great nobles and glad chere
Toward Saluce shapen their iournay
Fro day to day, riding forth her way.

Explicit quarta pars, & sequitur pars quinta.

AMong al this, after his wicked vsage
This Marques his wife yet tempted more
To the vttereste proofe of her corage,

Fully to haue experience and loze,
If that she were as stedfast (as before,)
He on a day in open audience
Full boistously hath said her this sentence:

Certes Grisilde, I had inough of pleasance
To han you to my wife, for your goodnesse
And for your trouth, and your obeysance,
Not for your lineage, ne for your richesse,
But I now know in very soothfastnesse,
That in great lordship, if I me well auise
There is great seruitude in sondry wise,

I may not done, as euery ploughman may:
My people me constraineth for to take
Another wife, and cryen day by day,
And eke the Pope this rancor for to slake
Consenteth it, that dare I vndertake:
And truely, thus much I wol you say,
My new wife is comming by the way.

Be strong of hert, & voide anon her place,
And thilke dowery that ye brought to me
Take it ayen, I grant it of my grace,
Returneth to your fathers house (qd. he)
No man may alway haue prosperite.
With euen heart I read you to endure
The strokes of fortune, or of auenture.

And she ayen answerd in patience:
My lord (qd. she) I wote and wist alway,
How that betwixt your magnificence
And my pouert, no man can ne may
Maken no comparison, it is no nay.
I held me neuer digne in no manere
To been your wife, ne yet your chamberere.

And in this house, there ye me lady made
(The hie God take I as for my witnesse
And all so wisely, as he my soule glad)
I held me neither lady ne maistresse,
But humble seruant to your worthinesse,
And euer shall, while my life may endure,
Abouen euery worldly creature.

That ye so long of your benignite
Haue hold me in honour and nobley
(Where I was not worthy for to be)
That thonke I God & you, to whom I prey,
So yeld it you, there is no more to sey:
Unto my father gladly wol I wende,
And with him dwell to my liues ende,

There I was fostred of a childe full small
Till I be deed, my life there woll I lead,
A widow cleane in heart, body and all.
For sithen I yaue to you my maidenhead,
And am your true wife, it is no dread:
God shilde such a lordes wife to take
Another man to husbond or to make.

And of your new wife, God of his grace
So graunt you wealth and high prosperite:
For I woll gladly yeue her my place,
In which I was blisfull wont to be.
For sithen it liketh you my lord (qd. she)
(That whylome weren all my hearts rest)
That I shall gone: I shall goe when you lest.

But there as ye me profred such dowaire
As I first brought, it is well in my mind,
It were my wretched clothes, nothing faire,
The which to me now were full hard to find.
Oh, good God, how gentle and how kind
Ye seemed by your speech and your visage,
The day that maked was our marriage.

But sooth is said, algate I find it trew,
For in effect it is proued now on me,
Loue is not old, as when it is new:
For certes lord, for none aduersite
To dien in this case, it shall neuer be
That euer in word or worke I shall repent,
That I you yaue mine heart in good intent.

My lord ye wote, that in my fathers place
Ye did me strip out of my poore wede,
And richely ye clad me of your grace,
To you brought I nought els out of drede,
But faith, nakednesse, and maidenhede:
But here ayen your clothing I restore,
And eke my wedding ring for euermore.

The remnaunt of your iewels ready be
Within your chamber, dare I safely saue:
Naked out of my fathers house (qd. she)
I came, and naked I mote turne againe,
All your pleasaunce would I follow faine:
But yet I hope it be not your entent,
That I smockeles out of your paleis went.

Ye could not doe so dishonest a thing,
That ilke wombe in which your children lay,
Should before the people, in my walking
Be seene all bare: wherefore I you pray
Let me not like a worme goe by the way:
Remembreth you mine owne lord so dere,
I was your wife, though I vnworthy were.

Wherefore in reward of my maidenhede
Which I to you brought, and not ayen bere,
As vouchsafe to yeue me to my mede,
But such a smocke as I was wont to were:
That I therewith may wrie ꝑ̄ wombe of her
That was your wife: and here I take my leue
Of you, mine owne lord, least I you greue.

The

The smock (qd. he) ỹ thou hast on thy bake,
Let it be still, and beare it forth with thee:
But well vneth that word had he spake,
But went his way forth routh and pitee.
Before the folke her selfe strippeth she,
And in her smock, with foot and head all bare,
Toward her fathers house forth is she fare.

The folke followed weeping in her wey,
And fortune euer they cursed as they gone:
But she fro weeping kept her eyen drey,
Ne in all this time word spake she none.
Her father, that this tidings heard anone,
Cursed the day and time, that nature
Shope him to been a liues creature.

For out of all doubt, this poore old man
Was euer suspect of her mariage:
For euer he deemed, sithen it began,
That when the lord fulfilled had his corage,
Him would thinke it was a disparage
To his estate, so low for to alight,
And voiden her as soone as euer he might.

Ayenst his doughter hastily goth he,
(For by ỹ noise of folk he knew her comming)
And with her old coat as it might be,
He couered her, full sore weeping:
But on her body might he it not bring,
For rude was the cloth, and she more of age
By daies fele than she was at her mariage.

Thus with her father for a certaine space
Dwelleth this floure of wifely patience,
That neuer by her words nor by her face,
Before the folke, ne eke in absence,
Ne shewed she that her was done offence,
Ne of her high estate no remembraunce
Ne had she, as by her countenaunce.

No wonder is, for in her great estate
Her ghost was euer in plaine humilitie:
No tender mouth, ne heart delicate,
Ne pompe, ne semblance of roialtie.
But full of patience and benignitie,
Discreet, and prudelesse, and aye honorable,
And to her husband euer meeke and stable.

Yen speak of Iob, & most for his humblesse,
(As clerkes when hem list can well endite
Namely of men) but in soothfastnesse,
Though clerkes praisen women but a lite,
There can no man in humblesse hem acquite
As women can: ne be halfe so trew
As women been, but it befall of new.

Explicit quinta pars: & sequitur pars sexta.

TRo Boloine is the Earle of Pauie come,
Of which the fame sprong to more and lesse:
And to the peoples eares all and some
Was couth eke, how a new Marquesse
He with him brought, in pomp & such richesse,
That was neuer seene with mans eie
So noble aray in West Lumbardie.

The Marques that shope & knew all this,
Er that this Erle was come, sent his message
To thilke poore and silly Grisildis,
And she with humble heart and glad visage,
Not with swelling heart in her courage,
Came at his hest, and on her knees her set,
And reuerently and wisely she him gret.

Grisilde (qd. he) my will is vtterly,
This maid that wedded shall be vnto me,
Receiued be to morrow so royally
As it is possible in my house to bee:
And eke that euery wight in his degree
Haue his estate in sitting and seruice,
And also pleasaunt, as ye can best deuise.

I haue no woman sufficient certaine,
The chambers for to array in ordinaunce
After my lust, and therefore wold I faine,
That thine weren all such gouernaunce:
Thou knowest eke of old all my pleasaunce,
Though thine array be bad, and euill besey,
Doe thou thy deuer at the least wey.

Not onely lord I am glad (qd. she)
To doen your lust, but I desire also
You for to please and serue in my degree,
Without faining, and shall euermo:
Ne neuer for no weale, ne for no wo,
Ne shall the ghost within my heart stent
To loue you best with all my true entent.

And with ỹ word she gan the hous to dight,
And tables to set, and beds to make,
And pained her to doen all that she might,
Praying the chamberers for Gods sake
To hasten hem, and fast sweepe and shake,
And she the most seruiceable of hem all,
Hath euery chamber arraied, and his hall.

Abouten vndren gan this Earle alight,
ỹ with him brought these noble children twey:
For which the people ran to see that sight
Of her array, so richely besey:
And then at erst amongs hem they sey,
That Walter was no foole, though him lest
To chaunge his wife: for it was for the best.

For she is fairer, as they deemen all,
Than is Grisild, and more tender of age:
And fairer fruit betweene hem shall fall,
And more pleasant for her high linage:
Her brother eke so faire was of his age,
That him to seen ỹ people had cauzt pleasance,
Cõmending now the Marques gouernance.

O sterne people, vnsad and vntrue,
Aye vndiscreet, and chaunging as a fane,
Delighting euer in rumer that is new,
For like the Moone euer waxe ye and wane:
Full of clapping, deare ynough of a tane.
Your dome is fals, your constance ill preueth,
A full great foole is he that on you leueth.

Thus saiden sad folke in that citie,
When that the people gased vp and doun:
For they were glad, right with the noueltie
To haue a new lady of her toun.
No more of this make I now mentioun,
But to Grisilde ayen will I me dresse,
And tellen her constance, and her busines.

Well busie was Grisilde on euery thing,
That to the feast was appertinent:
Right nauzt was she abashed of her clothing,
Though they wer rude, and somwhat to rent,
But with glad cheare to the yate is went
With other folke, to greet the Marquesesse,
And after doth she forth her busines.

With right glad chere the gests she receiueth
And buxomely eueriche in his degree,
That no man defaut there perceiueth,
But euer they wondren what she might bee,
That in so poore array was for to see,
And coud such honour and reuerence,
And worthily they praisen her prudence.

In all the meane while she neuer stent,
This maiden and eke her brother to cõmend
With all her heart and benigne intent,
So well, that no man coud her prise amend:
But at the last when these lords wend
To sitten doune to meat, he gan to call
Grisilde, as she was busie in the hall.

Grisilde (qd. he) as it were in his play,
How liketh thee my wife, and her beaute?
Right well my lord (qd. she) for in good fay,
A fairer saw I neuer none than she:
I pray to God so yeue you prosperite,
And so hope I, that he will to you send
Pleasaunce ynough vnto your liues end.

But one thing I beseech, and warne also
That ye pricke with no such turmenting
This tender maiden, as ye han do mo:
For she is fostered in her nourishing
More tenderly, in my supposing.
She could not aduersitie endure,
As could a poore fostred creature.

And when this Walter saw her patience,
Her glad cheare, and no malice at all,
And he so oft hath done her offence,
And she aye constant, and stable as a wall,
Continuing euer her innocence ouer all,
This furious Marques gan his heart dresse
To rue vpon her wifely stedfastnesse.

This is ynough, Grisilde mine (qd. he)
Be no more agast, ne cuill apaid,
I haue thy faith and thy benignite,
As well as euer woman was assaid
In great estate, or poorely araid:
Now know I deare wife thy stedfastnesse,
And her in armes tooke, and gan to kesse.

And she for wonder tooke thereof no keepe:
She heard not what thing he to her said:
She fared as she had stert out of her sleepe,
Till she out of her madnesse abraid.
Grisilde (qd. he) by God that for vs deid,
Thou art my wife, and none other I haue,
Ne neuer had, as God my soule saue.

This is thy daughter, which thou supposed
To be my wife, and none other faithfully:
And this shall be mine heir, as I haue disposed,
Thou bare hem in thy body truly:
At Bolone haue I kept hem likerly,
Take hem ayen, for now maist thou not say,
That thou hast lorn any of thy children tway.

And folke, that otherwise han said of me,
I warne hem wel, that I haue done this dede
For no malice, ne for no cruelte,
But for to assay in thee thy womanhede:
And not to slen my children, God forbede,
But for to keepen hem priuely and still,
Till I thy purpose knew, and all thy will.

Whẽ she this herd, a swoune doun she falleth
For pitous ioy, and after her swouning,
She both her yong children to her calleth,
And in her armes pitously weeping,
Embraced hem both tenderly kissing
Full like a mother with her salt teares
She bathed both her visage and her haires.

O which a pitous thing it was to see
Her swouning and her pitous voice to heare:
Graunt mercy lord God thonk it you (qd she)
That ye haue saued me my children deare:

Now

Now recke I neuer to be dead right here,
Sithen I stond in your loue, & in your grace,
No force of death, ne when my spirit pace.

O tender, O deare, O young childzen mine,
Your wofull mother wend stedfastly,
That cruell hounds, or some foule vermine
Had eaten you, but God of his mercy,
And your benigne father so tenderly
Hath done you keep: and in that same stound
All suddainly she swapt doune to the ground.

And in her swouning, so sadly held she
Her childzen two, whē she gan hem embrace,
That with great sleight and difficulte
The childzen from hir arms they gan to race:
O many a teare, on many a pitous face
Doune ran of hem that stooden there beside,
Unneth about her might no man abide.

Walter her gladdeth, and her sorow slaketh,
She riseth vp all abashed from her traunce,
And euery wight her ioy and feast maketh,
Till she hath caught ayen her countenaunce.
Walter her doth so faithfully pleasaunce,
That it was deintie to seene the chere
Betwixt hem two, when they were met ifere.

These ladies all, when they her time sey,
Han taken her, and into chamber gone,
And strippen her out of her rude arrey,
And in a cloth of gold that bright shone,
With a croune of many a rich stone
Upon her head, they her into hall brought:
And there she was honoured as she ought.

Thus hath this pitous day a blisfull end:
For euery man and woman doth his might
This day in mirth and reuell to dispend,
Till on the welkin shone the sterres bright:
For more solemne in euery mans sight
This feast was, and greater of costage,
Than was the reuell of her mariage.

Well many a yeare in high prosperite
Liuen these two in concord and in rest,
And richly his doughter maried he
Unto a lord, one of the worthiest
Of all Italie, and then in peace and rest
His wiues father in his court he kept,
Till that his soule out of his body crept.

His sonne succeedeth in his heritage,
In rest and peace, after his fathers day:
And fortunate was eke in mariage,
All put he not his wife in great assay:
This world is not so strong, it is no nay,
As it hath been in old times yore,
And herkneth what the autour saith therfore.

This story is said, not for that wiues should
Follow en Grisild, as in humilite:
For it were inportable tho they would,
But that euery wight in his degre
Should be constant in all aduersite
As was Grisild: wherefore Petrarke writeth
This storie, which with high stile he enditeth.

For sith a woman was so patient
Unto a mortall man, well more we ought
Receiue all in gree that God vs sent.
For great skill he preueth that he wrought:
But he ne tempteth no man that he bought,
As saith saint Jame, if ye his pistell read,
He preueth folke but assay, it is no dread.

And suffreth vs as for our exercise
With sharpe scourges of aduersite,
Well oft to be beaten in sundry wise:
Not for to know our will, for certes he
Or we were borne, knew all our frelte:
And for our best is all his gouernaunce,
Let vs liue then in vertuous suffraunce.

But one word herkeneth lordings or ye go:
It were full hard to find now adayes
In all a countrey, Grisildes three or two:
For if they were put to such assayes,
The gold of hem hath so bad alayes
With brasse, for though it be faire at eie,
It would rather brast a two than plie.

For which here, for the wiues loue of Bath
Whose life and eke mightie God maintene
In high maistry, or els ware it skath,
I will with lustie heart, fresh, and greene,
Say you a song, to glad you I wene:
And let vs stint of earnest mattere.
Herkneth my song that saith in this manere.

Lenuoye de Chaucer a les mariz de nostre temps.

Grisilde is dead and eke hir patience,
And both at once buried in Italie:
For which I crie in open audience,
No wedded man be so hardie to assaile
His wiues patience, in trust to find
Grisildes, for in certaine he shall faile.

O noble wiues, full of high prudence,
Let no humilite your tongue naile:
Ne let no clerke haue cause ne diligence

To

To write of you a storie of such marualle
As of Grisild patient and kinde,
Lest Chechisace swallow you in her entraile.

Followeth Ecco, that holdeth no silence,
But euer answereth at the countretaile:
Beth no adassed for your innocence,
But sharply taketh on you the gouernaile:
Enprinteth well this lesson in your minde,
For common profit, sith it may auaile.

Ne dredeth hem not, doth hem no reuerēce,
For though thine husband armed be in maile,
The arrowes of thy crabbed eloquence
Shall perce his brest, and eke his aduentaile:
In ielousie eke looke thou him binde,
And ỹ shal make him couch as doth a quaile.

If thou be faire, there folke ben in presence
Shew thou thy visage, and thine apparaile:
If thou be foule, be free of thy dispence,
To get thee friends aye do thy trauaile:
Be aye of cheare as light as lefe on linde,
And let him care, weepen, wring, and waile.

Ye archwiues stondeth aye at your defence,
Sith ye be strong, as is a great camaile:
Ne suffreth not, that men do you offence.
And ye sclendre wiues, feeble as in battaile,
Beth cygre as any tygre is in Inde:
Aye clappeth as a mill, I you counsaile.

¶ Here endeth the Clerke of Oxenfords tale.

¶ Here follow the words of our Host.

When this worthy clerke ended had his tale,
Our Host said and swore by cockes bones,
Me were leuer than a barrell of ale
My wife at home had heard this legend ones:
This is a gentle tale for the nones,
As to my purpose, wist ye my will,
But thing that woll not be, let it be still.

¶ The Frankeleins Prologue.

THese old gentle Britons in her daies,
Of diuers auentures maden laies,
Rimed at first in her mother tong:
Which layes with her instruments they song,
Or elis readen hem for her pleasaunce,
And one of hem haue I in remembraunce,
Which I shall say, as willing as I can.
But sirs, because I am a borell man,
At my beginning first I you beseech
Haue me excused of my rude speech:
I learned neuer Rhetorike certaine,
Thing that I speak, mote be bare and plaine:
I slept neuer on the mount of Pernaso,
Ne learned Marcus Tullius Cicero.
Colours ne know I none, withouten dread,
But such colours as growen in the mead,
Or elis such as men dien or paint:
Colours of Rhetorike been to me quaint,
My spirit feeleth not of such matere.
This is my tale, if ye woll it here.

¶ The Frankeleins Tale.

Aurelius after much labour and cost bestowed to win the loue of Dorigen, another mans wife, is content in the end through the good dealing of her and her husband, to loose both labour and cost. The scope of this tale seemeth a contention in courtesie.

IN Armorike, that called is Britaine,
There was a knight, that loued and did his paine
To serue a ladies in his best wise,
And many a labour, and many a great empryse
He for his lady wrought, ere she were wonne:
For she was one the fairest vnder sonne,
And eke thereto comen of high kinrede,
That well vneth durst this knight for drede
Tell her his wo, his paine, and his distresse.
But at the last, she of her worthinesse,
And namely for his meeke obeysaunce,
Hath such a pitty caught of his penaunce,
That priuely she fell of his accord
To take him for her husbond and her lord,
(Of such lordship as men haue ouer her wiues,
And for to lead in the more blisse her liues.)
Of his free will he swore her as a knight,
That neuer in all his life day he might
Ne should he take vpon him no maistrie
Against her will, ne kithe her ielousie,
But her obey, and follow her will in all,
As any louer to his lady shall:
Saue that the name of soueraignete
That would he haue for shame of his degree.
She thanked him, & with ful great humblesse
She said: sir, sith of your gentlenesse
Ye profred me to haue so large a raine,
Ne would God neuer betwixt vs twaine
As in my gilt, were either werre or strife:
Sir, I woll be your true humble wife,
Haue here my trouth, till that my heart brest:
Thus been they both in quiet and in rest.
For one thing sirs, safely dare I seine,

That

That friends euerich other must obeine,
If they woll long holden companie:
Loue woll not be constrained by maistrie.
When maistry comes, the God of loue anone
Beateth his wings, and farewell he is gone.
Loue is a thing, as any spirit free,
Women of kind desiren libertee,
And not to be constrained as a thrall:
And so done men, if I sooth say shall.
Looke who that most patient is in loue,
He is at his auauntage all aboue:
Patience is an high vertue certaine,
For it venquisheth, as these clerkes saine,
Things that rigour shall neuer attaine.
For euery word men may not chide or plaine,
Learneth to suffer, or els, so mote I gone,
Ye shall it learne whether ye woll or none.
For in this world certaine no wight there is,
That he ne doth or saieth sometime amis.
Ire, sickenesse, or constellation,
Wine, woo, or chaunging of complexion,
Causeth full oft to done amisse or speaken:
On euery wrong a man may not be wreken.
After the time must be temperaunce
To euery wight that can of gouernaunce.
And therefore hath this worthy wise knight,
(To liuen in ease) suffraunce her hight:
And she to him full wisely gan sweare,
That neuer should there be default in here.
Here may men see, humble and wise accord:
Thus hath she take her seruant and her lord,
Seruaunt in loue, and lord in mariage,
Then was he both in lordship and seruage:
Seruage? nay, but in lordship aboue,
Sithen he hath both his lady and his loue:
His lady certes, and his wife also,
The which that law of loue accordeth to.
And when he was in this prosperity,
Home with his wife he goth into his country,
Not fer fro Pẽmarke, ther his dwelling was,
Where as he liueth in ioy and solas.
Who could tell, but he had wedded be,
The ioy, the ease, and the prosperite,
That is betwixt an husbond and his wife?
Euermore lasted this blisfull life,
Til that this knight, of which I speake thus,
(That of Cacre Iuda, was cleped Aruiragus)
Shope him to dwellen a yeare or twaine
In England, that cleped was Britaine,
To seeken in armes worship and honour.
For all his lust he set in such labour,
And dwelt there two year, ỹ booke saith thus.
Now woll I stint of this Aruiragus,
And speake I woll of Dorigen his wife,
That loueth her husbond as her hearts life:
For his absence weepeth she and siketh,
As done these noble wiues when hem liketh:
She mourneth, waileth, fasteth, and plaineth
Desire of his presence her so constraineth,
That all this wide world set she at nought.
Her friends, which knew her heauy thought,
Comforten her in all that euer they may,
They preachen hir, and tellen her night & day,
That causeles she slew her selfe, alas,
And euery comfort possible in this caas,
They done to her, with all her businesse,
And all to maken her leaue her heauinesse.
By processe, as ye knowen euerychone,
Men mowen so long grauen in a stone,
Till some figure therein printed be:
So long han they comforted her, till she
Receiued hath by hope and by reason,
The emprinting of her constellation:
Through which her gret sorrow gan aslluage,
She may not alway enduren such a rage:
And eke Aruiragus in all this care
Hath sent his letters home of his welfare,
And that he woll come hastily againe,
Or els had this sorrow her heart slaine.
Her friends saw her sorrow gan to slake,
And praiden her on her knees for Gods sake
To come and romen in her companie,
Away to driuen her derke fantasie:
And finally she graunted that request,
For well she saw it was for the best.
Now stood her castle fast by the see,
And often with her friends walked shee,
Her to disporten on the bankes hie,
Where as she may ships and barges sie,
Sailing her course, where hem list go.
But yet was that a parcell of her wo,
For to her selfe full oft alas said shee,
Is there no ship, of so many as I see,
Wol bring home my lord? then were my hert
Warished of these bitter paines smert.
Another time wonld she sit and thinke,
And cast her eyen downward fro the brinke:
But when she saw the grisly rockes blake,
For very feare so would her hert quake,
That on her feet she might not her sustene.
Then would she sit adoune vpon the grene,
And pitously into the sea behold,
And say right thus, with sorrowfull sikes cold.
Eterne God, that through thy purueiaunce
Leadest this world by certaine gouernaunce,
In idle as men sain dost thou nothing make:
But lord, these grisly fiendly rockes blake,
That seemen rather a foule confusion
Of werke, than a faire creation
Of such a perfit God, wise and stable,
Why haue ye wrought this werk unreasonable?
For by this werke, north, south, west, ne east,
There nis fostred ne man, bird, ne beast:
It doth no good at all, but annoyeth:
See ye not lord how mankind it destroyeth?
An hundred thousand bodies of mankind

Haue

Haue rockes slaine, all be they not in mind.
Sin mankind is so faire a part of thy werke
That thou it madest like thy owne werke,
Then seemed it ye had a great cherte
Toward mankind: but how then may it be,
That ye such meanes maken it to disteyen?
Which meanes done no good, but euer anoyen.
I wote well clerkes woll saine as hem lest
By arguments, that all is for the best:
Though I ne cannot the causes well know,
But thilke God that made the wind to blow,
As keepe my lord, this is my conclusion.
To clerkes lete I all this disputation:
And would God that all these rockes blake
Were sonken into hell for his sake.
These rockes doe slee mine heart for feare:
Thus would she say with many a pitous tear
Her friends saw it was for her no disport
To romen by the sea, but discomfort,
And shapen hem to plaine some where els,
They leaden her by riuers and by wels,
And eke in other places delectables,
They daunten and they plaien at the tables.
So on a day, right in the morrow tide,
Unto a garden that was there beside,
In which that they had made her ordinaunce
Of vitailes, and other purueyaunce,
They gone and plaine hem all the long day:
And this was in the first morrow of May,
which May hath painted with his soft shours
This garden full of leaues and of flours:
And craft of mans hond so curiously
Arrayed had this garden truly,
That neuer nas there garden of such price,
But if it were the very paradise.
The odour of floures, and the fresh sight
Would haue made any liuing hert light
That euer was, but if too great sickenesse
Or too great sorrow held it in distresse,
So was it full of beauty, with pleasaunce.
And after dinner gone they to daunce
And sing also, saue Dorigene alone,
That yet vnto her selfe made her mone.
For she ne seie him on the daunce go,
That was her husbond, and her loue also:
But nathelesse she must her time abide,
And with good hope let her sorrow slide.
Upon this daunce, among other men
Daunced a squier before Dorigen,
That fresher was and iollier of array,
As to my doome, than is the month of May.
He singeth and daunceth, passing euery man,
That is or was sithen the world began:
He was therwith, and men should him discriue,
One of the best faring men on liue,
Yong, strong, vertuous, rich, and wise,
And well beloued, and holden of great price,
And shortly, if I the sooth tell shall,
Unwitting of this Dorigen at all,
This lusty squier, seruaunt to Venus,
Which ycleped was Aurelius,
Had loued her best of any creature
Two yeare and more, as was his auenture:
But neuer durst he tell her his greuaunce,
Withouten cup he dronke all his penaunce.
He was dispaired, nothing durst he say,
Saue in his songes somewhat would he wray
His wo, as in generall complaining,
He said he loued, and was beloued nothing:
Of which mattere made he many layes,
Songs, complaints, roundels, and verilayes,
How that he durst not his sorrow tell,
But languish, as doth a furie in hell,
And die he must (he said) as did Ecco
For Narcissus, that durst not tell his wo.
In other manner than ye heard me say,
Ne durst not he to her his wo bewray,
Saue perauenture sometime at daunces,
There young folke keepen her obseruaunces,
It may well be he looked on her face
In such a wise, as men that aske grace,
But nothing wist she of his entent:
Nathelesse it happed, ere they thence went,
Because that he was her neere neighbour,
And was a man of worship and honour,
And she had yknowne him of time yore,
They fell in speech, and so forth more & more
Unto his purpose then drow Aurelius:
And when he saw his time, he said thus.
Madame (qd. he) by God ỹ this world made,
So that I wist, that I might your hert glade,
I would that day, that your Arueragus
Went ouer the sea, that I Aurelius
Had went there ỹ I should neuer come again:
For well I wot my seruice is in vain,
My guerdon nis but bresting of mine hert:
Madame, rueth vpon my paines smert,
For with one word ye may me slee or saue,
Here at your foot God would ỹ I were graue.
I haue as now no leisure more to sey:
Haue mercy sweet, or ye woll doe me dey.
She gan to looke vpon Aurelius,
Is this your will (qd. she) and say ye thus?
Neuer erst (qd. she) ne wist I what ye ment:
But now I know Aurelius your entent.
By thilke God that yaue me soule and life,
Ne shall I neuer be vntrew wife
In word ne werke, as far as I haue wit,
I woll ben his to whom I am knit:
Take this for a finall answere of me,
But after this in play thus said she.
Aurelius (qd. she) by God aboue
Yet woll I graunt you to been your loue
(Sithen I see you so pitously complaine.)
Looke what day that endlong in Britaine
Ye remeue all the rockes, stone by stone,

That

That they ne let ship ne boat to gone,
I say when ye haue made these coasts so clene
Of rockes, that there nis no stone yleene,
Then will I loue you best of any man,
Here haue my trouth, in all that euer I can.
Is there none other grace in you (qd. he?)
No by that lord (qd. she) that maked me.
For well I wote that it shall neuer betide,
Let such follie out of your heart glide.
What deintie should a man haue in his life
For to goe loue another mans wife?
That hath her body when so that him liketh.
Aurelius full often sore siketh:
Wo was Aurely, when he this herd,
And with a sorowfull chere he thus answerd.
Madame (qd. he) this were impossible:
Then mote I die on suddaine death horrible:
And with that word he turned him anone.
Tho come her other friends euerichone,
And in the aleyes romeden vp and doun,
And nothing wist of this conclusioun,
But suddainely began to reuell new,
Till that the bright sonne had lost his hew.
For the orizont hath reft the sunne his light,
This is as much to say, as it was night:
And home they gone in ioy and in solas,
Saue onely wretched Aurelius, alas:
He to his house is gone with sorrowfull hert,
He said he might not from his death astert.
Him seemed, that he felt his heart all coid,
And vp to heauen his honds gan he hold,
And on his knees bare he set him adoun,
And in his raving said this orisoun:
For very wo out of his wit he braied,
He ne wist what he spake, but thus he said.
With pitous hert hath he his cõplaint begon
Unto the goddes, and first vnto the son
He said: God Apollo and gouernour
Of euery plant, herbe, tree, and flour,
That yeuest after thy declination
To ilke of hem his time and season,
As thine herberow chaungeth low and hie:
Lord Phebus, cast thy merciable eie
On wretched Aurelius, which am but lorne,
Lo lord, my lady hath my death ysworne
Without guilt, but thy benignity
Upon my deadly heart haue some pity.
For well I wot lord Phebus, if ye lest,
Ye may me helpe, saue my lady, best.
Now vouch ye saue, that I you deuise
How that I may be holpen & in what wise.
Your blisfull suster Lucina the shene,
That of the sea is goddesse and queene,
Though Neptunus hath deitie in the see,
Yet empresse aboue him is shee:
Ye knowen well lord, right as her desire
Is to be quickened and lighted of your fire,
For which she followeth you full besily,
Right so the sea desireth naturally
To folowen her, as she that is goddesse
Both of the sea and riuers more and lesse.
Wherefore lord Phebus, this is my request,
Doe this miracle, or doe mine heart brest.
That now next at this opposition,
Which in signe shall be of the Lion,
As prayeth her so great a flood to bring,
That fiue fadome at the least it ouerspring
The highest rocke in Armorike Britaine,
And let this flood to dure yeares twaine.
Then certes to my lady may I say,
Holdeth your hest, the rockes been away:
This thing may ye lightly done for me,
Pray her to gone no faster course than ye.
I say thus, prayeth your suster that shee go
No faster course than ye in yeares two:
Then shall she be at the full alway,
And spring flood lasting both night and day:
And but she vouchsafe in such manere
To graunt me my souereigne lady dere,
Pray her to sinken euery rocke adoun
Into her owne derke regioun
Under the ground, there Pluto dwelleth in,
Or neuermore shall I my lady win.
Thy tẽple in Delphos will I barefoot seeke,
O lord Phebus, see the teares on my cheeke,
And on my paine haue some compassioun:
And with that word, in swoune he fell adoun,
And for a long time he lay in a traunce.
His brother, which ỹ knew of his penaunce,
Up caught him, and to bed him brought.
Dispaired in this turment and this thought
Let I this wofull creature lie,
Chese he whether he will liue or die.
Aruiragus with heale and great honour
(As he that was of chiualrie the flour)
Is comen home, and other worthy men:
O blisful art thou now Dorigen,
That hast thy lusty husbond in thine armes,
That fresh knight, that worthy man of armes,
That loueth thee as his owne hearts life:
Nothing list him to be imaginatife,
If any wight had spoken (while he was out)
To her of loue, thereof had he no dout,
He entendeth not to such matere,
But danceth, iusteth, & maketh her good chere
And thus in ioy and blisse I let hem dwell,
And of wofull Aurelius will I tell.
In langour and in turment dispitous
Two yeare and more lay wretched Aurelius,
Ere any foot on earth he might gone,
Ne comfort in this time had he none,
Saue of his brother, which was a clerke,
He knew of all this wo and all this werke:
For to none other creature certaine
Of this mattere durst he no word saine,
Under his breast he bare it more secre,

Than euer did Pamphilus for Galathe.
His breast was whole without for to seene,
But in his heart aye was the arrow keene,
And well ye knowen, that of a surfanure,
In surgerie, is perillous the cure,
But mē might touch ỹ arow or come thereby.
His brother weepeth and waileth priuely,
Till at the last him fell in remembraunce,
That while he was at Orleaunce in Fraunce
(As these clerkes yong that been likerous)
To readen arts that been curious,
Seeken in euery halke and in euery Herne
Particular science for to lerne.
He him remembred, that vpon a dcie
At Orleaunce in studie a booke he scie
Of Magicke naturall, which his felaw,
That was in that time a batcheler of law,
All were he there to learne another craft,
Had priuely vpon his deske plaft,
Which booke spake of mochell operations
Touching the eight and twentie Mansions
That longen to the Moone, and such follie
As in our dayes is not worth a Flie:
For holy church saieth in our beleeue,
Ne suffereth none illusion vs to greeue.
And whē this book was in his remēbraunce,
Anon for ioy his heart gan to daunce,
And to himselfe he saied priuely.
My brother shall be warished likerly:
For I am siker that there be sciences,
By which men maken diuers apparences,
Such as these subtill tregetores play.
For oft at feasts haue I well heard say,
That tragetors, within an hall large
Haue made come in water and a barge,
And in the hall rowen vp and doun:
Sometime hath seemed a grim Lioun,
And sometime flowres spring as in a mede,
Sometime a vine, & grapes white and rede:
Sometime a castle of lime and stone,
And when hem liked, voiden hem anone:
Thus seemed it to euery mans sight.
Now then cōclude I thus, if that I might
At Orleaunce some old felaw find,
That had this Moones Mansions in mind,
Or other Magicke naturall aboue,
He should wel make my brother haue his loue
For with an apparaunce a clerke may make
To a mans sight, that all the rockes blake
Of Britaine were ywoided euerichone,
And ships by the brinke to comen and gone,
And in such forme enduren a yeare or two:
Then were my brother warished of his wo,
Then must she needs holden her behest,
Or elis she shall shame her at the lest.
What should I make a lenger tale of this?
Unto his brothers bed he commen is,
And such comfort he gaue him, for to gone
To Orleaunce, that he vp stert anone,
And on his way then is he forth ystare,
In hope to been leased of his care.
When they were comen almost to that citee
(But if it were a two furlong or three)
A yong clerke roming by himselfe they met,
Which that in Latine thriftily hem gret,
And afterward he saied a wonder thing,
I know the whole cause of your comming:
And ere they farther any foot went,
He told hem all that was in her intent.
This Briton clerke asked him of fellowes,
The which he had known in old daies,
And he answerd him that they dead were,
For which he wept ofte full many a tere.
Doune off his horse Aurelius light anon,
And with this Magician forth is he gon
Home to his house, and made him well at ese:
Hem lacked no vitaile that hem might plese.
So well araied an house as there was one,
Aurelius in his life saw neuer none.
He shewed him or he went to suppere
Forrests and parkes full of wild dere,
He saw there Harts with hornes hie,
The greatest that euer were seene with eie,
He see of hem an hundred slaine with hounds,
And some of arows bled with bitter wounds.
He saw, when voided were the wild dere,
These fauconers vpon a faire riuere,
That with the haukes han the Heron slaine.
Tho saw he knights iusting in a plaine.
And after this he did him such pleasaunce,
That he him shewed his lady in a daunce,
On which himselfe daunced as him thought.
And when this master, ỹ this magike wrought,
Saw it was time, he clapped his hondes to,
And farewell our reuell, all was ago,
And remeued neuer out of his hous,
While they saw all this sight marueilous,
But in his studie there his bookes bee,
They saten still, no wight but they three.
To him this maister called his squier,
And saied him thus, is ready our supper?
Almost an houre it is, I vndertake,
Sithen I you bad our supper ready make,
When that these worthy men went with me
Into my studie, there as my bookes be.
Sir (qd. the squier) when it liketh you,
It is all ready, though ye woll right now.
Goe we sup then (qd. he) for the best,
These amorous folke some time mote haue rest.
And after supper fell they in treate
What sum should this maisters guerdon be,
To remeue all the rockes of Britaine,
And eke from Gironde to the mouth of Saine.
He made it strange & swore so God him saue,
Lesse thā a thousand pound would he not haue,
Ne gladly for that summe nold he it done.

Aurelius

Aurelius with blisfull heart anone
Answerd thus: Fie on a thousand pound:
This wide world, which men say is round,
I would it yeue, if I were lord of it.
This bargaine is full drive, for we be knit,
Ye shall be paied truely by my trouth:
But looke now for no negligence or slouth,
Ne tarien vs here no lenger than to morow.
Nay (qd. this clerk) here my trouth to borow.
To bed is gone Aurelius when him lest,
And well nigh all night he had his rest,
What for his labour, and his hope of blisse,
His wofull heart of pennaunce had a lisse.
Upon the morrow when that it was day,
Home to Britaine tooke they the right way,
Aurelius, and this Magicine him beside,
And been descended there they would abide:
And this was, as the booke doth remember,
In the cold frostie season of December.
Phebus waxed old, and hewed like laton,
That afore in his hot declination (bright:
Shone as the burning gold, with streames
But now in Capricorne adoune he light,
Whereas he shone full pale, I dare well saine,
The bitter frost with the sludder raine
Destroyed hath the greene in every perd.
Janus sit by the fire with double berd,
And drinketh of his bugle horne the wine:
Before him stont brawne of the tusked swine,
And nowell crieth every lustie man.
Aurelius in all that ever he can,
Doeth to his maister chere and reuerence,
And praieth him to doen his diligence
To bringen him out of his paines smart,
Or with a sword that he would slit his hart.
This clerke such routh hath on this man,
That night & day he speedeth him what he can
To wait a time of his conclusion:
This is to say, to make illusion,
Or such an apparence of iogglerie
(I ne can no termes of Astrologie)
That he and every wight should wene & say,
That of Britaine the rockes were away,
Or els they were sonken vnder the ground:
Till at the last he hath his time yfound
To make his japes and his wretchednesse
Of such superstitious cursednesse:
His tollitan tables he forth brought
Full well corrected, him lacked nought,
Neither his collect, ne his expans yeres,
Ne his roots, ne yet his other geres,
As been his centris, and his argumentes,
And his proportionell conuenientes
For his equations in every thing.
And by his eight spheres in his working,
He knew full well how far alnath was shoue
Fro the head of thilke fixt Aries aboue,
That in the ninth spere considered is,
Full subtilly he had calked all this.
And when he had found his first Mansion,
He knew the remnaunt by proportion:
And knew the rising of the Moone wele,
And in such face, the terme and every dele,
And knew also his other obseruaunces
For such illusions and such mischaunces
As Heathen folke vsed in thilke daies:
For which no maked he no lenger delaies,
But through his magick, for a weeke or tway
It seemed that all the rockes were away.
Aurelius, which that despaired is,
Whether he shall haue his loue or fare amis,
Awaiteth night and day on this miracle:
And when he knew there was none obstacle,
But that voided were these rockes cuerichone,
Doune to the maisters feet he fell anone,
And saied, I wofull wretch Aurelius,
Thanke you lord and lady mine Venus,
That me hath holpen fro my cares cold.
And to y temple his way forth hath he hold,
Whereas he knew he should his lady see.
And when he saw his time, anon right hee
With dreadfull hart and with humble chere
Salued hath his soueraigne lady dere.
My right full lady (qd. this wofull man)
Whom I serue and loue, as I best can,
And lothest were of all this world displease,
Were it that I for you haue such disease,
That I must die here at your feet anon,
Nought would I tell how wo in me begon,
But certes either must I die or plaine,
Ye slea me guiltlesse for very paine.
But of my death though ye haue no routh,
Auisen you, ere that ye breake your trouth:
Repenteth you for that ilke God aboue:
For ye slea me, because that I you loue.
For madame, well ye wot that ye haue might
Not that I challenge any thing of right
Of you my soueraigne lady, but of your grace:
But in a garden yonde in such a place,
Ye wote right well what ye behight me,
And how in my hond your trouth plight ye
To loue me best. God wote ye saied so,
Albeit I am vnworthy thereto.
Madame I speake for the honour of you
More than for to saue my hearts life now:
I haue doen right as ye commaunded mee,
And if ye vouchsafe, ye may go see.
Doeth as you list, haueth your heste in mind,
For quick or dead, right there ye shall me find:
In you lieth all to doe me liue or dey,
But well I wote the rockes been all awey.
He tooke his leaue, and she astonied stood,
In all her face there nas a drop of blood:
She wend neuer han come in such a trap.
Alas (qd. she) that euer this should hap,
For wend I neuer by possibilite:

That such a miste or marualle might be:
It is against the proces of nature.
And home she goeth a sorowfull creature,
For very feare vnneths may she go,
She weepeth and waileth a day or two,
And swouneth, that it was routh to see:
But why it was, to no wight told she,
For out of toune was gone Aruiragus.
But to her selfe she spake, and saied thus
In her complaint, as ye shall after heare,
With face pale, and with sorowfull cheare.

Alas (qd. she) on thee fortune I plain,
That vnware hast wrapped me in thy chain:
Fro which to escape, wot I no succour,
Saue onely death, or els dishonour:
One of these two behoueth me to chese.
But natheles, yet had I leuer to lese
My life, than of my body to haue shame,
Or know my selfe false, or lese my name.
And with my death I may be quit ywis:
Hath there not full many a wife ere this,
And many a maid yslaine her selfe alas,
Rather than with her body doen trespas?
And certes lo, these stories been witnesse,
When thirtie tyrants full of cursednesse
Had slain Phidon in Athens at the feast,
They commaunded his doughters to arrest,
And bringen hem before hem in despite
All naked, to fulfill her foule delite:
And in her fathers blood he did hem daunce
Upon ỹ pauemẽt, God yeue him mischaunce.
For which these wofull maidens ful of dread,
Rather thã they would lesen her maidenhead,
They priuily been stert into a well,
And drenched hemselfe, as bookes can tell.

They of Messene let enquire and seeke
Of Lacedemony fiftie maidens eke,
On which they would haue doen her lechery:
But there was none of all that company
That she nas slaine, and with a glad intent
Chese rather for to dien, than to assent,
To been oppressed of her maidenhead.
Why should I then to die been in dread?

Lo eke the tyrant Aristoclides,
That loued a maid that hight Simphalides,
When that her father slaine was on a night,
Unto Dianes temple goth she anon right,
And hent the Image with her armes two,
Fro which Image would she neuer go,
No wight might fro it her honds to race,
Till she was slaine right in the selfe place.

Now sithens ỹ maidens had such despight
To been defouled with mans foule delight,
Well ought a wife rather her selfe slo,
Than be defouled, as thinketh me.

What shall I say of Hasdrubals wife,
That at Carthage bereft her selfe her life?
For when she saw the Romans wan the toun,
She tooke her children all, and lept adoun
Into the fire, and chese rather to die,
Than any Romane did her vilanie.

Hath not Lucrece yslaine her selfe, alas
At Rome, there as she oppressed was
Of Tarquine? for her thought it was shame
To liue, when that she had lost her name.

The eight maidens of Miletie also
Han slaine hemselue for very dread and wo,
Rather thã folk of Gaule should hem oppresse.

More than a thousand stories, as I gesse,
Couth I now tell as touching this matere.

When Abradas was slain, his wife so dere
Her selfe slow, and let her blood to glide
In Abradas wounds, broad and wide,
And saied, my body at the least way
There shall no wight defoule if I may.

What should I mo ensamples hereof sain,
Sithens that so many han hem slain,
Well rather than they would defouled be.
I will conclude that it is best for me
Well rather slea my selfe in some manere,
As did Demotius doughter dere,
Because that she nolde not defouled be.

O Sedasus, it is full great pite
To readen how thy doughters diden, alas?
That slowen hemselfe for such a maner caas.
As great a pity was it or well more,
Of the Theban maid: for that Nichanore,
One of Macedony, had her oppressed,
With her death her maidenhead she redressed.

What shall I saine of Nicerates wife,
That for such case bereft her selfe her life?

How true was eke to Alcibiades,
His loue, that for to dien rather chees,
Than to suffren his body vnburied be?

Lo which a wife was Alceste (qd. she.)
What saieth Homere of good Penelope?
All Greece knoweth of her chastite.

Pardee of Laodomia is written thus,
That whẽ at Troy was slain Protheselaus,
No longer nolde she liue after his day.

The same of noble Porcia tell I may,
Withouten Brutus couth she not liue,
To whom she had all her heart ygiue.

The perfit wifehood of Artemise
Honoured is throughout all Barbarie.

Oh Thenta Queene, thy wifely chastite
To all wines liuing may a mirrour be.

The same thing I say of Bilia,
Of Rodogone, and eke Valeria.

Thus plained Dorigene a day or twey,
Purposing euer that she would dey,
But natheles vpon the third night
Home came Aruiragus, the worthy knight,
And asked her why she wept so sore:
And she gan weepen euer lenger the more.

Alas (qd. she) that euer was I borne,

Thus haue I said (qd. she) thus haue I swoꝛn,
And told him all, as ye haue heard beꝼoꝛe:
It needeth not to rehearse it no moꝛe.
This husbōd with glad chere in sundꝛy wise
Answerd and saied, as I shall you deuise.
Is there ought els Doꝛigene but this?
Nay nay (qd. she) God helpe me so as wis,
This is too much, and it were Gods will.
Yea wife (qd. he) let slepe that may still,
It may be well: yet paraunture to day,
Ye shall your trouth hold by my fay.
Foꝛ God so wisly haue mercy on me,
I had well leuer sticked foꝛ to be
Foꝛ very loue which that I to you haue,
But if ye should your trouth keepe and saue.
Trouth is the hiest thing that men may kepe.
But with that woꝛd he bꝛast anone to weepe,
And saied, I you foꝛbid on paine of death,
That neuer whiles you lasteth life oꝛ bꝛeath,
To no wight tell of this misauenture.
As I may best I will my wo endure,
Ne make no countenance of heauinesse,
That folke of you may deeme harme ne gesse.
And foꝛth he cleped a squier and a maid,
Goth foꝛth anone with Doꝛigine he said,
And bꝛingeth her in such a place anone.
They took her leue, and on her way they gone:
But they ne wist why she thider went,
She nolde no wight tellen her intent.
This squier, which that hight Aurelius,
On Doꝛigene which that was so amoꝛous,
Of auenture happed her to meet
Amid the toune, right in the high street,
As she would haue gone the way foꝛthright
Toward the garden, there as she had hight.
And he went to the gardenward also,
Foꝛ well he spied when she would go
Out of her house, to any manner place:
But thus they met of auenture oꝛ of grace,
And he salueth her with glad intent,
And asked of her whider that she went.
And she answerd halfe as she were mad,
Unto the garden as my husoond bad
My trouth foꝛ to hold, alas, alas.
Aurelius gan wondꝛen of this caas,
And in his heart had great compassion
Of her chere, and her lamentation,
And of Aruiragus the woꝛthy knight,
That bad her hold all that she had hight,
So loth he was ꝑ she should bꝛeke her trouth:
And in his heart he caught of it great routh.
Considꝛing the best on euery side,
That fro his lust were him better abide,
Than doe so high a churlish wꝛetchednesse
Ayenst fraunchise, and all gentlenesse,
Foꝛ which in few woꝛds saied he thus:
Madame, saieth to your loꝛd Aruiragus,
That sithen I see this great gentlenesse
Of him, and eke I see well your distresse,
That ye to me should hold your trouth,
Certes me thinketh it were great routh:
I haue well leuer euer to suffer wo,
Than depart the loue betwixt you two.
I you release madame into your hond
Quite euery surement and euery bond
That ye haue made to me, as here beꝼoꝛe,
Sithens thilk time which that ye were boꝛn.
My trouth I plight, I shall you neuer repꝛeue
Of no beheest, and here I take my leue
As of the truest and the best wife
That euer yet I knew in all my life.
But euery wight beware of her beheest.
On Doꝛigene remembꝛeth at the least.
Thus can a squier doen a gentle dede,
As well as can a knight, withouten dꝛede.
She thonked him upon hir knees all bare,
And home unto her husoond is she fare,
And told him all as ye han heard me said:
And be ye siker, he was so well apaied,
That it were unpossible me to wꝛite.
What should I lenger of this case endite?
Aruiragus, and Doꝛigene his wife
In soueraigne blisse leaden foꝛth her life,
Neuer after was there anger hem betweene,
He cherished hir as though she were a queene,
And she was to him true foꝛ euermoꝛe.
Of these two folkes ye get of me no moꝛe.
Aurelius, that his cost hath all foꝛlone,
Cursed the time that euer he was boꝛne.
Alas (qd. he) alas that euer I beheight
Of pured gold a thousand pound of weight
Unto this Philosopher, how shall I doe?
I see no moꝛe, but that I am foꝛdoe.
Mine heritage mote I needs goe and sell,
And bin a begger, here may I no lenger dwell,
And shame all my kinrede in this place,
But I of him may get better grace.
But nathelesse I will of him assay
At certaine daies, yeare by yeare to pay,
And thonke him of his great courtesie,
My trouth will I keepe, I will not lie.
With heart soꝛe he goth unto his coffer
And bꝛought gold unto the Philosopher
The value of fiue hundꝛed pound as I gesse,
And him beseecheth of his gentlenesse
To graunt him daies of the remenaunt,
And saied: maister I dare well make auaunt,
I failed neuer of my trouth as yet.
Foꝛ siker ly my debt shall be quite
Towards you, how that euer I fare
To goue a begging in my kirtle bare:
But would ye vouchsafe upon suerte
Two yeare oꝛ three foꝛ to respite me,
Then were I well, foꝛ els mote I sell
Mine heritage, there is no moꝛe to tell.
This Philosopher soberly answerd,

And saied thus, when he this word herd,
Haue I not hold couenaunt vnto thee?
Yes certes, well and truly (qd. he.)
Hast thou not had thy lady as thee liketh?
No, no (qd. he) and soothly he liketh.
What was the cause, tell me if that thou can?
Aurelius anon his tale began,
And told him all as ye han herd before,
It needeth not to rehearce it any more.
He saied Aruiragus of gentilesse
Had leuer die in sorrow and in distresse,
Than his wife were of her trouth fals.
The sorrow of Dorigene he told him als,
How loth she was to been a wicked wife,
And that she had leuer haue lost her life.
And for her trouth she swore through innocence,
She nere erst herd speake of apparence:
That made me haue of her so great pite.
And right as freely as he sent her to me,
As freely sent I her to him againe:
This is all and some, there nis no more to saine.
The Philosopher answerd, leue brother,
Euerich of you did gently to other:
Thou art a squier, and he is a knight,
But God forbid for his blisfull might,
But if a clerke could doen a gentle deed
As well as any of you, it is no dreed.
Sir I release thee thy thousand pound,
As now thou were crope out of the ground,
Ne neuer ere now haddest thou knowen mee,
For sir, I woll not taken a penny of thee
For all my craft, ne nought for my trauaile:
Thou hast ypaied right well for my vitaile.
It is ynough, and far well and haue good day,
And took his horse, and rode forth on his way.
Lordings this question would I aske now,
Which was the most free, as thinketh you?
Now telleth me, ere that I further wend,
I can no more, my tale is at an end.

¶ The second Nonnes Prologue.

THe minister and the norice vnto vices,
Which that men clepen in English idlenesse,
That is Porter of the gate of delices
To eschue, and by her contrary her oppresse,
That is to saine, by lefull businesse:
Well ought we to doen our intent,
Least that the fiend through idlenesse vs hent.

For he that with his thousand cordes slie
Continually vs waiteth to be clap,
When he may man in idlenesse espie,
He can so lightly catch him in his trap,
Till that a man be hent right by the lap,
He nis not ware, the fiend hath him in hond:
Well ought vs werch, and idlenesse withstond.

And though men dreaden neuer for to die,
Yet see men well by reason doubtles,
That idlenesse is root of sluggardie,
Of which there cometh neuer good encrees,
For soothly sloth holdeth hem in a lees,
Onely to sleepe, and for to eat and drinke,
And to deuouren all that other swinke.

And for to put vs from such idlenesse,
That cause is of so great confusion,
I haue here doen my faithfull businesse
After the Legend in translation,
Right of thy glorious life and passion, (lilly,
Thou with thy garlond, wrought with rose and
Thee meane I, maid and martir saint Cecily.

And thou that art floure of virgins all,
Of whom that Bernard list so well to write,
To thee at my beginning first I call,
Thou comfort of vs wretches, doe me endite
Thy maidens death, that wan through hir merite
The eterne life, and of the fiend victory,
As men may after read in her story.

Thou maide and mother, doughter of thy son,
Thou well of mercy, sinfull soules cure,
In whom the God of bounty chese to won:
Thou humble and high ouer euery creature,
Thou noblest, and so farre ouer nature,
That no disdaine the maker had of kind,
His son in bloud and flesh to cloth and wind.

Within the cloyster of thy blisfull sides,
Took mans shape the eterne loue and pees:
That of the true compas Lord and guide is,
Whom heauen, earth, and sea, withouten les
Aye herien, and thou virgine wemles
Bare of thy body, and dwellest maiden pure
The creator of euery creature.

Assembled is in the magnificence
With mercy, goodnesse, and with such pitee,
That thou art the sonne of excellence,
Not onely that helpest them that praien ther,
But often time of thy benignitee
Full freely, or that men thine helpe beseech,
Thou goest before, and art her lives leech.

Now help thou blisfull and meeke faire maid
We flemed wretch, in this desert of gall:
Think on the woman of Canane, that said,
That whelpes eaten some of the crums small
That from her Lords table been yfall:
And though I vnworthy doughter of Eue
Be sinfull, yet accepteth my beleeue.

And for that faith is ded withouten werkis,
So for to werch, yeue me witte and space,

That

That I be quit from the place ỳ most derk is
O thou that art so faire and full of grace,
Be mine aduocate in that hie place,
There as without ende is song Osanna,
Thou Christes mother, & doughter of Anna.

And of thy light, my soule in prison light,
That troubled is by the contagion
Of my body, and also by the wight
Of earthly lust, and false affection:
O hauen, O rekute, O saluation
Of hem that been in sorow and distresse,
Now help, for to my werke I woll me dresse.

Yet I pray you that reden that I write,
Forgeueth me, that I doe no diligence
This ilke storie subtilly to endite,
For both haue I the words and the sentence
Of him that at the saints reuerence
The storie wrote, and followen her legende,
And pray you that ye woll my werke amende

First woll I you the name of saint Cecily
Expounc, as men may in her storie see:
It is to say in English, Heauens lilly,
For pure chastnesse of virginitie,
Or for the witnes had of honestie,
And greene of conscience, and of good fame,
The sote sauoured Lilly was her name.

Or Cecily is to say, the way to blinde:
For the ensample was by good teaching,
Or else Cecily, as I written finde,
Is ioyned by a manner conioining
Of heauen and Lia, in her figuring:
The heauen is set for thought of holinesse,
And Lia, for her lasting besinesse.

Cecily may eke be saied in this maner,
Wanting of blindnesse, for her great light,
For her sapience, and for her thewes clere.
Or els Lo, this maidens name so bright:
Of heuen and Leos cometh, of which by right
Men might the heauen of people her call,
Ensample of good and wise werkes all.

For Leos, people, in English is to say:
And right as men may in the heauen see
The sunne and moon, and sterres euery way,
Right so men ghostly, in this maiden free
Sawen of faith the great magnanimitie,
And eke the clerenesse hole of sapience,
And sundrie werkes, bright of excellence.

And right so as these Philosophers write
That heauen is swift, round, & eke brenning,
Right so was faire Cecily the white
Full swift and busie in euery good working,
And round and whole in good perseuering,
And brenning euer in charitie full bright:
Now haue I declared you what she hight.

¶ The second Nonnes Tale.

The life and death of Saint Cecily.

This maiden bright Cecile, as her life saith,
Was comen of Romanes and of noble kind:
And so forth fostered vp in the faith
Of Christ, and bare his Gospell in her mind:
She neuer ceased, as I written find,
Of her prayer, and God to loue and dread,
Beseeching him to keepe her maidenhead.

And when this maid should vnto a man
Iwedded be, that was full yong of age,
Which that ycleped was Valerian,
And day was come of her marriage,
She full deuout and humble in her corage,
Under her robe of gold, that sat full faire,
Had next her flesh yclad her in an heire.

And whiles that the organs made melodie,
To God alone thus in hert sung she,
O lord, my soule and eke my bodie gie
Unwemmed, lest I confounded be:
And for his loue that died vpon a tree,
Euery second or third day she fast,
Aye biding in her orison full fast.

The night came, and to bed must she gone
With her husbond, as is the manere,
And priuily she said vnto him anone,
O sweet and well beloued spouse dere,
There is a counsaile, and ye woll it here,
Which that right faine I would to you faine
So that ye me ensure, it not to bewraine.

Valerian gan fast vnto her swere,
That for no cas, ne thing that might be,
He should neuer to none bewraien here:
And then at erst thus to him said she,
I haue an Angell which that loueth me,
That with great loue, where so I wake or
Is ready aye my body for to keepe. (sleepe,

And if that he may felen out of drede,
That ye me touch or loue in vilonie,
He right anon will slee you with the dede,
And in your youth thus shall ye die,
And if that ye in clene loue me gie,
He woll you loue as me, for your cleanesse,
And shew you of his ioy and brightnesse.

This Valerian, corrected as God wold,
Answered ayen, if I shall trust thee,
Let me that angell see, and him behold,
And if that it a very angell be,
Then woll I done as thou hast prayed me:
And if thou loue another man forsoth, (both.
Right with this sword then woll I slee you

Cecile answerd anon in this wise,
If that ye lust, that angel shull you see,
So that ye trow on Christ, and you baptise,
Goth forth to Via apia (qd. she)
That from this toun ne stant but miles three,
And to the poore folke that there doe dwell
Say hem right thus, as I shall you tell.

Tell hem that I Cecile, you to hem sent
To shewen you the good Urban the old,
For secret needs, and for good entent:
And when that ye saint Urban han behold,
Tell him the words that I to you told,
And when that he hath purged you from sin,
Then shall ye see that angell ere ye twinne.

Valerian is to that place igon,
And right as him was taught by his lerning,
He found this holy Urban anon
Among these saints burials louting:
And he anon without tareing
Did his message, and when he had it tolde,
Urban for ioy gan his hondes vp hold.

The teres from his eyen let he fall:
Almightie God, O Iesu Christ (qd. he)
Sower of chaste counsill, hierde of vs all,
The fruit of thilke seed of chastite
That thou hast sow in Cecile, take to thee:
Lo like a besy bee withouten gile
Thee serueth aye thine owne thrall Cecile.

For thilke spouse, that she tooke but newe
Full like a fierce Lion, she sendeth here
As meeke as any lambe was to ewe:
And with that word anon there gan apere
An old man, iclad in white clothes clere,
That had a book with letters of gold in hond,
And gan biforne Valerian for to stond.

Valerian as deed, fell downe for drede,
When he this old man saw standing so,
Which forthwith anon he herd to rede,
O Lord, O faith, O God withouten mo
Of Christendome, and father of all also
Abouen all, and ouer all euery where:
These words all with gold ywritten were.

When this was rad, thē said this old man,
Leuest thou this thing or none, say ye or nay:
I leue all this thing (qd. Valerian)
Under the heauen no wight ne thinke may
Sother thing than this, I dare well say.
Tho vanished the old man, he nist where,
And Pope Urban him christned right there.

Valerian goeth home, and findeth Cecile
Within his chamber, with an Angell stonde:
This angell had of rose and of lilye
Crownes two, the which he bare in honde,
And first to Cecile, as I vnderstonde,
He yaue that one, and after gan he take
That other to Valerian her make.

With body clean, & with vnwemmed thought
Keepeth aye well these crownes two (qd. he)
From paradise to you I haue hem brought,
Ne neuer more shullen they rotten be,
Ne lese her sweet sauour, trusteth me,
Ne neuer wight shall seene hem with eye,
But he be chaste, and hate vilonie.

And thou Valerian, for thou so soone
Assentedest to good counsell also, (boone.
Say what thou list, and thou shalt haue thy
I haue a brother (qd. Valerian tho)
That in this world I loue no man so,
I pray you that my brother may haue grace
To know the trouth, as I doe in this place.

The angel answerd, God liketh your request,
And both with the palme of martirdome
Shall ye come vnto the blisfull feast:
And with ỹ word, Tiburce his brother come,
And when that he the sauour vndernome,
Which that the roses and the lillies cast,
Within his hert he gan to wonder tast.

And said: I wonder this time of the yere
Whence that this sote sauour commeth so
Of roses and lillies, that I smell here:
For though I had hem in mine handes two,
The sauour might in me no deeper goe:
The sweet smell, that in mine hert I find
Hath changed me all in another kind.

Valerian said, two crownes here haue we
Snow white, & rose red, that shineth clere,
Which that thine eyen han no might to see:
And as thou smellest hem through my praier
So shalt thou seen hem my leue brother deer,
If it so be that thou wilt without slouth
Beleeue aright, and know the very trouth.

Tiburce answerd, saiest thou this to me
In soothnesse, or in dreme herken I this:
In dremes (qd. Valerian) han we be
Unto this time, brother mine iwis:

But

But now at erst, our dwelling in trouth is.
How wost ỹ this (qd. Tiburce) & in what wise?
Qd. Ualerian, that I shall thee deuise.

The angell of God hath me ỹ trouth taught
Which thou shalt seene, and thou wilt reney
The idols, and be cleane, and els naught:
And of the miracles of these crownes twey
Saint Ambrose in his preface lust to sey:
Solemnely this noble doctour dere
Commendeth it, and saith in this manere.

The palme of martirdome for to receiue,
Saint Cecile, fulfilled of Gods yeft,
The world and eke her chamber gan weiue,
Witnesse Tiburces and Ceciles shrift,
To which God of his bounty would shift
Crownes two, of flowres well smelling,
And made the angell hem tho crownes bring.

The maid hath brought hem to blisse aboue:
The world hath wist what it is worth certain
Deuotion and chastity well for to loue.
Tho shewed him Cecile all open and plaine,
That all idols ben but things in vaine,
For they ben dumbe, and therto they ben dese,
And charged him his idols for to lese.

Who that troweth not this, a beast he is
(Qd. this Tiburce) if that I shall not lie.
She kissed his breast when she heard this,
And was full glad ỹe couth trouth espie:
This day take I thee for mine allie,
Said this blisfull maiden faire and deare,
For after that she said as ye may heare.

So right so as the loue of Christ (qd. she)
Made me thy brothers wife, right in ỹ wise
Anon for mine allie here take I thee,
Sithens that thou wolt thine idols despise.
Goth with thy brother now, and thee baptise,
And make thee clean, so ỹ thou maist behold
The angels face, of which thy brother told.

Tiburce answerd, and said: brother deare
First tel me whither I shal, and to what man:
To whom he said, come forth with good chere
I woll thee lead vnto the Pope Urban.
To Urban brother mine Ualerian
(Qd. this Tiburce) wilt thou me thider lede?
Me thinketh that it were a wonder dede.

Ne meanest thou not Urban (qd. he tho)
That is so oft damned to be dead,
And wonneth in halkes to and fro,
And dare not once putten forth his head?
Wen should him bren in a fire so red,
If he were found, and men might him spie,
And we also, that beare him companie.

And while we seeken thilke diuinitie,
That is yhid in heauen priuely,
Algate yhent in this world should we be.
To whom Cecile answerd boldely,
All men might dread well and skilfully
This life to lese, mine owne dere brother,
If this were liuing onely and none other.

But there is better liuing in other place,
That neuer shall be lost, ne drede thee nought:
Which Gods son to vs told through his grace:
that fathers son which hath al thing wrought,
And all iwrought is with a skilfull thought,
The ghost that from the father gan procede,
Hath souled him without any drede.

By word and by miracle, Ihesu Gods son
When he was in this world, declared here,
That there is other life there men may won:
To whom answerd Tiburce: O suster dere
Ne saidest thou right now in this manere,
There nas but one God in soothfastnesse,
And now of three how may thou bere witnesse?

That shall I tell (qd. she) or that I go:
Right as a man hath sapiences three,
Memory, engine, and intellect also,
So in such being of diuinitie,
Three persons may there full right well be:
Tho gan she there full busily him preach
Of Christs sonne, and of his paines teach.

And many points of his passion,
How Gods son in this world was withhold
To doe mankind plaine remission,
That was bound in sinnes and cares cold.
All these things she vnto Tiburce told,
And after this Tiburce in good intent,
With Ualerian to Pope Urban went.

That thonked God, & with glad hert & light
He christened him, & made him in that place
Perfite in his learning Gods knight:
And after this, Tiburce got such grace,
That euery day he saw in time and space
The Angell of God, and euery boone
That he God asked, it was sped full soone.

It were full hard by order for to saine
How many wonders Ihesu for him wrought:
But at the last, to tell short and plaine,
The sergeaunt of the toune for hem sought,
And hem before Almache ỹ prouost brought,
Which hem apposed, and knew all her intent,
And to the Image of Iupiter hem sent.

And

And said, who so woll doe no sacrifice,
Swap of his head, this is my sentence here:
Anon these martyrs, that I you deuise,
One Maximus that was an officere
Of the prefectes, and his counceleres
Hem hent, and when he forth the saints lad,
Himselfe he wept for pity that he had.

When Maximus had herd these saints lore,
He gote hem of the turmentours leue,
And had hem to his house withouten more,
And with her preaching, ere that it were eue,
They gan from the turmentour to reue,
And from Maximus, & from his folke echone
The false faith, to trowen in God alone.

Cecile came, when it was woxen night,
With priests, that hem christened all in fere:
And afterward, when day was woxen light,
Cecile hem said with a sober chere:
Now Christs owne knights both leue & dere
Casteth all away the werkes of derkenesse,
And armeth you in armour of brightnesse.

Ye han forsooth idone a great bataile (serued,
Your course is done, your faith hath you con=
Goth to the croune of life that may not faile,
The rightfull iudge, which ye han serued,
Shall yeue it you, as ye it deserued:
And when this thing was said, as I deuise,
Men led hem forth to done the sacrifice.

But when they were vnto the place ibrought,
To tell shortly the conclusioun,
They nold ensence ne sacrifice right nought,
But on her knees they saten hem adoun
With humble heart and sad deuotioun,
And losten both her heads in the place,
Her soules wenten to the king of grace.

This Maximus, that saw the thing betide,
With pitous teares told it anone right:
That he her soules saw to heauen glide
With angels full of clearenesse and of light:
And with his word conuerted many a wight.
For which Almachius did him so to bete
With whips of lead, till he his life gan lete.

Cecile him tooke, and buried him anone
By Tiburce and Valerian soothly,
Within her burying place vnder a stone:
And after this Almachius hastily
Bad his ministers fetchen openly
Cecile, so that she might in his presence
Doe sacrifice, and Iupiter encence.

But they conuerted at her wise lore
Wepten full sore, and yaue full credence
Unto her word, and criden more and more,
Christ, Gods sonne, withouten difference
Is very God, this is all our sentence,
That hath a seruaunt so good him to serue:
Thus with o voice we trow though we sterue

Almachius, that heard all this doing,
Bad fetch Cecile, that he might her see:
And alderfirst this was his asking,
What manner woman art thou (qd. he?)
I am a gentlewoman borne (qd. she:)
I aske of thee (qd. he) though it thee greeue,
Of thy religion and of thy beleeue?

Ye haue begun your question fondly
(Qd. she) that would two answers conclude
In one demaund, ye asken learnedly:
Almachius answerd to that similitude,
Of whence commeth thine answere so rude?
Of whence (qd. she) whē that she was framed,
Of conscience, and good faith vnfained.

Almachius said, ne takest thou none hede
Of my power? and she him answerd this:
Your might (qd. she) full little is to drede:
For euery mortall mans power nis
But ylike a bladder full of wind ywis:
For with a needles point, when it is yblow,
May all the boast of it be laid full low.

Full wrongfully beganst thou (qd. he)
And yet in wrong is thy perseuerance:
Wost thou not how our mighty princes free
Haue thus cōmanded and made ordinance,
That euery christen wight shal haue penance
But if that he his Christendome withsey,
And gone all quite, if he woll it reney?

Your princes erren, as your nobles dooth,
Qd. tho Cecile, in a wood sentence
Ye make vs guiltie, and it is not sooth:
For ye that knowen well our innocence,
For as much as we done a reuerence
To Christ, and for we beare a Christen name,
Ye put on vs a crime and eke a blame.

But we that well knowen thilke name so
For vertuous, we may it not withsey.
Almachius answerd, chese one of these two,
Doe sacrifice, or Christendome reney,
That thou mow escapen by that wey.
At which word the holy blisfull maid
Gan for to laugh, and to the iudge she said:

O iudge confused in thy nicete,
Wolt thou that I reney innocence?
To make me a wicked wight (qd. she)
Lo he dissimuleth here in audience,

He stareth and wodeth in his aduertence:
To whom Almachius said: O silly wretch,
Thou wost not how far my might may stretch

Hath not our mighty princes yeuen
To me both power and eke authorite
To make folke to dien or to liuen?
Why speakest thou so proudly then to me?
I ne speake it but stedfastly (qd. she)
Not proudely, for I say as for my side,
That I hate deadly thilke vice of pride.

And if thou drede not a sooth for to here,
Than woll I shewen all openly by right,
That thou hast made a full great leasing here:
Thou saist thy princes han yeuen thee might
Both to slee and eke to quite a wight:
Thou ne maist but onely like bereue,
Thou hast none other power ne leue.

But ȝ maist say, thy princes han thee maked
Minister of death, for if thou speake of mo,
Thou lest: for thy power is full naked.
Do way thy boldnesse, said Almachius tho,
And doe sacrifice to our gods ere thou go.
I recke not what wrong thou me profer,
For I can it suffer, as can a Philosopher.

But thilke wrongs may I not endure,
That thou speakest of our gods here (qd. he.)
Cecile answerd, O nice creature,
Thou saidst no word sithēs thou spakest to me
That I ne knew therewith thy nesse,
And that thou were in euery manner wise
A leaud officer, and a vaine iustice.

Thee lacketh nothing to thine vtter eien
That thou nart blind: for thing ȳ we seene all
That is a stone, that men well may aspien,
That ilke stone a god thou wolt it call:
I rede thee let thine hond vpon it fall,
And tast it well, and stone thou shalt it find,
Sens ȳ thou seest not with thine eyen blind.

It is a shame that the people shall
So scorne thee, and laugh at thy follie:
For commonly men wot it well ouer all,
That mighty God is in his heauens hie:
And these images, well maist thou espie,
To thee ne to hemselfe may they not profite,
For in her effect they be not worth a mite.

These and such other words saiden she,
And he wore wroth, and bad she should be lede
Home to her house, and in her house (qd. he)
Bren her in a bathe, with flames rede:
And as he bad, right so was done the dede.
For in a bathe they gan her fast sheten,
And night & day great fire vnder they beten.

All the long night, and eke the day also,
For all the fire, and eke the bathes hete,
She sat all cold, and felt of it no wo,
It made her not a drop for to swete:
But in that bath her life she mote lete.
For Almachie, with a full wicked intent,
To sleen her in the bathe, his sonde sent.

Three strokes in the necke he smote her tho
The turmentour, but for no maner chaunce
He might not smite all her necke atwo:
And for there was at that time an ordinaunce
That no man doe no person such pennaunce,
The fourth stroke to smiten, soft or sore:
This turmentour durst smite her no more.

But halfe dead, with her necke yeruen there
He left her lie, and on his way he went:
The christen folke that about her were
With sheetes home full faire they her hent:
Three dayes liued she in this turment,
And neuer ceased the faith to teach,
That she had fostred hem, she gan to preach.

And hem she yaue her moueables & her thing,
And to the Pope Urban betooke hem tho,
And said, I asked this of the heauen king,
To haue respite three dayes and no mo,
To recommaund to you, ere that I go,
These soules, and that I might doe werch
Here of mine house perpetuelliche a cherch.

Saint Urban, with his deacons priuely
The body fette, and buried it by night
Among his other saints honestly:
Her house the church of saint Cecile hight,
Saint Urban hallowed it, as he well might,
In which vnto this day, in noble wise,
Men done to Christ and to his saints seruise.

¶ The Cannons Yeomans Prologue.

When ended was the life of saint Cecile,
Ere we fully had ridden fiue mile,
At Boughton vnder the blee vs gan a take
A man, that clothed was in clothes blake,
And vnder that he had a white surplise:
His hackney, that was all pomely grise,
So sweat, that it wonder was to see,
It seemed that he had pricked miles three.
The horse eke that his yeoman rode vpon,
So sweateth, that vnneth might he gone.
About the paytrell stood the fome full hie,

He was of some as flecked as a pie:
A male twifolde on his croper lay,
It semed that he carried little aray,
All light for sommer rode this worthy man,
And in my heart wondren I began
What that he was, till I understood,
How that his cloke was sewed to his hood.
For which when I had long aused me,
I demed him some chanon for to be.
His hat hing at his backe by a lace,
For he had ridden more than trot or pace.
He rode ape pricking as he were wode,
A clote lefe he had laid under his hode
For swette, and for to keep his head fro hete.
But it was ioy for to see him swete,
His forehead dropped, as a stillatory
Were full of plantaine or of peritory.
And when he was come, he gan to cry,
God saue (qd. he) this holy company:
Fast haue I pricked (qd. he) for your sake,
Because that I would you ouertake,
To riden in this mery company.
His yoman was eke full of curtesie,
And said sirs, now in the morow tide
Out of your hostrie I saw you ride,
And warned here my lord and soueraine,
Which that to ridden with you is full faine,
For his disport, he loueth daliaunce. (chaunce,
Freend for thy warning God yeue thee good
Then said our host, certaine it would seeme
Thy lord were wise, and so I may well deme,
He is full ioconde also dare I say:
Can he ought tell a mery tale or twaie,
With which he glad may this companie?
Who sir, my lord? Ye without lye,
He can of mirth and eke of iolite
Not but inough also sir trulieth me.
And ye him knew all so well as doe I,
Ye would wonder how well and thriftely
He couth werke, and that in sondry wise.
He hath taken on him many a great empryse,
Which were full harde, for any that is here
To bring about, but they of him it lere.
As homely as he rideth among you,
If ye him knew, it wold been for your prowe:
Ye would not forgon his acquaintaunce
For mochell good I dare lay in balaunce
All that I haue in my possession.
He is a man of high discression:
I warne you well he is a passing wise man.
Well (qd. our host) I pray thee tell me thā
Is he a clerke or non? tell what he is.
A clerke, nay greater than a clerke I wis,
Said the yoman, and in words few,
Host, of his craft somwhat woll I shew.
I say my lord can such a subtelte,
(But all his craft ye may not wete of me,
And somewhat help I yet to his werching)
That all the ground that we be on riding
Till we come to Canterbury towne
He could all clene turnen vp and downe,
And paue it all of siluer and of gold.
And when this yoman had thus itolde
Unto our host: he said benedicite,
This thing is wonder meruailous to me:
(Seing that thy lord is of so hie prudence
Because of which, men shuld him reuerence)
That of his worship wreketh he lite:
His ouerest sloppe is not worthy a mite
As in effect to him, so mote I go.
It is all baudy and to tore also.
Why is thy lord so slothliche I thee prey,
And is of power better clothes to bey?
If that his deed acord with thy speech
Tell me that, and that I thee beseech?
Why (qd. this yeman) wherto aske ye me?
God helpe me so, for he shall neuer ythe:
But I woll not auowe that I say,
And therefore keep it secret I you pray,
He is too wise in fay, as I beleeue,
And that is ouerdone nill not preue.
And right (as clerkes saine) it is a vice:
Wherfore I hold him in that leude and nice.
For when a man hath ouergreat wit,
Full oft it happeth him to misusen it:
So doth my lord, and that me greeueth sore.
God amend it, I can say no more.
Thereof no force good yeman (qd. our host)
Seing of the conning of thy lord thou wost,
Tell how he doth, I pray thee heartily,
Seing that he is so crafty and so sly
And where dwellen ye, if it to tell be?
In the Subbarbs of a towne (qd. he)
Lurking in hernes and in lanes blind,
Whereas these robbers and theues by kind
Holden her priuy fearefull residence,
As they that dare not shewen her presence
So fare we, if that I shall say the soth.
Yet (qd. our host) let me talke to thee:
Why art thou so discoloured in thy face?
Peter (qd. he) God yeue it harde grace:
I am so vsed in the hote fire to blow,
That it hath chaunged my colour as I trow,
I am not wont in no mirrour to prie,
But swinke sore, and lerne to multiplie:
We blondren euer, and posen in the fire,
And for all that, we failen of our desire,
For euer we lacken our conclusion.
To much folke we do illusion,
And borow gold, be it a pound or two,
Or ten or twelue, or many summes mo,
And make hem weenen at the least way,
That of a pound we could maken tway:
Yet is it false, and aye han we good hope
It for to done, and after it we grope:
But that science is so ferre vs before,

We

We mowe not although we had it swore
It ouertake, it flyt away so fast,
It wol vs make beggers at the last.
Whiles this yeman was thus in his talking,
This Chanō drew him neere, & herd all thing
Which this yeman spake, for suspection
Of mennes speech euer had this Chanon:
For Cato saieth, he that gilty is,
Demeth all thing be spoken of him amis:
Because of that, he gan so nigh to draw
To this yeman, to herken all his sawe,
And thus he said vnto his yeman tho,
Hold now thy peace, and speke no words mo:
For if thou do, thou shalt it sore abie.
Thou slaundrest me here in this companie,
And eke discouerest that thou shouldest hide.
We (qd. our host) tell on what so euer betide
Of all this thretyng, recke thee not a mite.
In faith (qd. he) no more do I but lite:
And when this Chanon saw it would not be,
But his yeman would tell his priuite,
He fled away for very sorow and shame.
A (qd. the yemon) here shall rise a game:
All that I can anon woll I you tell,
Sens he is gon, the foule fende him quell:
For neuer hereafter woll I with him mete
For peny ne for pound. I you behete
He that me brought first vnto that game,
Er that he die, sorow haue he and shame.
For it is ernest to me by my faith,
That fele I woll what so any man saith:
And yet for all my sinert and all my greue
For all my sorow, labour and mischiefe,
I couth neuer leaue it in no wise.
Now would to God my wit might suffice
To tellen all that longeth to that art:
But nathelesse, yet woll I tell you a part,
Sens that my lord is gon, I woll not spare,
Such thing as I know, I woll declare.

¶ The Chanons yeomans Tale.

A Priest of London more couetous than wise, is deceiued by a Chanon professing the Arte of Alchymie.

With this Chanon I dwelt seuen yere,
And of his science I am neuer the nere:
All that I had, I haue lost thereby,
And God wot, so hath many mo than I.
There I was wont to be right fresh and gay
Of clothing, and eke of other good aray,
Now may I weare an hose vpon mine hedde:
And where my colour was both fresh & redde,
Now is it wanne, and of a leaden hew,
Who so it vseth, sore shall him rue:
And of my swinke, yet blered is mine eye,
Lo which auantage it is to multiplie,
That sliding science, hath me made so bare,
That I haue no good, where that euer I fare:
And yet I am endetted so thereby
Of gold, that I haue borowed truly,
That while I liue, I shall it quite neuer,
Let euery man beware by me euer.
What manor man that casteth him thereto
If he continue, I hold his thrift ido
So help me God, thereby shall he neuer win,
But empte his purse, & make his wits thin:
And when he, through his madnesse and folie
Hath lost his own good through iopardie,
Than he exciteth other men thereto,
To lese her good as himselfe hath do:
For vnto shrewes, ioy it is and ese
To haue her felawes in pain and disese.
For thus was I once lerned of a clerke,
Of that no charge: I woll speak of our werke.
When we be there as we shall exercise
Our cluish craft, we semen wonder wise,
Our termes been so clergial and so quaint.
I blow the fire till my hert faint.
What should I tell eche proposition
Of things, which that we werchen vpon?
As on fine or sixe ounces, may well be
Of siluer, or of some other quantite,
And bidde me to tellen you the names
Of Orpiment, brent bones, pyron squames,
That into pouder grounden been full small,
And in an earthen pot, how put is all,
And salt iput in, and also papere,
Before these pouders that I speake of here,
And wel icouered with a lampe of glas,
And of much other thing that there was:
And of the pottes and glas engluting,
That of the aire might passe out nothing.
And of the close fire, and smart also,
Which that was made, & of the care and wo,
That we had in our matters subliming,
And in amalgaming, and calcening
Of quicke siluer, icleped Mercurie crude,
For all our sleight, we can not conclude,
Our Orpiment, and sublimed Mercurie,
Our ground litarge eke on porphirie,
Of each of these, ounces a certaine,
Not helpeth vs, our labour is in vaine:
Ne eke our spirites attentioun,
Ne our matters that lien all fire adoun
Nowe in our werking nothing auaile.
For lost is all our labour and our trauaile
And all the cost a twentie deuil way
Is lost also, which we vpon it lay.
There is also full many another thing,
That is to our craft appertaining,
Though I by order hem ne rehearse can:

Because that I am a leude man:
Yet woll I tellen hem, as they come to minde,
Though I ne can set hem in her kinde,
As Bole Armoniake, Verdegrece, Boraxe,
And sundry vessels made of earth and glas,
Our vrinals, and our diseensories
Viols, crosselles, and sublimatories,
Concurbites, and alembekes eke,
And other such, deare inough of a leke,
It nedeth not to rehearse hem all:
Waters rubifying, and Boles gall,
Arsenike, sal Armoniake, and Brimstone,
And herbes cold I tell eke many one,
As Egremonie, Valerian, and Lunarie,
And other such, if that me list to tarie.
Our lampes eke brenning both night and day,
To bring about our craft if that we may.
Our fornice eke of calcination,
And of waters albification,
Unslekked lime, chalke, and glaire of an eye,
Powders diuers, ashes, doung, pisse, and eleie,
Sered pokettes, salt Peter, and Vitriole,
And diuers fires made of wood and cole.
Sal Tartre, Alcaly, and sal preparate,
And combust matters, and coagulate:
Cley made with horse dung, mans here, & oile
Of tartre alum, glas, berme, wort, & argoile,
Resagor, and other matters enbibing,
And eke of our matters encorporing,
And of our siluer citrination,
Our sementing, and eke fermentation
Our yngottes, testes, and many things mo.
I woll you tell as was me taught also
The foure spirits, and the bodies seuen
By order, as oft I heard my lord nemen.
The first spirit, Quicksiluer cleped is:
The second, Orpiment: the third twis
Sal Armoniake: the fourth Brimstone:
The bodies seuen eke, lo here hem anone
Sol gold is, and Luna siluer we threpe,
Mars yron, Mercurie quicke siluer we clepe:
Saturnus leade, and Jupiter is tinne,
And Venus coper, by my father kinne.
This cursed craft, who so woll exercise,
He shall ne good haue that may him suffice.
For all the good he spendeth thereabout
He lese shall, thereof haue I no doubt.
Who so that listen to bitter his foly,
Let him come forth and learne to multiplie:
And euery man that hath ought in his cofer,
Let him appere, and wex a Philosopher:
Alkaunce that craft is so light for to lere.
Nay, nay, God wot, all be he Monke or Frere
Preest or Chanon, or any other wight,
Though he sit at his booke both day & night
In learning of this elnish nice lore,
All is in vaine: and parde much more
Is to lere a leude man this subtilte,
Fie speke not thereof, it woll not be,
All could he lettrure, or could he none
As in effect, he shall finde it all one.
For both two, by my saluation
Concluden in multiplication
Liche well, when they haue all ido.
This is to saine, they failen both two.
Yet forgate I much rehearsaile
Of waters corosike, and of limaile,
And of bodies mollification,
And also of her induration:
Oiles, ablutions, metall fusible,
To tellen you all, would passe any bible
That O where is: wherefore as for the best
Of all these names now would I me rest,
For as I trow, I haue you told ynow
To reise a fende, all looke he neuer so row.
A naie let be: the Philosophers stone
Elixer cleped, we liken fast echone:
For had we him, then were we liker inow,
But vnto God of heauen I make auow,
For all our craft when that we han all ido
And all our sleight, he woll not come vs to.
He hath made vs spenden much good,
For sorow of which, almost we waxen wood,
But that good hope creepeth in our hart
Supposing euer, though we sore smart,
To been relieued of him afterward:
Supposing and hope is sharpe and hard.
I warne you well it is to liken euer,
That future temps hath made men discreuer
In trust thereof, all that euer they had,
Yet of that arte they could not waxe sad,
For vnto hem it is a bitter sweet
So seemeth it, for ne had they but a sheet
Which ỹ they might wrappē hem in a night,
And a bratte to walken in a day light,
They would hem sell, & spend it on this craft,
They conne not stint, till nothing be laft:
And euermore, where that euer they gone,
Men may hem ken by smell of Brimstone,
For all the world they stinken as a Bote,
Her sauour is so Rammish and so hote,
That though a man a mile from hem be,
The sauour woll enfect him trusteth me.
Lo, thus by smelling, & by thred bare array
If that men list, this folke know they may:
And if a man woll aske him preuily,
Why they be clothed so vnthriftily,
Right anon they woll rowne in his ere,
And saien, if that they aspied were,
Men woll hem slea, because of her science:
Lo thus these folke betraien innocence.
Passe ouer this, go my tale vnto:
Er that the potte be on the fire ido
Of mettals, with a certaine quantitie,
My lord hem tempereth, and no man but he:
Now he is gon, I dare say boldly.

For

For as men sain, he can doen craftly,
Algate I wote well he hath such a name,
And yet full oft he renneth in the blame,
And wote ye how full oft it happeth so,
The pot breaketh, and farewell all is go.
These mettalles beene of so great violence,
Our walles may not make hem resistence.
But if they were wrought of lime and stone,
They persen so, & throgh the wall they gone:
And some of hem sinken into the ground,
Thus haue we lost by times many a pound.
And some are scattered all the flore about.
Some lepen into the roofe withouten doubt.
Tho that the fende not in our sight him shew,
I trow that he with vs be, that like shrew.
In hell where that he is lord and sire
Ne is there no more wo, ne angre ne ire,
When that our pot is broke, as I haue saied
Euery man chite, and holte him cull apaied:
Some saied it was long of the fire making,
Some saied nai, it was on the blowing.
Then was I ferde, for that was mine office.
Straw (qd. the third) ye been leude & nice,
It was not tempred as it ought to be.
Nay (qd. the fourth) stint and herken me,
Because our fire was not made of Beech
That is the cause, and none other so theche.
I can not tell whereon it is along,
But well I wot geat strife is vs among.
What (qd. my lord) there nis no more to doen
Of these perils I will beware eftsone.
I am right siker, that the pot was crased:
Be as be may, be ye not amased,
As vsage is, let swepe the flooze as swithe,
Plucke vp your heart and be glad and blithe.
The mullocke on an heape iswept was,
And on the flooze ycast a canuas,
And all this mullocke in a Sive it throw,
And sifted and iplucked many a throwe.
Parde (qd. one) somewhat of our metall
Yet is there here, though we haue not all.
And tho this thing misbapped hath as now
Another time it may been well inow.
We mote put our good in auenture,
A marchant parde may not aie endure,
Trusteth me well, in his prosperitee:
Sometime his good is drowned in the see,
And sometime it commeth safe vnto the lond.
Peace (qd. my lord) ỹ next time I will fond
To bring our craft all in another plite,
And but I doe sirs, let me haue the wite:
There was default in somewhat wel I wote.
Another saied, the fire was ouer hote,
But be it hote or cold, I dare say this,
That we concluden euer more amis:
We failen of that which we would haue,
And in our madnesse euermore we raue,
And when we be together euerichone,
Euery man seemeth as wise as Salomon.
But all thing, which that shineth as the gold
Is not gold, as that I haue heard told:
Ne euery apple that is faire at eie,
Nis not good, what so men clap or crie:
Right so to it fareth emong vs,
He that seemeth the wisest by Iesus,
Is most foole, when it commeth to the preke:
And he that seemeth trust is a theke.
That shal ye know, er that I from ye wende,
By that I of my tale haue made an ende.
There was a Chanon of religioun
Emonges vs, would enfect all a town,
Though it as great were as Ninive,
Rome, Alisaundre, Troie, and other three.
His sleight and his infinite falsenesse
There couth no man written as I gesse,
Though that he might liue a thousand yere,
In all this world of falsenesse nis his pere.
For in his termes he wol him so wind,
And speak his words in so slie a kind,
When he comune shall with any wight,
That he woll make him dote anon right,
But if a fende he be as himselfe is.
Full many a man hath he begiled er this,
And mo woll, if that he may liue a while:
And yet men riden and gone full many a mile
Him for to seeke, and haue his acquaintance,
Not knowing of his false gouernance.
And if ye list to giue audience,
I woll it tellen here in your presence.
But worshipfull Chanons religious,
Ne deemeth not that I slander your house,
Although my tale of a Chanon be:
Of euery order some shrew is parde.
And God forbid that all a company
Should rue a singuler mans folly.
To slander you is not mine entent,
But to correct that amisse, is ment.
This tale was not onely told for you,
But eke for other mo: ye wote well how
That emong Christs Apostles twelue
There was no traitour but Iudas himselue.
Then why should ỹ remnant haue any blame
That guiltlesse were? by you I say the same,
Saue onely this, if ye woll harken me,
If any Iudas in your couent be,
Remeueth him betime, I you rede,
If shame or losse may causen any drede.
And be nothing displeased I you pray,
But in this case herketh what I say.

IN London was a priest annuellere,
That therein had dwelt many a yere,
Which was so pleasant & so seruisable
Unto the wife where he was at table,
That she would suffer him nothing to pay
For borde ne clothing, went he neuer so gay,

And spending siluer had he right inow:
Thereof no force, I will proceed as now
And tell forth my tale of the Chanon,
That brought this priest to confusion.
This false Chanon came vpon a day
Vnto this priest chamber, where he lay,
Beseeching him to lene him a certain
Of gold, and he would quite him ayen:
Lenech me a Marke (qd. he) but dayes three,
And at my day I will quite it thee.
And if it so be, that thou finde me false,
Another day hang by the halse.
This priest took him a marke, & that swith,
And this Chanon oft thanked him sith,
And tooke his leue, and went forth his wey:
And at thirde day brought him his money,
And to this priest he tooke this gold ayen,
Whereof this priest was full glad and fain.
Certes (qd. he) nothing anoieth me
To lene a man a noble, two, or three,
Or what thing were in my possession,
When he so true is of condition,
That in no wise he breake will his day:
To such a man I can neuer say nay.
What qd. this Chanon, should I be vntrue,
Nay, that were a thing fallen of new:
Trouth is a thing that I will euer kepe
Vnto the day in which I shall crepe
Into my graue, or els God forbede:
Beleueth this as siker as your crede.
God thanke I, and in good time be it saied,
That there nas neuer man yet euill apayed
For gold ne siluer that he to me lent,
Ne neuer falshede in mine hert I ment.
And sir (qd. he) now of my priuite,
Sens ye so goodliche haue been to me,
And kith to me so great gentlenesse,
Somwhat to quite with your kindnesse,
I will you shew, if ye will it lere
(I shall it shew to you anon right here)
How I can werche in Philosophy,
Take good heed, ye shall it see with your eye,
That I will do a maistrie or I go.
Ye sir (qd. the priest) and will ye so?
Mary thereof I pray you heartily.
At your commandement sir truly
(Qd. the Chanon) and els God forbede:
Lo how this theefe couth his seruice bede.
Full soth it is that such profered seruice
Stinketh, as witnesseth the old wise,
And that full soone I will it verifie
In this Chanon, root of all trecherie,
That euermore delight hath and gladnesse
(Such fendly thoughts in his hert empresse)
How Christs people he may to mischef bring.
God keep vs from his false dissimuling.
What wist this priest with who that he delte?
Ne of his harme comming nothing he felt.
O sely priest, O sely innocent,
With couetise anon thou shalt be blent:
O graceles, full blind is thy conceite,
Nothing art thou ware of his deceite,
Which that this Fox hath shapen to thee:
His wily wrenches thou maiest not flee:
Wherfore to go to the conclusion
That referreth to thy confusion,
Vnhappy man, anon I will me hie
To tell thine vnwitte and thy folie,
And eke the falsnesse of that other wretch,
As forforth as my conning will stretch.
This Chanon was my lord ye wold wene,
Sir host in faith, and by the heauen Queene
It was another Chanon and not he,
That can an hundred fold more subtilte:
He hath betraied folke many a time,
Of his falsenesse it doleth me to time:
Euer when I speke of his falshede
For shame of him my cheekes waxen rede:
Algates they beginnen for to glow,
For rednesse haue I none, right well I know,
In all my visage, for fumes diuerse
Of mettals, which ye haue heard me reherse
Consumed and wasted hath my rednesse.
Now take hede of this Chanons cursednesse.
Sir (qd. he to the priest) let your man gone
For quicksiluer, that we it had anone,
And let him bring ounces two or three:
And when he commeth, as fast shul you see
A wonder thing, which ye saw neuer er this.
Sir (qd. the priest) it shall be done iwis.
He bad his seruant fetch him this thing,
And he all ready was at his bidding,
And went him forth, and came anon again
With this quicksiluer, shortly for to sain,
And took these vnces three to the Chanoun,
And he him laid well and faire adoun:
And bad the seruant coles for to bring,
That he anon might go to his werking.
The coles right anon were iset,
And this Chanon tooke out a crosselet
Of his bosome, and shewed it to the priest:
This instrumēt (qd. he) which that thou seest,
Take in thy hond, and put thy selfe therein
Of this quicksiluer an vnce, and begin
In the name of Christ to wex a Philosopher:
There be full few, which I would it proker
To shew hem so much of my science:
For here shul ye see by experience,
That this quicksiluer I will mortifie,
Right in your sight anon without en lie,
And make it as good siluer and as fine,
As there is any in your purse or mine,
Or elswhere: and make it malliable,
And els hold me false and vnstable
Emonges folke euer to appeare.
I haue a pouder that cost me deare,

Shall

Shall make all good, for it is cause of all
My cunning, which I to you shew shall.
Voideth your man, and let him be thercout,
And shet the dooze, whiles we been about
Our priuitie, that no man vs espie,
Whiles that we werken in our Philosophie.
All, as he bad, fulfilled was in dede.
This ilke seruant anon out he pede,
And his maister shet the dooze anon,
And to her labour spedily they gon.

This priest at this cursed Chanos bidding,
Upon the fire anon set this thing,
And blew the fire, and busied him full fast:
And this Chanon into this crosset cast
A pouder, I not whereof it was
Imade, either of chalke, earth, or glasse,
Or somewhat els, was not worth a flie,
To bind with the priest: and bad him hie
These coles for to couchen all aboue
The crosselet, for in token that I thee loue
(Qd. this Chanon) thine owne hondes two
Shall werke all thing that here shall be do.

Grant mercy (qd. the priest) & was full glad,
And couched coles as the Chanon bad:
And while he busie was, this fendly wretch
This false Chanon, the foule fende him fetch,
Out of his bosome tooke a bechen cole,
In which full subtily was made an hole,
And therein was put of siluer limaile
An vnce, and stopped was without faile
The hole with waxe, to keep the limaile in:
And vnderstandeth that this falke gin
Was not made there, but it was made before,
And other things that I shall you tell more
Hereafter, which that he with him brought,
Er he came there, to begile him he thought,
And so he did, as they went a twin:
Till he had nere vndon him, could he not blin.
It dulleth me, when that I of him spcke,
On his falshede faine would I me wreke,
If I wist how, but he is here and there,
He is so variaunt, he bideth no where.

But taketh hede sirs now for Gods loue.
He toke his cole of which I spake aboue,
And in his honde he bare it priuely,
And whiles the priest couched busily
The coles together as I told you er this,
This Chanon saied, friend ye doen amis,
This is not couched as it ought to be,
But fone I shall amend it (qd he)
Now let me meddle therewith but a while,
For of you haue I pittie by saint Gile.
Ye been right hot, I see well how you swete,
Haue here a cloth and wipe away the wete.
And all while the priest him wiped hace,
This Chanon toke the cole, I shrew his face,
And laied it abouen vpon the midward
Of the crosset, and blew well afterward
Till that the coles began fast to bren

Now yeue vs drink, (qd. this Chanon the)
As swithe all shall be well I vndertake,
Sit we down, and let vs mery make.
And when that this Chanons bechen cole
Was brent all, the limaile out of the hole
Into the crosset anon fell adown,
And so it must needs do by reason,
Sens it so euen aboue couched was,
But thereof wist the priest nothing alas:
He demed all the coles liche good,
For of the slight nothing he vnderstood.

And when this Alkamister saw his time,
Reiseth vp sir priest (qd. he) & stondeth by me,
And for I wote well ingot haue I none,
Goth walketh forth, & bring a chalke stone:
For I woll make it of the same shappe,
That an ingot is, if I may haue happe,
And bring eke with you a bolle or a pan
Full of water, and ye shall see than
How that our bestnes shall hap and preue:
And yet for ye shall haue no misbeleue
Ne wrong conceit of me in your absence,
I woll not been out of your presence,
But go with you and come with you again.

The chamber dooze shortly for to sain
They opened & shet, and went forth her weie,
And forth with hem they caried the keie,
And comen ayen withouten any delay,
What should I tary all the long day,
He toke the chalke, and shope it in the wise,
Of an yngot, as I shall you deuise.

I say he tooke out of his own sleue
A teine of siluer, iuell mote he cheue,
Which that was but a iust vnce of weight:
And taketh heed now of his cursed sleight.
He shop his yngot, in length and in brede
Of the teine, withouten any drede
So sily that the priest it not espide,
And in his sleue again he gan it hide:
And from the fire tooke vp his matere,
And into the yngot it put with mery chere:
And into the water vessel he it cast,
When that him list, and bad the priest as fast
Loke what there is, put in thin honde & grope,
Thou shalt finde there siluer as I hope,
What diuell of hell should it els be,
Shauing of siluer, siluer is parde.

He put in his honde, and tooke vp a teine
Of siluer fine, and glad in euery vaine
Was this priest, when he saw it was so:
Gods blessing and his mothers also
And all Hallowes, haue ye sir Chanon,
Saied this priest, and I her malison
But and ye vouchsafe to teachen me
This noble craft and this subtilte,
I woll be yours in all that euer I may.
Qd. the Chanon, yet woll I make assaie

The second time, that ye mow take hede
And been expert of this, and in your nede
Another day assay in mine absence
This disciplme, and this craftie science.
Lo take another ounce (qd. he) tho
Of quicke siluer, withouten wordes mo,
And doen therewith as I haue doen er this
With that other, which that now siluer is.
The priest him beseeth in all that he can
To doen as this Chanon this cursed man
Commanded him, and fast blewe the fire,
For to come to the effect of his desire.
And this Chanon, right in the meane while
All ready was, this priest eft to begile,
And for a countenance in his hond bare
An hollow sticke, take kepe and beware,
In thende of which an ounce and no more
Of siluer limaile put was, as before
Was in his cole, and stopped with waxe wele
For to keepen in his limaile euery dele.
And whiles this priest was in his businesse,
This Chanon with his sticke gan him dresse
To him anon, and his pouder cast in
As he did erst, the deuill out of his skin
Him torne, I pray to God for his falshede.
For he was euer false in word and dede:
And with his sticke, aboue the crosselet,
That was ordained with that false iet,
He stireth the coles, till all relent gan
The waxe again the fire, as euery man
But he a foole be, wote well it mote nede,
And all that in the hole was, out yede,
And into the crosselet hastily it fell.
The priest supposed nothing but well,
But busied him fast, and was wonder fain,
Supposing nought but trouth soth to sain:
He was so glad, that I can not expresse
In no maner his mirth and his gladnesse,
And to the Chanon he profered eft sone
Body and god: ye (qd. the Chanon) anon
Tho I be pore, craftie thou shalt me find:
I warne thee yet is there more behinde.
Is there any coper here within, saied he?
Ye sir (qd. the priest) I trow there be.
Elis go and buie some, and that a swithe,
Now good sir go forth thy way and hithe.
He went his way, & with the coper he came,
And this Chanon in his hond it name,
And of that coper waged out but an ounce:
All to simple is my tonge to pronounce
As to minister by my wit the doublenesse.
Of this Chanon, root of all cursednesse.
but feinde frendly, to hem ỹ knew him nought,
But he was fendly, both in worke & thought.
It werieth me to tell of his falsenesse,
And natheles, yet will I it expresse
To the intent that mē may beware therby,
And not for none other cause truely.
He put this ounce of coper into the crosselet,
And on the fire as swithe he hath it set,
And cast in pouder, & made the priest to blow
And in is working for to stoupe low
As he did erst, and all nas but a pape,
Right as him list the priest he made his Ape.
And afterward in the ingot he it cast
And in the pan put it at the last
Of water, and in he put his owne hond,
And in his sleue, as ye before hond
Heard me tell, he had a siluer teine,
He slily tooke it out, this cursed heine,
Unwitting this priest of his false craft,
And in the pannes botome he hath it laft,
And in the water rombleth too and fro,
And wonder priuily tooke vp also
The coper teine, not knowing this priest,
And hid it, and hent him by the brest,
And to him spake, and thus said in his game:
Stoupeth adown, by God ye be to blame,
Helpeth me now, as I did you whilere,
Put in your hond, and loketh what is there.
This priest tooke vp this siluer teine anon,
And then said the Chanon, let vs gon
With these three teines which we hā wrouzt,
To some Goldsmith, and wete if it be ought:
For by my faith, I nold for my hood
But if it were siluer fine and good,
And that as swithe well proued shall be.
Unto the Goldsmith, with these teines three
They went, and put them in assaie
To fire and hammer: might no man saie nay,
But they were as them ought for to be. (he
This sotted priest, who was gladder than
Was neuer birde gladder ayenst the day,
Ne Nightingale, ayenst the season of May
Was neuer none, that list better to sing,
Ne lady lustier in carolling:
And for to speake of loue and womanhede,
Ne knight in armes to doen a hardy dede
To stonden in grace of his lady dere,
Than had this priest, this craft now to lere:
And to the Chanon thus he spake and said,
For the loue of God, that for vs all deid,
And as I may deserue it vnto you,
What shall this receit cost, telleth me now?
By our lady (qd. this Chanon) it is dere
I warne you well, saue I and a Frere
In England, there can no man it make.
No force (qd he) now sir for Gods sake,
What shall I pay, tell me I you pray.
I wis (qd. he) it is full deare I say.
Sir at one worde, if that ye list it haue,
Ye shall pay fourtie pound, so God me saue:
And nere the friendship that ye did er this
To me, ye shoulden pay more wis.
This priest the sum of fortie pound anon
Of nobles fet, and told hem euerichon

To this Chanon, for this ilke receit.
All his worching was fraud and deceit.
Sir priest he said, I keep for to haue no loos
Of my craft, for I would it were kept cloos,
And as you loue me, keepeth it secre,
For and men know all my subtilte,
By God men would haue so great enuie
To me, because of my Philosophie,
I should be dead, there were none other way.
God it forbid (qd. the priest) what ye say,
Yet had I lener spend all the good
Which that I haue, or els waxe I wood,
Than that ye should fallen in such mischefe:
For your good will haue ye right good prefe
Qd. the Chanon, and farewell graunt mercie.
He went his way, & the priest neuer him sie
After that day: & when that this priest should
Maken assay, at such time as he would
Of this receit, farewell it nold not be.
Lo thus bepaped and beguiled was he:
Thus maketh he his introduction
To bring folke to her destruction.
☞ Considereth sirs, how in each estate
Betwixt men and gold there is debate
So ferforth, that vnneths there is none,
(This multiplying blindeth so many one)
That in good faith I trow that it be
The greatest cause of such scarsite.
These philosophers speaken so mistily
In this craft, that men cannot come thereby,
For any wit that men haue now adaies:
They may wel chattre & iangle as do ỳ iaies,
And in her termes set her lust and paine,
But to her purpose shull they neuer attaine.
☞ A man may lightly learne, if he haue ought
To multiplie, and bring his good to nought.
Lo, such a lucre is in this lusty game,
A mans mirth it woll turne all to grame,
And emptien also great and heauy purses,
And maken folke to purchase curses
Of hem that han also her good plent.
O fie for shame, they that han be brent,
Alas, cannot they flie the fires hete?
Ye that it vsen, I rede that ye it lete,
☞ Least ye lesen all: for bet than neuer is late:
Neuer to thriue, were too long a date.
Though ỳ ye prolle aye, ye shall it neuer find,
☞ Ye ben as bold as is bayard the blind
That blondereth forth, & perill casteth none:
He is as bold to renne ayenst a stone,
As for to goe beside in the way:
So faren ye, that multiplien I say.
If that your eyen cannot scene aright,
Looketh that your mind lacke not his sight.
For though ye looke neuer so broad and stare,
Ye shall not win a mite in that chaffare,
☞ But wast all that ye may repe and renne:
Withdraw the fire, least it too fast brenne.
Medleth with that art no more I meane,
For if ye done, your thrift is gone full cleane.
And right as swithe I woll you tellen here
What ỳ the philosophers sain in this matere.
Lo thus saith Arnolde of the new toun,
As his Rosarie maketh mentioun,
He saith right thus, without en any lie,
There may no man Mercurie mortifie,
But if it be with his brothers knowledging:
Lo how that he which first said this thing,
Of Philosophers father was, Hermes.
He saith how that the dragon doutles
Ne dieth not, but if he be slaine
With his brother: And this is for to saine
By the dragon Mercury, and none other,
He vnderstood ỳ brimstone was his brother,
That out of Sol and Luna were ydraw:
And therefore said he, take heed to my saw.
Let no man busie him this art for to seech,
But he that the entention and speech
Of Philosophers vnderstond can:
And if he doe, he is a leaud man.
For this science and this cunning (qd. he)
Is of the secre of the secres parde.
Also there was a disciple of Plato,
That on a time said his maister to,
As his booke Senior woll beare witnesse,
And this was his demaund in soothfastnesse:
Tell me the name of the priuy stone?
And Plato answerd vnto him anone,
Take the stone that Titanos men name.
Which is that (qd. he?) Magnetia is the same
Said Plato: ye sir and is it thus?
This is ignotum per ignotius.
What is Magnetia, good sir I you pray?
It is a water that is made I say
Of the elements foure (qd. Plato.)
Tell me the roche good sir (qd. he tho)
Of that water, if it be your will.
Nay, nay (qd Plato) certaine that I nill:
The Philosophers were ylworne eachone,
That they should discouer it vnto none,
Ne in no booke it write in no manere,
For vnto Christ it is so leef and dere,
That he woll not that it discouered be,
But where it liketh to his deitie,
Man to enspire and eke for to defend,
When that him liketh, lo this is his end.
Then conclude I thus, sens ỳ God of heuen
Ne will not that the Philosophers nemen,
How that a man shall come vnto this stone,
I rede as for the best, let it gone.
For who so maketh God his aduersary, ☞
As for to werch any thing in contrary
Vnto his will, certes neuer shall he thriue,
Though that he multiply tearme of his liue:
And there a point: for ended is my tale.
God send euery true man bote of his bale.

¶ The Doctor of Physicks Prologue.

WHen this yeoman his tale ended had
Of this false Chanon, which was so bad,
Our host gan say, truly and certaine
This priest was beguiled, sooth for to saine:
He weened for to be a Philosopher,
Till he right no gold left in his cofer:
And soothly this priest had all the pape,
This cursed Chanon put in his hood an ape.
But all this passe I ouer as now:
Sir doctor of Physicke, yet I pray you,
Tell vs a tale of some honest matere.
It shall be done, if that ye woll it here,
Said this doctor, and his tale began anone,
Now good men (qd. he) herkeneth euerichone.

¶ The Doctor of Physickes Tale.

Virginius slayeth his onely daughter, rather than that she shall be defiled by the letcherous Iudge Appius.

THere was, as telleth vs Titus Liuius,
A knight, that cleaped was Virginius,
Fulfilled of honour and worthinesse,
And strong of friends, and of great richesse.
A daughter he had by his wife,
And neuer had he mo in all his life:
Faire was this maid in excellent beautee
Abouen euery wight that man may see:
For nature hath with soueraigne diligence
Formed her in so great excellence,
As though she would say, lo I nature,
Thus can I forme and paint a creature
When that me list, who can me counterfete?
Pigmalio not, though he alway forge & bete,
Or graue or paint: for I dare well saine,
Apelles or Eccrlis should werch in vaine
To graue or paint, or forge or bete,
If they presumed me to counterfete.
For he that is the fourmer principall,
Hath made me his vicar generall
To fourme and paint earthly creature
Right as me list. All thing is in my cure
Vnder the moone, that may wane and waxe:
And for my werke nothing woll I axe,
My lord and I been fully of accord.
I made her to the worship of my lord,
So doe I all mine other creatures,
Of what colour they be, or of what figures:
Thus seemeth me that nature would say.
This maid was of age xii. yere and tway,
In which that nature hath such delite.
For right as she can paint a lilly white
And rody as rose, right with such painture
She painted hath this noble creature
Ere she was borne, vpon her lims free
Were als bright as such colours should bee,
And Phebus died had her tresses grete,
Like to the streames of his burned hete.
And if that excellent were her beaute,
A thousand fold more vertuous was she:
In her ne lacketh no condition,
That is to praise, as by discretion
As well in body as in ghost, chast was she:
For which she floured in virginite
With all humility and abstinence,
With all attemperaunce and patience,
With measure eke, and bering of aray.
Discreet she was in answering alway,
Tho she were wise as Pallas, dare I saine.
(Her facond eke full womanly and plaine)
No counterfeited termes at all had shee
To seeme wise: but after her degree
She spake, and all her words more and lesse
Sowning in vertue and in gentlenesse.
Shamefast she was in maidēs shamfastnesse,
Constant in hert, and euer in busines
To driue her out of all sluggardie:
Bacchus had of her mouth no maistrie.
For wine and youth done Venus encrece,
As men in fire woll casten oyle or grece.
And of her owne vertue vnconstrained,
She hath full oft her sicke fained,
For that she would flie the companie,
Where likely was to treaten of follie,
As is at feasts, at reuels, and at daunces,
That been occasions of daliaunces:
Such things maken children for to bee
Too soone ripe and bold, as men may see:
Which is full perillous, and hath been yore,
For all too soone may she learne the lore
Of boldnesse, when as she is a wife.
And ye maistresses in your old life,
That lords doughters han in gouernaunce,
Ne taketh of my word no displeasaunce:
Thinke that ye been set in gouernings
Of lords doughters, onely for two things,
Either for you han kept your honestly,
Either for ye han fall in freelty,
And knowen well ynough the old daunce,
And counne forsake fully all mischaunce:
For euermore therefore for Christs sake,
Keepeth well tho that ye vndertake.
A theefe of venelon, that hath forlaft
His likerousnesse, and all his theeues craft,
Can keepe a forrest best of any man:
Now keepeth hem well, for & ye woll ye can:

Loo=

Looketh well, to no vice that ye aſſent,
Leaſt ye be damned for your euill entent.
For who ſo doth, a traytour is certaine,
And taketh keepe of that I ſhall you ſaine:
Of all treaſon ſoueraigne peſtilence
Is, when a wight betrayeth innocence.
Ye fathers, and eke ye mothers alſo,
Though ye han children, be it one or mo,
Yours is the charge of all her ſufferaunce,
Whiles that they been in your gouernaunce.
Beth ware, that by enſample of your liuing,
Either by your negligence in chaſtiſing,
That they ne periſh: for I dare well ſay,
If that they done, ye ſhall full ſore abay.
Under a ſheepheard ſoft and negligent,
The wolfe hath many a ſheep & lambe to rent.
Sufficeth one enſample now as here,
For I mote turne ayen to my matere.
This maid of which I tell my tale expreſſe,
She kept her ſelue, ſhe needed no maiſtreſſe.
For in her liuing maidens might rede
As in a booke, euery good worke and dede,
That longeth to a maid vertuous:
She was ſo prudent and ſo bounteous.
For which out ſprong on euery ſide
Both of her beauty and her bounty wide:
That thorow ỹ lond they preiſed her echone,
That loued vertue, ſaue enuy alone,
That ſorry is of other mens wele,
And glad is of her ſorrow and vnhele.
The doctour maketh this deſcriptioun,
This maid went on a day into the toun
Toward the temple, with her mother dere,
As is of young maidens the manere.
Now was there a iuſtice in the toun,
That gouernour was of that regioun:
And ſo befell, this Iuſtice his eyen caſt
Upon this maid, auiſing her full faſt
As ſhe came forby, there as the Judge ſtood:
Anon his heart chaunged and his mood,
So was he caught with beauty of this maid
And to himſelfe full priuely he ſaid,
This maid ſhall be mine for any man.
Anon the fiend into his heart ran,
And taught him ſuddainly, by what ſleight
The maid to his purpoſe win he might.
For certes, by no force, ne by no meed,
Him thought he was not able for to ſpeed.
For ſhe was ſtrong of friends, and eke ſhe
Confirmed was in ſuch ſoueraigne beaute,
That well he wiſt he might her neuer win,
As for to make her with her body ſin.
For which with great deliberatioun
He ſent after a client into the toun,
The which he knew full ſubtill and full bold.
This Judge this client his tale hath told
In ſecret wiſe, and made him to enſure,
He ſhould tell it vnto no creature:
And if he did, he ſhould leſe his hede.
When aſſented was this curſed rede,
Glad was the iudge, and made good chere
And yaue him gifts precious and dere.
When ſhapen was all this conſpiracie
Fro point to point, how that his lecherie
Performed ſhould be full ſubtilly,
As ye ſhullen after heare openly:
Home goth this client ỹ hight Claudius.
But this falſe iudge, that hight Appius,
(So was his name, for it is no fable,
But knowen for an hiſtoriall thing notable
The ſentence of it ſooth is out of dout)
This falſe iudge I ſay goth now faſt about
To haſten his delight all that he may:
And ſo befell, that ſoone after on a day
This falſe iudge, as telleth vs the ſtorie,
As he was wont, ſat in his conſiſtorie,
And yaue his doomes vpon ſundry caas,
This falſe client came forth a full great paas
And ſaid, lord, if that it be your will,
As doth me right vpon this pitous bill,
In which I plaine vpon Virginius.
And if he woll ſay it is not thus,
I woll proue it, and find good witneſſe,
That ſooth is, that my bill woll expreſſe.
The iudge anſwerd, of this in his abſence
I may not yeue definite ſentence:
Let doe him call, and I woll gladly here,
Thou ſhalt haue all right, and no wrong here.
Virginius came to wete the iudges will,
And right anon was rad this curſed bill,
The ſentence of it was as ye ſhall heare.
To you my lord Appius ſo deare
Sheweth your poore ſeruaunt Claudius,
How that a knight called Virginius,
Ayenſt the law and ayenſt all equite,
Holdeth expreſſe ayenſt the will of me
My ſeruant, which that is my thrall by right,
Which from mine hous was ſtolen on a night
Whiles ſhe was full yong, I woll it preue
By witneſſe, lord, ſo that ye you not greue:
She is not his doughter what ſo he ſay,
Wherefore my lord iuſtice I you pray:
Yeeld me my thrall, if it be your will.
Lo this was all the ſentence of that bill.
Virginius gan vpon the client behold:
But haſtily, ere he his tale told,
He would haue defended it, as ſhuld a knight,
And by witneſſe of many a trew wight,
That all was falſe, that ſaid his aduerſarie.
This curſed iudge would no lenger tary,
Ne here a word more of Virginius
But yaue his iudgement, and ſaid thus.
I deme anon this client his ſeruaunt haue,
Thou ſhalt no lenger her in thine houſe ſaue,
Go bring her forth, and put her in our ward.
This cliēt ſhal haue his thrall, thus I award.

And

And when this worthy knight Virginius
Through the assent of the iudge Appius
Must by force his deare doughter yeuen
Unto the iudge, in lechery to liuen,
He goth him home, and set him in his hall,
And let anon his deare doughter call:
And with a face dead as asben cold,
Upon her humble face he gan behold,
With fathers pity, sticking through his hert,
All would he not from his purpose conuert.
Doughter (qd. he) Virginia by thy name,
There ben two waies, either death, or shame
That thou must suffer, alas ỹ I was borne,
For neuer thou deseruedest wherefore
To dien with a sword or with a knife:
Oh dere doughter, comfort of my life,
Which I haue fostred vp with such pleasance,
That thou neuer were out of my remẽbrance:
O doughter, which that art my last wo,
And in my life my last ioy also,
O iemme of chastitie, in patience
Take thou thy death, this is my sentence:
For loue and not for hate thou must be dead,
My pitous hond mote smite of thine head,
Alas that euer Appius thee sey.
Thus hath he falsely iudged thee to dey.
And told her all the cause, as ye before
Han heard, it needeth not to tell it more.
O mercy dere father (qd. this maid)
And with that word, both her armes laid
About his necke, as she was wont to do,
The teares brast out of her eyen two,
And said, O good father shall I die,
Is there no grace? is there no remedie?
No certes deare doughter mine (qd. he.)
Then yeue me leaue father mine (qd. she)
My death to complaine a little space:
For parde, Iepte yaue his doughter grace
For to complaine, ere he her slough, alas,
And God it wot, nothing was her trespas,
But that she ran her father first to see,
To welcome him with great solemnitee:
And with that word she fell aswoune anone,
And after when her swouning was gone,
She riseth vp, and to her father said:
Blessed be God that I shall die a maid.
Yeue me my death, ere that I haue a shame,
Doth with your child your wil a gods name:
And with that word she prayeth him full oft,
That with his sword he should smite her soft,
And with that word, aswoune doune she fell.
Her father with sorrowfull heart and fell,
Her head off smote, and by the top it hent,
And to the iudge he it yaue in present,
As he sat in doome in consistorie.
When the iudge it saw, as saith the storie,
He bad take him, and hong him also fast:
But right anone all the people in thrast
To saue the knight, for routh and for pity,
For knowen was the iudges iniquity.
The people anon had suspect in this thing
By manner of this clients challenging,
That it was by the assent of Appius:
They wist well that he was lecherous,
For which vnto Appius they gone,
And hesten him in prison right anone,
Whereas he slew himselfe: and Claudius,
That seruaunt was vnto this Appius,
Was demed to be honged vpon a tree:
But Virginius of his great pitee
So prayed for him, that he was exiled,
And els certes he had been beguiled:
The remnaunt were honged, more and lesse,
That consented were to his cursednesse.
Here may men see how sin hath his merite: ☞
Beware, for no man wot how God wol smite
In no degree, ne in no manner wise,
The worme of conscience woll arise
Of wicked life, though it so priuie be,
That no man wote of it but God and he:
Whether he be leaud man or lered,
He not how soone he may been afered.
Therefore I rede you this counsaile take, ☞
To forsake sinne, or sinne you forsake.

¶ The words of the Host.

OUr Host gan sweare as he were wood,
Harrow (qd. he) by nailes and by blood,
This was a false theefe, and a cursed iustice:
As shamefull death, as heart may deuise,
Come to the iustice and her aduocas.
Algate this silly maiden is slaine, alas,
Alas too deare abought she her beautee.
Wherefore I say, that all men may see,
That yefts of fortune or of nature, ☞
Been cause of death of many a creature.
Her beauty was her death, I dare well saine:
Alas so pitously as she was slaine.
But thereof woll I not proceed as now,
Men haue full oft more harme than prow. ☞
But truly truly mine owne maister dere,
This is a cruell tale for to here:
But natheless, passe ouer and no force.
I pray to God to saue thy gentle corse,
And thy vrinals, and thy iordanes,
Thine ypocras, and eke thy galianes,
And euery boxe full of letuarie
God blesse hem and our lady saint Marie.
So mote I thee, thou art a proper man,
And like a prelate by saint Runian,
Saue that I cannot speake well in terme,
But well I wot, thou dost mine hert to yerne,

That

That I haue almost yeaught a cardiacle:
By corpus domini, But I haue triacle,
Or els a draught of moist cornie ale,
Or but I heare anon another merry tale,
My heart is lost for pity of this maid.
Thou belamy, thou John pardoner he said,
Tell vs some merry tale, or tape, right anon.
It shall be done (qd. he) by saint Runion.
But first (qd. he) here at this ale stake
I woll both drinke, and bite on a cake:
But right anone, these gentles gan to crie,
Nay, let him tell vs of no ribaudrie:
Tell vs some mozall thing, that we mowlere
Some wit, and then woll we gladly here.
I graunt (qd. he) ywis, but in ỹ cup Ile thinke
On some honest thing, whiles that I drinke.

¶ The Pardoners Prologue.

Lordings (quoth he) in chirch when I preche,
I paine mee to haue an hautein speche,
And ring it out, as round as doth a bell,
For I can all by rote that I tell.
My teme is alway one, and euer was,
(Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas)
First I pronounce fro whence I come,
And then my bils I shew all and some:
Our liege lords seale on my patent
That shew I first, my body to warrent,
That no man be so bold, priest ne clerke,
Me to disturbe of Christs holy werke.
And after that I tell forth my tales
Of Buls, of Popes, and of Cardinales,
Of Patriarkes, and of Bishops I shew,
And in latine I speake words a few
To sauer with my predication,
And for to stere men to deuotion.
Then shew I forth my long christall stones,
Ycrammed full of clouts and of bones,
Relickes they been, as wene they echone:
Then haue I in laton a shoder bone,
Which that was of an holy iewes shepe.
Good men say I, take of my words kepe:
If that this bone be walhen in any well,
If cow or calfe, sheepe, or oxe swell
That any worme hath eaten, or hem stong,
Take water of this well, and walh his tong,
And it is hole anon: and furthermore
Of pockes, and of scabs, and euery sore
Shall shepe be hole, that of this well
Drinketh a draught, take keepe of that I tell.
If that the good man that beasts oweth,
Woll euery day ere the cocke croweth,
Fasting drinke of this well a draught,
(As thilke holy iew our elders taught)
His beasts and his store shall multiplie:
And sirs, also it healeth iealousie.
For though a man be fall in iealous rage,
Let make with this water his potage,
And neuer shall he more his wife mistrist,
Though he in sooth the defaut by her wist:
All had she taken priests two or three.
Here is a mittaine eke, that ye may see:
He that his hand woll put in this mittaine,
He shall haue multiplying of his graine,
When he hath sowen, be it wheat or otes,
So that he offer good pens or grotes.
And men and women, o thing I warne you:
If any wight been in this church now,
That hath done sinne horrible, that he
Dare not for shame of it shriuen be:
Or any woman, be she yong or old
That hath made her husbond a cokewold,
Such folke shull haue no power ne no grace
To offer to my relickes in this place.
And who so findeth him out of such blame,
Commeth vp and offer in Gods name,
And I assoyle him by the authoritie,
Such as by bull was graunted to me.
By this gaude haue I won euery yere
An hundred marke, sithen I was pardonere.
I stond like a clerke in my pulpet,
And when the lewd people been doune set,
I preach so as ye haue iered before,
And tell to them an hundred japes more.
Then paine I me to stretch forth my necke,
And east and west vpon the people I becke
As doth a doue, sitting vpon a berne:
My hondes and my tongue gone so yerne,
That it is ioy to see my busines.
Of auarice and of such cursednesse
All my preaching is for to maken hem free
To yeuen her pens, and namely vnto mee.
For mine entent is not but for to winne,
And nothing for correction of sinne.
I recke neuer when that they ben buried,
Though her soule gone a blackburied.
For certes many a predication
Commeth oft time of euill entention.
Some for pleasaunce of folke, & for flaterie,
To been auaunced by hypocrisie:
And some for vaineglory, and some for hate.
For when I dare not other wayes debate,
Then woll I sting hem with my tongue smert
In preaching, so that he shall not astert
To ben defamed falsely, if that he
Hath trespassed to my bretherne or to me.
For though I tell not his proper name,
Men shall well know that it is the same
By signes, or by other circumstaunces.
Thus quite I folke, ỹ doth vs displesaunces:
Thus put I out my venim vnder hew
Of holinesse, to seemen holy and trew.

But

But ſhortly mine entent I will deuiſe,
I preach of nothing but of couetiſe.
Therefore my teme is yet, and euer was,
Radix omnium malorum eſt cupiditas.
Thus can I preach ayenſt the ſame vice
Which that I vſe, and that is auarice.
But though my ſelfe be guilty in that ſinne,
Yet can I maken other folke to twinne
From auarice, and ſore hem to repent:
But that is not my principall entent,
I preach nothing but for couetiſe.
Of this matere it ought ynough ſuffiſe.
Then tell I hem enſamples many one
Of old ſtories done long time agone.
For lewd people ayen louen tales old,
Which things they can well report & hold.
What, trowen ye whiles that I may preach,
And win gold and ſilver for to teach,
That I will liue in pouert wilfully?
Nay, nay, I thought it neuer truly.
For I will preach and beg in ſundry londs,
I will not doe no labour with mine hondes,
Ne make baskets and liue thereby,
Because I will not beg idelly.
I will none of the apoſtles counterfete:
I will haue money, mault, cheeſe, and whete,
All were it yeuen of the pooreſt page,
Or of the pooreſt widdow in a village:
Though her children ſhould ſterue for famine.
Nay, I will drinke the licour of the wine,
And haue a iolly wench in euery toun:
But herkeneth lordings my concluſioun.
Your liking is that I ſhould tell a tale,
Now I haue dronken a draught of corny ale:
By God I hope I ſhall tell you a thing,
That ſhall by reaſon been at your liking:
For though my ſelfe be a full vicious man,
A moral tale yet I you tell can,
Which I am wont to preach, for to win:
Now hold your peace, my tale I will begin.

¶ The Pardoners Tale.

A company of riotours conſpire to kill Death, who killeth them one after another.

In Flanders whilom there was a companie
Of yong folke, that haunted folie:
As hazard, riot, ſtewes, and tauernes,
Wherras with harps, lutes, and geternes,
They daunce and plaien at dice night & day,
And eaten alſo, ouer that her might may.
Through which they done the deuill ſacrifice
Within the deuils temple, in curſed wiſe,
By ſuperfluitie abhominable:
Her othes been ſo great and ſo damnable,
That it is griſly for to heare hem ſweare:
Our bleſſed lordes body they all to teare,
Hem thought the Jewes rent him not ynough:
And each of hem at others ſinne lough.
And right anon comen in tombleſteres
Fetis and ſmale, and yong foiteres,
Singers with harpes, bauds, and wafereres,
Which that been verely the deuils officers
To kindle and blow the fire of lecherie,
That is annexed vnto glotonie.
The holy writ take I to my witneſſe,
That lecherie is in wine and dronkennеſſe.
Lo how that dronken Loth vnkindly
Lay by his daughters two vnwittingly,
So dronke he was he nift what he wrought,
And therefore ſore repenten him ought.
Herodes, who ſo well the ſtories ſeche,
There may ye learne, and by enſample teche,
When he of wine was replete at his feaſt,
Right at his owne table yaue his heſt
To ſleen Johan the Baptiſt full guiltleſſe.
Seneke ſaith eke good words doubtleſſe:
He ſaith he can no difference find
Betwixt a man that is out of his mind,
And a man the which is dronkelew:
But that woodneſſe fallen in a shrew,
Perſeuereth lenger than doth dronkennеſſe.
O glotenie, full of curſednеſſe:
O cauſe firſt of our confuſion,
O originall of our damnation,
til Chriſt had bought vs with his blood again:
Lo how dere, ſhortly for to ſain,
Bought was firſt this curſed villanie:
Corrupt was all this world through glotenie.
Adam our fornfather, and his wife alſo,
Fro Paradice, to labour and to wo
Were driuen for that vice, it is no drede:
For whiles that Adam faſted, as I rede,
He was in Paradiſe, and when that hee
Eat of the fruit defended on the tree,
Anon he was out caſt to wo and paine.
O glotenie, on thee well ought vs to plaine.
Oh, wiſt a man how many maladies
Followeth of exceſſe and of glotenies,
He would been the more meaſurable
Of his diete, ſitting at his table.
Alas the ſhort throat, the tender mouth,
Maketh that Eaſt & Weſt, North & South,
In earth, in aire, in water, men to ſwinke,
To getten a glutton deinte meat and drinke.
Of this matter, O Paul wel canſt thou treat,
Meat vnto wombe, & wombe eke vnto meat
Shall God deſtroien both, as Paule ſaith.
Alas, a foule thing it is by my faith,
To ſay this word, and fouler is the dede,
When men ſo drinketh of the white and rede,

That

That of his throte he maketh his priue
Through thilke cursed superfluite.
The Apostle saieth weeping full pitously,
There walken many, of which told haue I,
I say it now weeping with pitous voice,
They been enemies of Christs croice:
Of which the end is death, wombe is her God.
O belly, O wombe, O stinking cod,
Fulfilled of dong and corruptioun,
At either end of thee foule is the soun.
How great cost and labour is there to find
These cookes: Lord how they stamp, strein, & grind,
And turne substance into accident, (grind,
To fulfill all thy likerous talent.
Out of the hard bones knocken they
The mary, for they cast it not away,
That may go through the gullet soft and sote:
Of spicerie, of leaues, barke, and rote,
Shall been his sauce ymade by delite
To maken hem haue a newer appetite.
But certes he, that haunteth such delices,
Is dead, whiles that he liueth in the vices.
A lecherous thing is wine and dronkennes,
It is full of striuing and of wretchednes.
O dronken man, disfigured in thy face,
Soure is thy breath, foul art thou to embrace:
And through thy dronken nose soueth ỹ soun,
As tho thou saidest ate Sampson Sampsoũ:
And yet God wot Sãpson dronk neuer wine.
Thou fallest, as it were a stricked swine:
Thy tongue is lost, and all thine honest cure,
For dronkennesse is very sepulture
Of mans wit, and his discretion.
In whom that drinke hath domination,
He can no counsaile keepe it is no drede.
Now kepe you fro the white and fro the rede,
And namely fro the White wine of Lepe,
That is to sell in Fishstreet and in Chepe.
This wine of Spaine creepeth subtilly,
And so do other wines growing hard by:
Of which riseth such fumositee,
That whẽ a man hath dronk draughts three,
And weneth that he be at home in Chepe,
He is in Spaine, right at the toune of Lepe,
Nought at Rochell, ne at Burdeaux toun.
And then woll he say, Sampsoun Sãpsoun.
But herkeneth lordings o word, I you pray,
That all the souereigne acts dare I say
Of victories in the old Testament,
Through very God, that is omnipotent,
Were doen in abstinence and in prayere:
Looketh the Bible, and there ye mow it lere.
Looketh Attila, the great conquerour
Died in his sleepe, with shame and dishonour,
Bleeding aye at his nose in dronkennesse:
A captaine should liue in sobernesse.
And ouer all this, auise you right well,
What was commaunded vnto Lamuel:
Not Samuell: but Lamuel say I,
Redeth the Bible, and find it expressly
Of wine yeuing to hem that haue iustice:
No more of this, for it may well suffice.

And now that I haue spoke of glotonie,
Now woll I defend you hasardrie.
Hasard is very mother of lesings,
And of deceit, and cursed forswearings:
Blaspheme of Christ, manslaughter, & waste also
Of catell, of time, and of other mo.
It is repreue, and contrary to honour,
For to be holden a common hasardour.
And euer the higher that he is of estate,
The more he is holden desolate.
If that a Prince shall vse hasardrie
In his gouernaunce and policie,
He is as by common opinion
Hold the lesse in reputation.
Stilbõ that was hold a wise embassadour,
Was sent to Corinth with full great honour
Fro Calidone, to maken hem alliaunce:
And whẽ he came, there happed this chaunce,
That all the greatest that were of the lond
Playing at hasard he hem yfond:
For which, as soone as it might be,
He stale him home ayen to his countre,
And saied, There woll I not lese my name,
I will not take on me so great defame,
For to allie you to none hasardours:
Sendeth other wiser embassadours.
For by my trouth, me were leuer die,
Than I should you to hasardours allie.
For ye that been so glorious in honours,
Shall not allie you with hasardours,
As by my will, ne by my treatie:
This wise Philosopher thus said he.
Looke eke how to king Demetrius
The king of Parthes, as the booke saieth vs,
Sent him a paire of dice of gold in scorne,
For he had vsed hasardrie there biforne:
For which he held his glory and his renoun
At no value or reputatioun.
Lords might find other manner play
Honest ynough to driue the day away.

Now wol I speake of othes false and great
A word or two, as other bookes entreat.
Great swearing is thing abhominable,
And false swearing is yet more reprouable:
The high God forbad swearing at all,
Witnesse of Mathew: but in speciall
Of swearing saieth the holy Jeremie,
Thou shalt sweare sooth thine othes, & not lie:
And sweare in dome and eke in rightwisnes,
But idle swearing is a cursednesse.
Behold and see that in the first table
Of high Gods hests that ben honourable,

How that the ſecond heſt of him is this,
Take not my name in idleneſſe amis.
Lo, he rather forbiddeth ſuch ſwearing,
Than homicide, or any other curſed thing:
I ſay as thus, by order it ſtondeth,
This knoweth they ꝑ his heſts vnderſtōdeth,
How that the ſecond heſt of God is that:
And furthermore, I woll thee tell all plat,
That vengeaunce ſhall not part fro his hous,
That of his othes is too outrageous.
By Gods precious heart, and his nailes,
And by the bloud of Chriſt, that is in Hailes,
Seuen is my chaunce, & thine fiue and three:
By Gods armes, if thou falſly play me,
This dagger ſhall through thine heart ygo.
This fruit it commeth of thilke bones two,
Forſwearing, ire, falſenеſſe, and homicide.
Now for the loue of Chriſt that for vs dide,
Leaueth your othes, both great and ſmale,
For I ſhall tell you a merueilous tale.
These riotours three, of which I tell,
Long erſt or prime rong any bell,
Were ſet hem in a Tauerne to drinke:
And as they ſat, they heard a bell clinke
Before a corſe, that was caried to his graue:
That one of hem gan call to his knaue,
Go bette (qd. he) and aſke redily,
What corſe is this, that paſſeth forth by:
And looke that thou report his name wele.
Sir (qd. he) it needeth neuer a dele:
It was me told ere ye came here two houres,
He was parde an old fellow of yours,
And ſuddainly was he ſlaine to night:
For drunke as he ſat on his bench vpright,
There came a priuy theefe, men clepen death,
That in this countrey all the people ſlaeth:
And with his ſpeare he ſmote his heart atwo,
And went his way withouten wordes mo.
He hath a thouſand ſlaine this peſtilence:
And maiſter ere ye come in his preſence,
Me thinketh that it were neceſſarie
For to beware of ſuch an aduerſarie:
Be redy for to meten him euermore,
Thus taught me my dame, I ſay no more.
By ſaint Mary, ſaid this Tauernere,
The child ſaith ſooth, for he hath this yere
Hens ouer a mile, ſlaine in a great village,
Both man and woman, child, and page,
I trowe his habitation be there:
To been auiſed, great wiſdome it were,
Er that he did a man diſhonour.
Ye, Gods armes (qd. this riotour)
Is it ſuch peril with him for to meet?
I ſhall him ſeeche by ſtile and eke by ſtreet,
I make a vow by Gods digne bones,
Herkeneth fellowes, we three been allones:
Let ech of vs hold vp his hond to other,
And ech of vs become others brother,
And we woll ſlea this falſe traitour death:
He ſhall be ſlaine, that ſo many ſlaeth
By Gods dignity, ere that it be night.
Togider han these three her trouthes plight
To liue and die ech of them with other,
As though he were his owne brother.
And vp they ſtert all dronken in this rage,
And forth they gone toward that village,
Of which the Tauerner hath ſpoke before,
And many a griſly oth han they ſwore,
And Chriſts bleſſed body they to rent,
Death ſhall be dead, and we may him hent.
When they han gone not fully a mile,
Right as they would haue troden ouer a ſtile,
An old poore man with hem met.
This old man full meekely hem gret,
And ſaied, now lordings God you ſee.
The proudeſt of these riotours three
Anſwerd ayen, what churle with hard grace,
Why art thou all forwrapped ſaue thy face?
Why liueſt thou ſo long in ſo great age?
This old man gan looken in his viſage,
And ſaied thus: for that I cannot find
A man, though I walked into Inde,
Neither in city, ne in no village,
That would chaunge his youth for mine age,
And therefore mote I haue mine age ſtill
As long time as it ſhall be Gods will.
Ne death alas nill not haue my life,
Thus walke I like a reſtleſſe caitife,
And on ꝑ ground, which is my mothers gate,
I knocke with my ſtaffe erliche and late,
And ſay ſtill, leue mother let me in,
Lo how I vaniſh, fleſh, blood, and ſkin:
Alas, when ſhall my bones been at reſt,
Mother with you would I chaunge my cheſt,
That in my chamber long time hath be,
Ye for an heren clout to wrap in me:
But yet to me ſhe woll not doen that grace,
For which full pale and welked is my face.
But ſirs, to you it is no courteſie
To ſpeaken vnto an old man villanie,
But he trеſpace in word either in dede,
In holy writ ye may your ſelfe well rede:
Againſt an old man, hore vpon his hede
Ye ſhould ariſe: therefore I you rede
Ne doeth to an old man no harme as now,
No more than ye would a man did you
In age, if that ye may ſo long abide.
And God be with you whether ye go or ride,
I mote goe thider as I haue to go.
Nay old churle, by God thou ſhalt not ſo,
Saied theſe other hazardours anon.
Thou parteſt not ſo lightly by ſaint John:
Thou ſpakeſt right now of thilke traitor death,
That in this countrey all our friends ſlaeth:
Haue here my trouth thou art his eſpie,
Tell where he is, or els thou ſhalt die

By God and by the holy Sacrament,
For soothly thou art of his assent
To slea vs yong folke, O thou false theef.
Now sirs, if it be to you so lefe
To find death, tourne vp this crooked way,
For in that groue I left him by my fay
Vnder a tree, and there he woll abide:
Ne for your bost he nill him nothing hide.
See ye yonder oke, right there ye shall him find:
God saue you, that bought ayen mankind,
And you amend, thus saied this old man.
Then eueriche of these riotours ran,
Til they came to the tree, and there they found
Flozeines of gold fine, ycoined round,
Well nigh a seuen bushels, as hem thought:
No lenger than after death they sought,
But ech of hem so glad was of that sight,
For that the flozeins so faire been & bright,
That doune they sit by the precious hozd,
The yongest of hem spake the first wozd.
Bzethern (qd. he) take keepe what I say,
My wit is great, though I bozd oz play:
This treasure hath fortune to vs yeuen
In mirth and iolity our life to liuen,
And lightly as it comes, so woll we spend:
Hete, Gods precious hart: who did once wend
To day, that we should haue so faire a grace?
But might this gold be caried fro this place
Home to my houle, oz els vnto yours,
(For well I wote that all this gold is ours)
Then were we in high felicite.
But truly by day it may not be,
Men would thē say ỹ we wer theeues strong,
And for our owne treasure doen vs hong.
This treasure must yearied be by night
As wisely and as slily as it might.
Wherefore I rede, draw cut among vs all,
And let us see where the cut woll fall:
He that hath the shortest cut, with hart blith,
Shall renne to the toune, and that full swith,
To bring vs bread and drinke full priuely:
And two of vs shall keepe full subtilly
This treasure well: and if he woll not tarie,
When it is night, we woll this treasure carie
By one assent, where as vs list best.
That one of hem brought grasse in his fest,
And bad hem draw, & look where it wold fall,
And it fell on the yongest of hem all:
And forth toward the toune he went anone.
And also soone as he was gone,
That one of hem spake vnto that other,
Thou wost well thou art my swozne brother,
Thy profite woll I tell thee right anone:
Thou wost well that our fellow is gone,
And here is gold, and that full great plentee,
That shall departed be among vs three.
But natheless, if that I can shape it so,
That it departed were among vs two,
Had I not doen a friendly turne to thee?
That other answerd, I not how ỹ might be:
I woll wel that the gold were ours two,
What should we doe, that it might be so?
Shall it be counsaile (saied the first shrew)
And I shall tell thee in wozds few
What we woll doen, and bring it well about.
I graunt (qd. that other) out of dout:
That by my trouth I woll thee not bewrain.
Now (qd. he) thou wost well we been twain,
And twaine of vs shall stronger be than one?
Looke when he is set, and then anone
Arise, as though thou wouldest with him play,
And I shall riuen him through the sides tway,
Whiles ỹ thou strugliest with him as in game:
And with thy dagger looke thou do the same,
And then shall all the good departed be
My owne dere friend, betwixt thee and me:
Then may we both all our lusts fulfill,
And play at dice right at our owne will.
And thus accozded ben these shrewes tway,
To slea the third, as ye heard me say.
This yongest, which that went to ỹ toune,
Full often in his hart rolled vp and doune
The beauty of these flozeins faire and bright:
O Lozd (qd. he) if so were that I might
Haue all this treasure to my selfe alone,
There nis no man that liueth vnder trone
Of God, that should liue so merry as I:
And at the last the fiend our enemy
Put in his thought that he shuld poison bey,
With which he might slaen his felows twey.
For why, the fiend fond him in such liuing,
That he had leue to sozrow him to bring.
For this was vtterly his entent,
To slaen hem both, and neuer to repent.
And forth he goth, no lenger would he tary,
Into the toune vnto a Potecary,
And praied him that he would him sell
Some poyson, that he might his rats quell.
And eke there was a Polkat in his hawe,
That as he saied, his Capons had ỹslaw:
And said, he would wreken him if ỹ he might
Of vermine, that destroied hem by night.
The Potecarie answerd, thou shalt haue
A thing, as wisly God my soule saue,
In all this wozld there nis no creature
That eateth oz drinketh of this confecture,
Not but ỹ mountenaunce of a corne of whete,
That he ne shall his life anone forlete,
Ye sterue he shall, and that in lesse while,
Thā thou woldest gone apace, not but a mile:
This poison is so hard and so violent.
This cursed man hath in his hond hent
This poison in a boxe, and swithe he ran
Into the next street vnto a man,
And bozrowed of him large bottles three,
And in the two the poison poured hee:

The third he kept cleane for his owne drinke,
For all the night he shope him for to swinke
In caryng of the gold out of that place.
And when this riotour with sory grace
Hath fild with him his great bottles three,
To his fellowes ayen repaired hee.

What needeth it thereof to sermon more?
For right as they had cast his death before,
Right so they han him slain,and that anone.
And whē this was doen,then spake that one,
Now let vs sit and drinke,and make vs merry,
And afterward they woine his body bury:
And after that it happed hem par caas,

The one took the bottle,there ỹ poison was,
And dronke,and yaue his fellow drinke also,
Through which anon they steruen both two.

But certes I suppose that Auicenne
Wrote neuer in no canon,ne in no fenne
More wonder sorrows of empoysoning,
Than had these wretches two in her ending.
Thus ended been these homicides two,
And eke the false empoysoner also.

O cursed sinne,full of all cursednesse,
O traitour homicide,O wickednesse,
O glotonie,luxure,and hasardie,
Thou blasphemour of Christ with villanie,
And othes great,of vsage and of pride:
Alas mankind,how may it betide,
That to thy creatour,which ỹ thee wrought,
And with his precious blood thee bought,
Thou art so false and so vnkind,alas.

Now good mē,God forgeue you your tres=
And ware you fro the sinne of auarice, (pas:
Mine holy pardon may you all warish,
So that ye offer nobles or starlings,
Other els siluer spoones,brooches,or rings.
Bowith your head vnder this holy Bull.
Cōmeth vp ye wiues,and offreth of your wol,
Your names here I enter in my roll anone,
Into the blisse of heauen shull ye all gone:
I you assoile by mine high powere
Ye that offren,to been as cleane and clere
As ye were borne. Lo sirs,thus I preach:
And Iesu Christ,that is our soules leach,
So graunt you his pardon to receiue,
For that is best,I woll you not deceiue.
But sirs one word forgate I in my tale,
I haue relikes and pardons in my male,
As faire as any man in England,
Which were yeuen me by the Popes hond,
If any of you woll of deuotion
Offren,and haue mine absolution,
Commeth forth anon,and kneeleth her adoun
That ye may haue part of my Pardoun,
Or els taketh pardon as ye wend,
All new and fresh at euery tounes end,
So that ye offren alway new and new
Nobles or pens,which been good and trew.
It is great honour to euerich that is here,
That ye may haue a sufficient pardoner
To assoile you in countrey there ye ride,
For aventures,which that may betide.
For peraventure there may fall one or two
Doune off her hors,and breke her neck atwo.
Looke which seurtie it is to you all,
That I am in your fellowship yfall,
That may assoile you both more and lasse,
When that the soule shall fro thy body passe.
I rede that our host shall first beginne,
For he is most enuelopt of sinne.
Commeth forth sir host,and offer first anone,
And thou shalt kisse the relikes euerichone
Ye for a grote,vnbokell anon thy purse.

Nay nay(qd.he)then haue I Christs curse:
Let be(qd.he)it shall not be so theiche,
Thou wouldest make me kisse thine old breech,
And swearе it were a relike of a saint,
Though it were with thy foundement depaint.
But by the croffe which saint Helain fond,
I would I had thine coilons in mine hond
Instead of relikes,or of sanctuarie:
Let cut hem of,I woll help thee hem to carie,
They shull be shrined in an hogs turd.

This Pardoner answered not a word,
So wroth he was,he would no word say.

Now(qd.our host)I woll no lenger play
With thee,ne with none other angrie man.

But right anon the worthy knight began,
When that he saw that all the people lough:
No more of this,for it is right ynough,
Sir Pardoner,be merry and glad of chere,
And ye sir host,that been to me so dere:
I pray you that ye kisse the Pardonere,
And Pardoner,I pray thee draw thee nere,
And as we did,let vs lough and play:
Anon they kissed,and ride forth her way.

¶ The Shipmans Prologue.

Now friendes said our host so dere,
How liketh you by Iohn the Pardonere?
Hee hath vnbokeled well the male,
He hath vs told right a thriftie tale
As touching of mens misgouernaunce:
I pray to God yeue him full good chaunce,
As ye han heard of these riotours three.
Now gentle Mariner,I heartely pray thee,
Tell vs a good tale,and that right anon:

It shall be doen,by God and by saint Iohn
Saied this Mariner,as well as euer I can:
And right anon his tale he thus began.

¶ The Shipmans Tale.

A Marchant of S. Denise is cousined by his owne wife, and by a Monke called Dan Iohn. This argument is taken out of Bochas in his Nouels.

A Marchant whilom dwelled at saint Denise,
That rich was, for which men held him wise:
A wife he had of excellent beaute,
And compinable, and reuelous was she,
Which is a thing that causeth more dispence,
Than worth is all the chere and reuerence,
That men hem doen at feasts and at daunces:
Such salutations and countenaunces
Passeth, as doeth the shaddow on a wall:
But wo is him that pay mote for all,
The sely husbond algate he mote pay,
He mote vs both clothe and eke array
All for his owne worship, richely:
In which array we daunce iolily.
And if that he may not perauenture,
Or els lust not no such spence endure,
But thinketh that it is wast and ploft,
Then mote another pay for our cost,
And lend vs gold, and that is perillous.

This noble Marchant held a noble hous,
For which he had all day great repaire
For his largesse, and for his wife was faire,
That wonder is: but herkeneth to my tale.
Among all his guests both great and smale
There was a Monke, a faire man and a bold,
I trow thirtie Winter he was old,
That euer in one was drawing to that place:
This yong Monke, that so faire was of face,
Acquainted was so well with this good man,
Sithens that he first knowledge began,
That in his house as familier was he,
As it is possible any fremd to be.
And for as much as this good man
And eke this Monke, of which I began,
Were both two yborne in one village,
The Monke him claimed, as for cousinage,
And he again saied him not once nay,
But was as glad therof, as foule of day:
For to his heart it was a great pleasaunce.
Thus ben they knit with eterne alliaunce,
And eke of hem gan other for to ensure
Of brotherhed, whiles her life may dure.

Free was Dan Iohn, & namely of dispence
As in that hous, and full of diligence
To doe pleasaunce, and eke great costage:
He forgate not to yeue the least page
In all that house, but after her degree:
He yaue the lord, and sithen his meince,
When that he came, some maner honest thing,
For which they were as glad of his comming
As foule is faine, when the sunne vp riseth:
No more hereof as now, for it suffiseth.

But so befell, this Marchaunt on a day
Shope him to make ready his array
Toward the toune of Bruges for to fare,
To buy there a portion of ware:
For which he hath sent to Paris anon
A messenger, and praied hath Dan Iohn
That he should come to S. Denis to plain
With him, and with his wife, a day or twain,
Or he to Bruges went, in all wise.

This noble Monke, of which I you deuise,
Hath of his Abbot, as him list, licence,
(Because he was a man of high prudence
And eke an officer) out for to ride
To seene her graunges, and her bernes wide,
And vnto saint Denis he commeth anon:
Who was so welcome as my lord Dan Iohn,
Our dere cousin full of courtesie?
With him he brought a iubbe of Malueisie,
And eke another full of fine vernage,
And volatily, as was aye his vsage:
And thus I let hem both eat, drinke, and play,
This marchant & this monke a day or tway.

The third day this Marchaunt vp riseth,
And on his need sadly him aduiseth:
And vp into his counting house goth he
To reckon with himselfe, as well may be
Of thilke yere, how it with him stood,
And how he dispended had his good,
And if that he encreased were or none.
His bookes and his bagges many one
He laieth afore him on his counter boord:
Full rich was his treasure and his hord.
For which full fast his counter doore he shet,
And eke he nolde no man should him let
Of his accounts, for the meane time:
And thus he sate till it was passed prime.

Dan Iohn was risen in the morow also,
And in the garden walked to and fro,
And hath his things saied full courtesly:
This good wife come walking prively
Into the garden, there he walked soft,
And him salueth, as she hath doen full oft:
A maiden child came in her compaine,
Which as her list she may gouerne and gie,
For yet vnder the yerd was the maid.

O dere cousin mine Dan Iohn, she said,
What aileth you so rathe to arise?

Nece (quod he) it ought ynough suffise
Fiue houres for to sleepen on a night:
But it were for an old palled wight,
As been these old wedded men, that lie & dare,
As in a forme sitteth a weary Hare
Al forstraught with hounds great and smale.

But derre nece, why looke ye so pale?
I trowen certes, that our good man
Hath you laboured, sith this night began,
That you were need to resten hastely:
And with that word he lough full merely,
And with his owne thought he wox all red.
Then this faire wife gan to shake her hed,
And saied thus, ye God wote all (qd. she)
Nay cosin mine, it stonds not so with me:
For by that God, that yaue me soule and life,
In all the realme of Fraunce is there no wife,
That lesse lust hath to that foly play;
For I may singen alas and welaway
That I was borne, but to no wight (qd. she)
Dare I not tell how it stont with me.
Wherfore I thinke out of this world to wend,
Or els of my selfe soone to make an end,
So full I am of drede and eke of care.

This Monk began vpon this wife to stare,
And saied alas, nay nece God forbede,
That ye for any sorrow, or for any drede
Fordoe your selfe: but telleth me your greefe,
Peraventure I may in your mischeefe
Counsaile or helpe: and therefore telleth me
All your anoy, for it shall secre be:
For on my Portehose I make an oth,
That neuer in my life, for lefe ne loth
Ne shall I not of no counsaile you bewray.

The same ayen to you (qd. she) I say:
By God and by this Portehose I you sweare,
Though men would me all in peeces teare,
Ne shall I neuer, for to goe to hell,
Bewray o word of thing that ye me tell,
Nor for no coulenage, ne for alliaunce,
But verely for loue and affiaunce.
Thus been they swore, and herevpon kist,
And like of hem told other what hem list.

Cousin (qd. she) if I had a space,
As I haue none, and namely in this place,
Then would I tell a legend of my life,
That I suffred haue sith I was a wife
With mine husbond, though he be your cosin:
Nay (qd. this Monke) by God and S. Martin
He nis no more cousin vnto mee,
Than is this leafe that hongeth on the tree:
I clepe him so by saint Denis of Fraunce
To haue the more cause of acquaintaunce
Of you, whom I haue loued specially
Abouen all other women sikerly,
This sweare I you on my profession:
Telleth your greefe, least he come adoun,
And hasteth you, and goth your way anon.

My dere loue (qd. she) O my Dan Iohn,
Full lefe me were this counsaile to hide,
But out it mote, it may no lenger abide.
My husbond is to me the worst man,
That euer was sith the world began:
But sithen I am a wife, it sit not to me
To tellen no wight of our priuite
Neither in bed, ne in none other place,
God shilde I should tell it for his grace:
A wife ne should not say of her husbond
But all honour, as I can vnderstond,
Saue vnto you thus much tell I shall:
As helpe me God, he is nought worth at all
In no degree, the value of a flie.
But yet me greeueth most his nigardie:
And well ye wot, that women naturally
Desiren thinges sixe, as well as I.
They wolden that her husbonds should bee
Hardy, and wise, rich, and thereto free,
And buxome to his wife, and fresh a bed.
But by that ilke lord that for vs bled,
For his honour my selfe to array
A sunday next comming, I mote needs pay
An hundred frankes, or els am I lorne:
Yet were me leuer that I were vnborne,
Than me were done a slaunder or a villanie.
And if mine husbond eke might it espie,
I nere but lost, and therefore I you prey
Lene me this summe, or els mote I dey:
Dan Iohn I say, lene me this hundred frankes,
Parde I will not faile you my thankes,
If that ye list to doe that I you pray.
For of a certaine day I will you pay,
And to don you what pleasaunce and seruice
That I may done, right as ye list deuise:
And but I do, God take on me vengeaunce,
As foule as euer had Genilon of Fraunce.

This gentle monk answerd in this manere,
Now truly mine owne lady dere
I haue (qd. he) on you so great routh,
That I you sweare, and plight you my trouth,
That when your husbond is to Flanders fare,
I will deliuer you of all this care,
For I will bring you an hundred frankes.
And with that he caught her by the flankes,
And her embraced hard, and kissed her oft.
Goth now your way (qd. he) all still and soft,
And let vs dine as soone as euer ye may,
For by my kalender it is prime of the day:
Goth now, and beth as true as I shall be.

Now sir (God forbid good sir said she:
And forth she goth, as iolly as a pie,
And bad the cookes that they should hem hie
So that men might dine, and that anone:
Vp to her husbond is this wife gone,
And knocked at his counter doze boldely,
Qui est la (qd. he) Peter it am I,
Why what (qd. he) how long will ye fast?
How long time will ye recken and cast
Your summes, your bookes and your things?
The diuell haue part of all such reckonings.
Ye haue ynough (qd. she) of Gods sond,
Come doun to day, and let your bags stond.
Ne be ye not ashamed, that Dan Iohn

Shall fasting all this long day gon?
What let vs go heare masse and go dine.
Wife (qd. this man) little canst thou diuine
The curious busines that we haue:
For of vs chapmen so God me saue,
And by that lord that called is saint Iue,
Scarsly among twenty, twelue shall thriue
Continually, lasting vnto their age.
We may well make chere and good visage,
And driue forth the world as it may be,
And keepe our state in priuite
Till we be dead, or els that we play
A pilgrimage, or gone out of the way:
And therefore haue I great necessite
Upon this queinte world to aduise me.
For euermore we mote stand in drede
Of hap and fortune, in our chapmanhede.
To Flanders will I gone to morrow day,
And come ayene as lone as euer I may:
For which my dere wife I thee beseke
As be to euery wight buxom and meke,
And for to keepe our good be curious,
And honestly gouerne well our house.
Thou hast ynough, in euery maner wise,
That to a thrifty huswife may suffice:
Thee lacketh none array, ne no vitaile,
Of siluer in thy purse thou maiest not faile.
And with ỹ word his counter dore he shette,
And down he goth, no lenger would he lette,
And hastily a masse was there saide,
And spedily the tables were vnlaide,
And to dinner fast they hem spedde,
And richly the chapman this monke fedde.
And after dinner Dan John soberly
This chapman tooke apart all priuily,
And said him thus, cousin it stondeth so,
That well I see, to Bruges ye will go,
God and saint Austen spede you and gide:
I pray you cousin wisely that you ride,
Gouerne you well also of your diete
Attemperatly, and namely in this hete:
Betwixt vs two needeth no straunge fare.
Farewell cousin, God shilde you fro care.
If any thing there be by day or night,
And it lie in my power or in my might,
That ye me will command in any wise,
It shall be done, right as ye will deuise.
O thing or ye go, if that it may be,
I wold faine pray you for to lene me
An hundred frankes for a weke or twey,
For certaine beasts that I mote needs bey,
To store therewith a place that is ours:
God helpe me so, I would it were yours.
I shall not faile surely at my day
Not for a thousand frankes, a mile way.
But let this thing be secret, I you pray:
For yet this night these beasts mote I bey.
And fare now wele, mine owne cousin dere,
Grant mercie of your cost and your chere
This noble marchant, gentilly anon
Answerd and said, O cousin Dan Iohn,
Now sikerly, this is a small request:
My gold is yours when that you lest,
And not onely my gold, but my chaffare:
That what you list, God shild that ye spare.
But one thing is, ye know it well inough
Of chapmen, that her money is her plough.
We may haue creaunce while we haue a name,
But goodlesse for to be it is a shame.
Pay it ayen, when it lieth at your ese,
After my might faine would I you plese.
The hundreth frankes fet he forth anon,
And priuily tooke hem to Dan John:
No wight of this world, wist of this lone,
Sauing this marchant, & Dan John alone.
They drinke, speak, and rome a while & play,
Till that Dan John rideth to his abbey.
The morow came, & forth rid this marchãt
To Flanders ward, his prentes brought him
Til he came to Bruges, wel & merely. (auant.
Now goth this marchant well and besily
About his nedes, and buieth, and creaunceth,
He neither playeth at dice, ne daunceth:
But as a marchant shortly to tell,
He led his life, and there I let him dwell.
The sonday next ỹ this marchãt was gon,
To saint Denis is comen Dan John
With croune and berde all fresh & new ishaue:
In all this house there nas so litle a knaue,
Ne no wight els, but he was full faine,
For ỹ my lord Dan John was comen againe.
And shortly to the point for to gon,
This faire wife accordeth with Dan John,
That for these C. frankes he should all night
Haue her in his armes bolt vpright:
And this accord parformed was in dede.
In mirth all night a bese like they lede
Til it was day, that Dan John yede his way,
And bad the meinie farewell & haue good day.
For none of hem, ne no wight in the toun
Had of Dan John any suspection,
And forth he rideth, home to his abbey,
Or where him liste, no more of him I sey.
This marchant, when ended was ỹ faire,
To saint Denis he gan for to repaire,
And with his wife he maketh feest and chere,
And telleth her that chaffare is so dere,
That needs must he make a chenesaunce.
For he was bonden in a recognisaunce.
To pay twentie thousand shildes anon:
For which this marchant is to Paris gon
To borrow of certaine friends that he had
A certaine frankes, and some with him he lad:
And when he was comen in to the toun,
For cherite and great affection
Unto Dan John he first goth him to play,

Nought for to borrow of him no money,
But for to wete and see of his welfare,
And for to tellen him of his chaffare
As frends don, when they been mette in fere.
Dan John him maketh feast & merry chere,
And he him tolde ayen full specially,
How he had bought, full well and graciously,
Thonked be God, all hole his Marchandise:
Saue that he must in all maner wise
Maken a cheuesaunce, as for his best:
And then should he be in ioy and rest.
Dan John answerd, certes I am right faine,
That ye in heale be commen home againe:
And if I were rich, as haue I blisse,
Of twēty thousand shildes shuld ye not misse.
For ye so kindly this other day
Lent me gold, and as I can and may
I thonke you, by God and by saint Jame.
But natheles, I took it vnto our Dame,
Your wife at home, the same gold againe
Upon your bench, she wote it wel certaine,
By certaine tokens that I can here tell:
Now by your leaue, I may no lenger dwell:
Our abbot woll out of this toun anon,
And in his company I mote gon.
Grete well our dame, mine own neece swete
And farewell deare cousin, till we mete.
This marchant that was full ware & wise,
Creaunced hath, and eke paide in Paris
To certaine lombardes redy in her hondes
This sum of gold, & gate of hem the bondes,
And home he goth, as mery as a popingay.
For well he knew he stood in such aray,
That needs must he win by that viage
A thousand frankes, aboue all his costage.
His wife full ready mete him at the yate,
As she was wont of old vsage algate:
And all that night in mirth they be sette,
For he was rich, and clerely out of dette.
Whē it was day, this marchant gan embrace
His wife all new, and kissed her in her face,
And vp he goeth, and made it wonder tough:
No more (qd. she) by God ye haue ynough:
And wantonly ayen with him she plaide,
Tell at the last this marchant thus said.
By God (qd. he) I am a little wrothe
With you my wife, although it be me lothe:
And wote ye why? by God as I gesse
For ye haue make a maner of strangenesse
Betwixt me and my cousin Dan John:
Ye should haue warned me, or I had gon,
That he had you an hundred frankes paide
By redy token: and held him euill apaide,
For that I to him spake of cheuesaunce:
Me seemed so as by his countenaunce.
But natheles by God our heauenly king,
I thought not to aske of him nothing.
I pray thee wife ne do no more so,
Tell me alway er that I fro thee go,
If any dettour hath in mine absence
Apaide thee, lest through thy negligence,
I might him aske a thing that he hath paide.
This wife was not aferde ne affraide,
But boldly she said, and that anon,
Mary I defie that false monke Dan John,
I keepe not of his tokens neuer a dele:
He tooke me certaine gold, I wote it wele.
What euill the dome on his monkes snoute:
For God it wote, I wend without doute,
That he had yeue it me, because of you,
To doen therwith mine honor and my prow
For coūnage, and eke for belle chere,
That he hath had full often times here.
But sith I see it stonte in such disioynte,
I woll answere you shortly to the pointe.
Ye haue no slacke dettours than am I:
For I woll pay you well and redely
Fro day to day, and if so be I faile,
I am your wife, score it on my taile.
I shall pay it as soone as euer I may.
For by my truth, I haue on mine aray,
And not in waste, bestowed it euery dele:
And for I haue bestowed it so wele
To your honour, for Gods sake I say,
As be not wrothe but let vs laugh and play:
Ye shall my ioly bodie haue to wedde,
By God I nill not pay you but a bedde:
Forgeue it me now, mine owne spouse dere,
Turneth hitherward and make better chere.
This marchant saw ther was no remedy:
And for to chide, it was but a foly,
Sith that the thing may not amended be.
Now wife he said, and I forgeue it thee:
But in thy life be no more so large,
Keep bet my good, this yeue I thee in charge.
Thus endeth now my tale, and God vs send
Taling inough, vnto our liues ende.

¶ Here folowēth the wordes of our Hoste.

WEll said by corpus Domini (qd. our Hoste)
Now long mote thou saile all by the coste
Thou gentle Maister, gentle Marinere:
God giue ỹ monke a thousand last quad yere. ¶
A ha fellowes, beware of such a pape,
The monke put in the marchāts hode an ape, ¶
And in his wiues eke, by saint Austin:
Draweth no monkes more into your inne.
But now passe ouer, & let vs seeke aboute,
Who shall tell now first of all this route,
Another tale: and with that word he said
As curteously as it had been a maid,

My

My lady Prioresse, by your leaue,
So that I wist that I shuld you not greue,
I wolden deme, that ye tellen shold
A tale next, if so be that ye wold:
Now wol ye vouchsafe, my lady dere?
(Gladly qd. she) and said in this manere.

¶ The Prioresses Prologue.

Domine dominus noster: quam admirabile est nomen tuum in vniuersa terra.

O Lord our lord, thy name how mer-
ueilous
Is in this wide world ispradd (qd. she)
For not only thy laud precious
Parformed is by men of dignite,
But by the mouth of childzen thy bounte
Parfourmed is, for on the breest sucking
Sometime shewen they thine heriyng.

Wherefore in laude, as I can best and may,
Of thee and of the white lilly floure,
Which that thee bare, and is a maide alway,
To tell a storie I wol do my labour:
Nought that I may encrese her honour,
For she her selfe is honour and rote
Of bountie, next her sonne, and soules bote.

O mother maiden, O maiden & mother free,
O bushe vnbrent, brennand in Moyses sight,
That rauishedest downe fro the deite
Throgh thin humblenes, ỹ gost ỹ in the alight:
Of whose vertue, when he in thin hert pight,
Conceiued was the fathers sapience:
Helpe me to tell it in thy reuerence.

Lady, thy bountie, and thy magnificence
Thy vertue and thy great humilitie
There may no tongue expresse in no science:
For sometime lady, er men pray to thee
Thou goest before, of thy benignite,
And gettest vs the light through thy prayere,
To giden vs vnto thy sonne so dere.

My conning is to weake, O blisfull queen,
For to declare thy high worthinesse:
That I ne may not the weight sustene,
But as a childe of twelue moneth old & lesse,
That can vnnethes any word expresse,
Right so fare I, and therfore I you pray,
Gideth my song, that I shall of you say.

¶ The Prioresses tale.

A miracle of a Christians child, murthered by the Iewes.

There was in Asie, in a great Citie
Amonges christen folke a certaine iewrie
Sustened by a lorde of that Countrie,
For foule vsury, and lucre of villany,
Hatefull to Christ, and to his company:
And throgh the strete mē might ride & wende
For it was free, and open at euery ende.

A little schole of Christen folke there stood
Down at the farther end, in which ther were
Childzen an hepe comen of Christen blood,
That learned in that schole yere by yere,
Such manere doctrine as men vsen here:
This is to say, to singen and to rede
As smale childzen done in her childhede.

Amonges these childzē was a widowes son
A litle clergion, of vii. yeres of age,
That day by day to schole was his won,
And eke also where he sey the image
Of Christes mother, had he in vsage
As him was taught, to knele adown & say,
An Aue maria, as he goth by the way.

Thus hath this widow, her litle child itauzt
Our blessed Lady Christes mother dere
To worshipe aye, and he forgate it naught:
For thelely childe would all day sone lere.
But aye, when I remember on this matere,
Saint Nicholas stōdeth euer in my presence:
For he so yong to Christ did reuerence.

This litle childe his litle booke lerning,
As he sate in the schole at his primere,
He (Alma redemptoris mater) herd sing,
As childzen lered her antiphoncre:
And as he durst, he drewe aye nere and nere
And harkened to the wordes and the note,
Til he the first verse couth al by rote.

Nouzt wist he what this latin was to say:
For he so yong and tender was of age,
But on a day his felow han he pray
To expound him the song, in his language,
Or tellen him why this song was in vsage:
This praid he him to construe and declare,
Full often time vpon his knees bare.

His felow, which that elder was than he
Answerd him thus, this song I haue herd say,
Was made of our blessed Lady fre,
Her to salewe, and eke her for to pray
To been our help, and succour when we dey.
I can no more expoune in this mater:
I lerne song, I can but small grammer.

And

And is this song made in reuerence
Of Christes mother, said this innocent?
Now certes I will done my diligence
To conne it all er Christenmesse be went
Though that I for my primer shall be shent,
And shoulde be beten thrise in an houre,
I will it conne, our Ladie to honoure.

His felow taught him homeward priuely
Fro day to day, till he couth it by rote,
And than he sung it well and boldely
Fro word to word according to the note:
Twise a day it passed through his throte
To scholeward, & homeward when he went:
On Christes mother set was all his entent.

As I haue said, throughout the Jewrie
This little child as he came to and fro,
Ful merely than would he sing and crie,
O Alma redemptoris mater, euer mo:
The sweetnes hath his hert perced so
Of Christes mother, that to her to pray
He cannot stint of singing by the way.

Our first foe, the Serpent Sathanas,
That hath in Jewes hert his waspes nest,
Up swaie and said, O Ebrake people alas,
Is this a thing to you that is honest,
That such a boy shall walke as him lest
In your dispite, and sing of such sentence,
Which is against your lawes reuerence?

From thencefoorth the Jewes han conspired
This innocent out of this world to chase:
An homicide thereto han they hired,
That in an aley had a priuie place,
And as the child gan forby to pace,
This cursed Jew him hent, and held fast,
And cut his throte, and in a pit him cast.

I say that in a wardrope they him threw,
Where that the Jewes purged her intraile:
O cursed folke, of herodes all new,
What may your cuill entent you auaile?
Murder will out, certes it will not faile,
And namely ther the honor of God shall spred:
The blood out crieth on your cursed deed.

O martyr founded in virginitie,
Now maist thou sing folowing euer in on
The white lambe celestiall (quod she)
Of which the great Euangelist saint John
In Pathmos wrote, which saieth that they gon
Before this lambe, and sing a song all new
That neuer fleshly woman they ne knew.

This poore widow awaiteth al the night
After her little childe, and he came nought:
For which as soone as it was day light,
With face pale for dredde and busy thought,
She hath at schole, and elswhere him sought,
Till finally she gan so farre aspie,
That he last seene was in the Jewrie.

With mother pitie in her brest enclosed
She goth as she were halfe out of her minde
To euery place, where she hath supposed
By likelihood her child for to finde:
And euer on Christes mother good and kinde
She cried, and at last thus she wrought,
Among the cursed Jewes she him sought.

She freneth and she praieth pitously
To euery Jew that dwelleth in thilke place
To tellen her, if her child went there by:
They say nay, but Jesu of his grace
Yaue in her thought, within a little space,
That in that place after her sonne she crode.
There he was cast in a pit beside.

O great God, that performest thy laude
By mouth of innocents, loe here thy might:
This Gemme of chastitie, this Emeraude
And eke of martirdome the rubie bright,
There he with throte icorue lay vpright,
He (Alma redemptoris) gan to sing
So loude, that all the place gan to ring.

The Christen folk, that through the street went,
In comen, for to wonder on this thing:
And hastely they for the Prouost sent,
He came anon without tarying,
And herieth Christ that is of heauen king,
And eke his mother honour of mankind,
And after that, the Jewes let he binde.

This child with pitous lamentation
Was vp taken, singing his song alway:
And with honour and great procession,
They carien him to the next abbey,
His mother swouning by the bere lay,
Unneath might the people that were there
This new Rachell bringen fro his bere.

With turment, & with shamefull deth ilke one
This Prouost doth these Jewes for to sterue,
That of this murder wiste, and that anone,
He nolde no such cursednesse obserue:
Euill shall he haue, that euil wol deserue.
Therefore with wild horse he did hem draw,
And after hanged hem by the law.

Upon bere aye lieth this innocent
Before the chefaulter whiles the masse last:
And after that, the abbot with his couen
Hem spedde for to burie him als fast:

And

And when they holy water on him cast,
Yet spake ỹ child, whē spyint was holy water,
And sang, O alma redemptoris mater.

This abbot, which that was an holy man,
As monkes been, or els ought to be,
This yong childe to couer he began,
And said: O dere child I hailse thee
By vertue of the holy Trinitie,
Tell me what is thy cause for to sing,
Sithens thy throte is cut to my seeming.

Wy throte is cut vnto my necke bone
Said this child, and as by way of kind
I should haue deyd ye long time agone:
But Jesus Christ, as ye in bookes find,
Will that his glory last and be in minde,
And for the worshipe of his mother dere,
Yet may I sing (O alma) loude and clere.

This wel of mercie, Christs mother swete
I loued alway, as after my conning:
And when that I my life should forlete,
To me she came, and bad me for to sing
This antem verily in my dying
As ye han herde, and when that I had song,
Me thought she laid a graine vpon my tong.

Wherefore I sing, and sing mote certaine
In honour of the blisfull maiden free,
Till fro my tongue off taken is the graine,
And after that thus she said to me:
My little child now will I fetch thee,
When that the graine is fro thy tong itake:
Be not agaste, I will thee not forsake.

This holy monke, this abbot him mene I,
His tong out caught, and tok away the graine,
And he yaue vp the ghost full softly,
And when this abbot had this wonder seyne,
His salt teres trikled all down as reyne:
And grofle he fell all flat to the ground,
And still he lay, as he had been ibound.

The couent lay eke vpon the pauement
Weeping and herying Christes mother dere,
And after they risen, and forth ben went,
And tooke away this martir fro the bere,
And in a tombe of marble stones clere
Enclosen they his litle body swete:
There he is now, God leue vs for to mete.

O yong Hew of Lincolne slaine also
With cursed Iewes, as it is notable:
For it is but a litle while ago,
Pray for vs we sinfull folke vnstable,
That of his mercie God be merciable
On vs, his great mercy multiply
For the reuerence of his mother Mary.

¶ Here folowyth the wordes of the Hoste to Chaucer.

When said was this miracle, every man
As sober was, as wonder was to see,
Till that our hoste to japen began,
And then at erste he looked vpon me,
And said thus: what man art thou (qd. he)
Thou lookest, as thou wouldest finde an hare,
For euer vpon the ground I see the stare.

Approch neere, and looke vp merely:
Now ware you sirs, and let this mā haue place,
He in the waste is shapen as well as I:
This were a popet in armes to embrace
For any woman, small and faire of face.
He semeth elusch by his countenance,
For vnto no wight doth he dallance.

Say now sōwhat, sithēs other folke han said:
Tell vs a tale of mirth and that anon.
Hoste (qd. he) ne be not cuill apaide,
For other tale certes can I none,
But of a rime I lerned yore agone,
Ye that is good (qd. he) we shullen here
Some deinte thing, me thinketh by thy chere.

¶ Here followeth the rime of sir Thopas.

A Northren tale of an outlandish Knight purposely vttered by Chaucer, in a differing rime and stile from the other tales, as though he himselfe were not the Authour, but onely the reporter of the rest.

Listeneth lordinges in good entent,
And I will tell you verament
Of mirth and of solas,
All of a knight was faire and gent
In battaile and in turnament,
His name was sir Thopas.
I borne he was in ferre countre
In Flaunders, all beyonde the see
At Popering in the place,
His father was a man full free
And lord he was of that countre,
As it was Gods grace.
Sir Thopas was a doughty swaine
White was his face as paine maine
His lippes reed as rose,
His rudde is like scarlet in graine,

And

And I you tell in good certaine
He had a semely nose.
His haire, his berde, was like safroun
That to his girdle raught adowne
His shoone of cordewane,
Of Bruges were his hosen broun
His robe was of chekelatoun,
That cost many a iane,
He couth hunt at the wilde dere
And ride an haking for by the riuere
With grey Goshauke on honde,
Thereto he was a good archere,
Of wrastling was there none his pere
There any Ram should stonde,
Full many a maide bright in boure
They mourne for him their paramoure,
Whan hem were bet to sleepe,
But he was chaste and no lechoure,
And sweet as is the bramble floure,
That beareth the red hipe.
And so befell vpon a day
Forsoth, as I you tell may
Sir Thopas would out ride.
He wroth vpon his stede gray
And in his honde a launce gay
A long sword by his side.
He pricketh through a faire forest
Therein was many a wilde beest
Ye both Bucke and Hare,
And as he pricked North and East
I telien you him had almeste
Betide a sory care.
There springen herbes great and small
The Licorys and the Setual
And many a clowe Gelofer,
And Nutmiges to put in ale
Whether it be new or stale
Or for to lie in cofer.
The birds singen, it is no nay
The Sperhauke and the Popingaie
That ioy it were to here,
The throstell eke made his laie
The Wood doue vpon the spraie
She sung full loude and clere.
Sir Thopas fell in loue longing
And when he heard the Throstill sing
He pricketh as he were wood,
His faire stede in his pricking
So swette, that men might him wring
His sides were all blood.
Sir Thopas eke so wearie was
For pricking on the soft grass
To fiers was his corage,
That downe he laied him in that place
To maken his stede some solace
And gaue him good forage.
Oh, saint Mary, benedicite
What aileth this loue at me
To binde me so sore?
Me dreamed all this night parde
An elfe queene shall my lemman be
And sleep vnder my gore.
And Elfe Queene will I loue ywis
For in this world no woman is
To be my make in towne,
All other women I forsake
And to an Elfe Queene I me take
By dale and eke by doune.
Into his saddle he clomb anone
And pricked ouer stile and stone
An Elfe Queene to spie,
Till he so long had ridden and gone
That he found in a privie wone
The countrey of Fairie.
Wherein he sought North and South
And oft he spied with his mouth
In many a forest wilde,
And in that countre nas there none
As farre as he had rid and gone,
Neither wife ne childe.
Till him there came a great Giaunt
His name was called sir Oliphaunt
A perillous man of deede,
He swore, child, by Termagaunt
But if you pricke out of my haunt
Anon I slea thy steede.
Here is the Queene of Fairie,
With harpe, and pipe, and simphonie
Within this place and boure:
The childe saied, als so mote I thee
To morow will I meten thee,
Whan I haue mine armoure.
And yet I hope par ma foie
That thou shalt with this launce gaie
Abien it through thy mawe:
Thy Hawberke shall I perce, if I may,
Or it be fully prime of the day
For here thou shalt be slawe.
Sir Thopas droue abacke full fast,
This Gyaunt at him stones cast
Out of a fell staffe sling:
But faire escaped sir Thopace
And all was through Gods grace
And through his faire bearing.
Yet listneth lordings to my tale,
Merier then the Nightingale,
For now I will ye roune,
How sir Thopas with sides smale
Pricking ouer doune and dale
Is comen ayen to toune.
His merry men commanded he
To maken him both game and gle,
For needs must he fight
With a Giant with heads three,
For Paramours and iolite
Of one that shone full bright.

Doe come he saied my minstrales
And iestoys for to tellen vs tales
Anon in mine arming,
Of Romaunces that been royals
Of Popes and of Cardinals,
And eke of loue longing.
They set him first the swete wine
And Mede eke in a Mazeline
And royal spicerie,
Of Ginger bread that was full fine,
Of Licoris and eke Comine,
With Suger that is trie.
He did next his white lere
Of cloth of lake fine and clere
A breche and eke a shert,
And next his shert an haketon
And ouer that an habergion
For percing of his hert.
And ouer that a fine hauberke
Was all iwrought of Iewes werke
Full strong it was of plate,
And ouer that his cote armoure
As white as is the Lilie floure
In which he would debate.
His shield was all of gold so red
And therein was a Bores head
A carbocle by his side,
And there he swore on ale and bread
How that the Gyant should be dead
Betide what so betide.
His iambeux were of cure buly
His sword sheth of Iuorie,
His helmet of Laton bright,
His saddle was of rucl bone,
His bridle as the Sunne shone
Or as the Moone light.
His speare was of fine Cypres
That biddeth warre, and nothing peace,
The head full sharpe iground.
His steede was all dapple gray
Hee goth an aumble by the way
Full softly and round in londe.
Lo Lordes mine, here is a fit
If ye woll any more of it
To tellen it woll I fond.

NOw hold your mouth for charite
Both knight and also ladie fre
And herkeneth to my spell,
Of battaile and of chevalrie
And of ladies loue drerie
Anon I woll you tell.
Men speken of Romaunces of pris
Of Horne child, and of Ipotis,
Of Beuis, and of sir Gie,
Of sir Libeaux and Blandamoure
But sir Thopas, he beareth the floure
Of riall chevalrie.
His good steede he bestrode
And forth upon his way glode
As sparke out of the bronde,
Upon his crest he bare a tour
And therein sticked a Lilie flour
God shilde his cors fro shonde.
And for he was a knight auntrous,
He nolde slepen in none house
But liggen in his hood,
His bright helme was his wanger
And by him fed his destrer
Of herbes fine and good.
Himselfe dronke water of the well
As did the knight sir Perciuell
So worthy under wede,

¶ The words of our Hoste.

NO more of this for Gods dignite
(Qd. our Hoste) for thou makest me
So wearie of thy very lewednes,
That vnto willy God my soule blesse,
Mine eares aken of thy drastie speach:
Now such a rime the deuill I betcach,
This may wel be clepe rime Dogrel (qd. he:)
Why so (qd I) why wolt thou let me
More of my tale, than any other man,
Sins that it is the best rime I can?
By God (qd. he) plainly at o worde,
Thy drasty riming is not worth a torde:
Thou dost nought els but spendest time.
Sir at one word, thou shalt no lenger rime,
Let see whether thou canst tell ought in gest
Or tell in prose somewhat at the lest,
In which ther may be some mirth or doctrine.
Gladly (qd. I) by Gods swete pine
I woll you tell a litle thing in prose,
That ought like you, as I suppose,
Or els ye be certes too dangerous:
It is a morall tale vertuous,
All be it told sometime in sundry wise
Of sundry folke, as I shall you deuise.
As thus, ye wote that euery Euangelist,
That telleth vs the paine of Iesu Christ,
Ne saith not all thing that his fellow doth:
But natheles her sentence is all soth,
And all accordeth in her sentence,
All be there in her telling difference:
For some of hem saien more, and some lesse,
Whan they his pitous passion expresse:
I meane of Marke, Matthew, Luke, & Iohn,
But doubtlesse her sentence is all one.
Therefore lordings all, I you beseech,
If that you thinke I vary in my speech
As thus, although I tell somewhat more

Of Prouerbes, than ye han heard before
Comprehended in this little treatise here
To enforcen the effect of my matere,
And though I do not the same wordes say
As ye han heard, yet to all you I pray
Blameth me not: for in my sentence
Shull ye not finde mochell difference,
Fro the sentence of this treatile lite,
After the which this little tale I write.
And therefore herkeneth, what I shall say
And let me tell my tale I you pray.

¶ Chaucers tale of Melibeus.

Prudence the discreet wife of Melibeus perswadeth her husband to patience, and to receiue his enemies to mercie and grace. A tale full of Moralitie, wherein both high and low may learne to gouerne their affections.

A Long man called Melibeus, mighty and rich, begate vpon his wife that called was Prudence, a doughter which that called was Sophie.

Upon a day befell that he for his disport is went into the fields him to play: His wife and eke his doughter had he left within his house, of which the doores were fast ishet. Foure of his old foes han it aspied, and setten ladders to the walles of his house, and by the windowes beene entred, and bet his wife, and wounded his doughter with fiue mortall woundes, in fiue sundry places: That is to say, In her feet, in her hondes, in her eares, in her nose, and in her mouth, and lefte her for dede, and went-en her way.

When Melibeus returned was into his house, and see all this mischiefe, hee like a mad man renting his clothes, gan to weepe and crie.

Prudence his wife, as farre forth as shee durst, besought him of his weping for to stint: But not for thy, he gan to weep and cry euer lenger the more.

This noble wife Prudence, remembred her vpon the sentence of Ouid, in his booke that cleped is the remedie of loue, whereas he saith, Hee is a foole that disbourbeth the mother to weepe, in the death of her childe, till she haue wept her fill, as for a certaine time: and then shall a man doen his diligence with amiable wordes, to recomfort and pray her of her weeping for to stint. For which reason this noble wife Prudence, suffered her husbond to weepe and cry, as for a certaine space: and when she saw her time, shee sayed him in this wise. Alas my Lord (qd. shee) why make yee your selfe for to be like a foole? For-sooth it appertineth not vnto a wise man to maken such a sorowe. Your doughter with the grace of God, shall warish and escape. And all were it so that she right now were dead, yee ne ought not as for her death your selfe destroy. Seneck saith, The wise man shall not take to great discomfort for the death of his children, but certes he should suffer it in patience, as wel as he abideth ỹ death of his own proper person.

This Melibeus answered anon and said: What man (qd. he) should of his weping stint, that hath so great a cause for to weepe: Jesus himselfe our Lorde, wept for the death of Lazarus his friend. Prudence answered, certes well I wote, A temperat weeping is nothing defended, to him that sorowfull is, among folke in sorow, but it is rather graunted him to weepe. The Apostle Paule vnto the Romanes writteth, Men should reioyce with him that maketh ioye, and weepe with such folke as weepen. But though a temperate weeping be granted, certes outragious weeping is defended. Measure of weeping should be considered, after the lore that teacheth vs Seneck. When that thy friend is dead (qd. he) let not thine eyen to moist been of teeres, ne to much drie: although teeres comen to thine eyen, let hem not fall. And when thou hast forgon thy friend, doe diligence to get another friend: and this is more wisedom than for to weepe for thy friend, which thou hast lorne, for therein is no bote. And therfore if yee gouerne you by sapience, put away sorrow out of your heart. Remembreth you that Jesus Sirake saieth, A man that is ioyous and glad in hart, it him conserueth flouring in his age: But sothly a sorowfull heart maketh his bones drie. Hee saith eke thus, That sorow in heart slayeth full many a man. Salomon sayeth, That right as mouths in the sheepes fleise annoieth the clothes, and the small wormes the tree, right so anoieth sorow the heart of man, wherfore vs ought as well in the death of our children, as in the losse of our temporall goods, haue patience.

Remember you vpon patient Job, when hee had lost his children and his temporall substaunce, and in his bodie endured and receiued full many a grieuous tribulation, yet saied hee thus: Our Lord it sent to me, our Lord hath bereft it mee, right so as our Lorde would, right so it be done, iblessed be the name of our Lord. To these forsaid things Melibeus vnto his wife Prudence answerd: All thy wordes (qd. he) ben true, and thereto profi-

table,

table, but truely mine heart is troubled with this sorrow so greeuously, that I not what to do. Let call (qd. Prudence) your true friends al and thy linage, which that been wise, and telleth to hem your case, and heartheneth what they say in counsailing, and gouerne you after her sentence. Salomon saith, Werke all thy things by counsaile, and thou shalt neuer rue. Then by counsaile of his wife Prudence, this Melibeus let cause a great congregation of people, as Surgiens, Phisitions, old folke and yong, and some of his old enemies reconciled (as by her semblante) to his loue and to his grace: and therwithal there came some of his neighbours, that did him reuerence more for dread than for loue, as it happe ofte. There comen also ful many subtill flatterers, and wise Aduocates learned in the lawe. And when these folkes togeders assembled were, this Melibeus in sorrowfull wise shewed hem his case, and by the manner of his speech, it seemed that in heart, he bare a cruell ire, ready to doen vengeaunce vpon his foes, and suddainly he desired that warre should begin, but natheles yet asked he counsaile vpon this matter. A Surgien by licence and assent of such as were wise vp rose, and vnto Melibeus saied, as ye shall heare.

Sir (qd. he) as to vs Surgiens appertaineth, that we doe to euery wight the best that we can, where as we beene withholden, and to our patient that wee dooen no damage: wherfore it happeth many time and ofte, that when two men haue euerich wounded other, one Surgien healeth hem both, wherfore vnto our arte it is not pertinent to norish warre, ne parties to support. But certes, as to the warishing of your doughter, all bee it so that perilously she be wounded, we shall doe so tentife businesse fro day to night, that with the grace of God, she shall been whole and sound, as soone as is possible. Almost right in the same wise the Phisitions answered, saue that they saiden a few words more: That right as maladies beene by her contraries cured, right so shall a man warishe warre by peace. His neighbours full of enuie, his fained friends that seemed reconciled, and his flatterers, maden semblaunce of weeping, and empaired and agrutched much of this matter, in praysing greatly Melibe, of might, of power, of riches, and of friendes, dispising the power of his aduersaries: and said vtterly, that hee anon should wreken him on his foes, and begin warre.

Up rose then an Aduocate that was wise, by leaue and by counsaile of other that were wise, and saied: The neede for the which wee beene assembled in this place, is a full heauie thing, & a great matter, because of the wrong and of the wickednesse that hath bee doen, and eke by reason of great damages, that in time comming been possible to fallen for the same, and eke by reason of the great riches & power of the parties both, for the which reasons, it were a full great peril to erren in this matter. Wherefore, Melibeus this is our sentence, we counsaile you aboven all thing, that right anon thou doe thy diligence in keeping of thy proper person, in such a wise that thou ne want non espie ne watch, thy body for to saue: And after that, wee counsaile that in thine house thou set sufficient garrison, so as they may as well thy body as thy house defend: But certes to moven warre, or to doen suddainly vengeaunce, we may not deeme in so little time, that it were profitable, wherefore we alke leiser and space to haue deliberation in this cause to deeme, for the common prouerbe saith thus: He that sone deemeth, sone shall repent. And eke men sain, Thilke Judge is wise that sone vnderstondeth a matter, and iudgeth by leiser. For all be it tarrying be noifull, algate it is not to be reproued in yeuing of iudgement, ne in vengeance taking, when it is sufficient and reasonable. And that shewed our lord Jesu Christ by ensample, for when the woman was taken in auoutrie, and was brought in his presens to knowen what should be doen of her person, all be it that he wist wel himself what he would answere, yet ne would he not answere suddainly, but he would haue deliberation, & in the ground he wrote twise, and by this cause we aske deliberation: and we shall then by the grace of God counsaile you that thing that shall be profitable.

Up stert then the yong folke at ones, and the most part of that companie haue scorned this old wise man, and begun to make noise and said. Right so as whiles that iron is hot men should smite, right so men should wreken her wrongs while that they been fresh and new, and with loude voyce they cryed warre, warre. Up rose the one of the old wise, and with his hand made countenaunce that they should holden hem still, and yeuen him audience. Lordings (qd. he) There is full many a man that crieth warre, warre, that wote full lite what warre amounteth. Warre at his beginning hath so great an entring and so large, that euery wight may enter when him liketh & lightly find warre: but certes what end therof shall fall, it is not lightly to know. When that warre is once begun, there is ful many a child vnborne of his mother, that shall sterue yong, because of thilke warre, other els

liue in sorrow, or dien in wretchednesse: And therefore or that any warre bee begon, men must haue great counsaile and good deliberacion. And whan this olde man wende to enforcen his tale by reason, wel nie al at ones begen for to rise, for to breaken his tale, and bidden him full oft his wordes to abredge: For certes hee that preacheth to hem that list not heare his wordes, his sermon hem annoieth. For Jesus Sirake saieth, the weeping in musicke is a noious thing. This is as much to say, as much auaileth it to speake before folke to which his speach anoieth, as it is for to singen before hem that weepe. And when this wise man, saw that him wanted audience, all shamefast hee set him adowne ayen. For Salomon saith: There as thou maiest not haue audience, enforce thee not to speake. I see well (qd. this wiseman) that the common Prouerbe is such, That good counsaile wanteth, when it is most neede.

Yet had this Melibeus in his counsaile many folke, that priuily in his eare counsailed him certaine things, and counsailed him the contrary in generall audience. When Melibeus had heard that the greatest part of his counsaile, were accorded that he should make warre, anon hee consented to her counsailing, and fully affermed her sentence. Then Dame Prudence, when that shee saw her husbonde shope him for to awreke him on his enemies, and to begin warre: shee in full humble wise, when shee saw her time, sayed to him these wordes: My lorde (qd. shee) I you beseech as heartily as I dare or can, ne haste you not too fast and for all guerdons yeue mee audience. For Peter Alphons saieth, Who so doeth to thee good or harme, haste thee not to quite it, for in this wise thy friend woll abide, & thine enemie shall the lenger liue in dread. The prouerbe saieth, He hasteth well that wisely can abide: And in wicked hast is no profite.

This Melibe answered to his wife Prudence: I purpose not (qd. he) to werke by thy counsaile, for many causes and reasons: for certes euery wight would hold mee then a foole. This is to say, if I for thy counsailing would change things that been ordeined and affirmed by so many wise. Secondly, I say, that all women beene wicked, and none good of hem all. For of a thousand men saith Salomon, I found one good man: But certes of al women found I neuer none. And also certes, if I gouerned mee by thy counsaile, it should seeme that I had yeue thee ouer mee the maistrie: and God forbid that it so were. For Jesus Sirake saieth, that if the wife haue maistrie, shee is contrarious to her husbond. And Salomon saieth, Neuer in thy life to thy wife, ne to thy childe, ne to thy friend, ne yeue no power ouer thy selfe: for better it were that thy children aske of thee things that hem needeth, than thy selfe to be in the hands of thy children. And also if I woll werche by thy counsaile, certes my counsail must be somtime secrete, till it were time that it must bee knowen: and this ne may not bee, if I should be counsailed by thee. When dame Prudence full debonairly and with great patience, had heard all that her husbonde liked for to say, then asked she of him licence for to speake, and saied in this wise. My lord (qd. she) as to your first reason, it may lightly been answerd: For I say that it is no follie to chaunge counsaile when the thing is chaunged, or els when the thing seemeth otherwise than it seemed afore. And moreouer I say, though that yee haue sworne and behight to performe your emprise, and by iust cause ye doe it not, men should not say therefore ye were a lyer and forsworn: For the booke saieth, That the wise man maketh no lesing, when hee turneth his corage for the better. And albeit that your emprise bee established and ordeined by great multitude of folke, yet dare you not accomplish thilke ordinance but you liketh: for the trouth of things, and the profit, been rather founden in fewe folke that beene wise and full of reason, than by great multitude of folke, there euery man cryeth and clattereth what him liketh: soothly such multitude is not honest. And as to the second reason, whereas ye say, That all women been wicked: saue your grace, Certes ye despise all women in this wise, and he that all dispiseth, as saith the booke, al displeaseth. And Senecke saith, That who so woll haue Sapience, shall no man dispraise, but he shall gladly teach the science that hee can, without presumption or pride: and such things as he nought ne can, hee shall not beene ashamed to learne hem, and to enquire of lesse folke than himselfe. And that ther hath ben many a good woman, may lightly be prooued: for certes sir, our Lord Jesu Christ nolde neuer han descended to be borne of a woman, if all women had be wicked: And after that, for the great bounte that is in women, our Lord Jesu Christ, when he was risen frō death to life, appeared rather to a woman, than to his Apostles. And though that Salomon sayed, he found neuer women good, it followeth not therefore, that all women be wicked: for though that hee ne found no good woman, certes many another man hath founde many a woman full good and true. Or els peraventure the entent of Salomon was this, That in soueraigne bounte he found

found no woman, this is to say: that there is no wight that hath parfite bounte saue God alone, as he himselfe recordeth in his Euangelie. For there nis no creature so good, that him ne wanteth somwhat of the perfection of God that is his maker. Your third reason is this, ye say that if that ye gouerne you by my counsaile, it should seeme that ye had yeue me the maistrie and the lordship of your person. Sir, saue your grace it is not so, for if so were that no man should bee counsailed but onely of hem that han lordship and maistrie of his person, men nolde not bee counsailed so oft: For sothly thilke man that asketh counsaile of a purpose, yet hath he free will whither hee woll doe after that counsaile or non. And as to your fourth reason, there as yee saine that the iangleric of women can hide things that they wot not, as who so saieth, that a woman can not hide that she wote. Sir, these wordes been vnderstonde of women that been iangelers and wicked, of which women men saine that three things driuen a man out of his house, that is to say, smoke, dropping of raine, and wicked wiues. And of such women Salomon saieth, That a man were better dwell in deserte, than with a woman that is riotous: And sir by your leaue, it am not I, for ye haue ful oft assaied my great silence and my great patience, and eke how well that I can hide and heale things, that men oughten secretly to hiden. And sothly as to your fift reason, wheras you say, that in wicked counsaile women vanquish men: God wote that thilke reason stant here in no stede: for vnderstondeth now, ye asken counsaile for to doe wickednes: And if ye woll werken wickednes, and your wife restraineth thilke wicked purpose, and ouercome you by reason and by good counsail: certes your wife ought rather to bee praised than blamed. Thus should you vnderstonde the Philosopher that saieth, In wicked counsaile women vanquish her husbondes. And there, as ye blame al women and her reasons, I shall shewe you by many ensamples, that many women haue be full good, and yet been, and her counsaile wholsome and profitable. Eke some men han saied, that the counsaile of women is either too deere, or too little worth. But albeit so that full many women bee bad, and her counsaile vile and nought worth, yet han men found full many a good woman, and full discrete and wise in counsailing. Lo Iacob through the counsaile of his mother Rebecke, wan the benison of his father, and the Lordship of all his brethren: Judith thorow her good counsaile, deliuered the citie of Bethule, in which she dwelt, out of the honde of Holofern that had it all besieged, and wold haue destroyed it. Abigaile deliuered Nabail her husbond fro Dauid the king, that would haue slaine him, and appeased the ire of the king by her wit, and by her good counsaile. Hester by her counsaile enhaunced greatly the people of God, in the reigne of Assuerus the king. And the same bountie in good counsailing of many a good woman may men reade and tell. And furthermore, when that our Lord hath created Adam our former father, hee saied in this wise: It is not good to bee a man a lone: make wee an helper to himselfe semblable. Here may yee see that if that women were not good, and her counsaile good and profitable, our Lorde God of heauen ne would neither han wrought hem, ne called hem the helper of man, but rather confusion to man. And there sayed a clerke ones in two verses: What is better than gold? Jasper. What is better than Jasper? Wisdome. And what is better than wisdome? Woman. And what is better than a good woman? That is a good man. And what is better than a good man? Nothing. And sir, by many other reasons may yee seene, that many women been good, and eke her counsaile good and profitable. And therefore sir, if that yee woll trust to my counsaile, I shall restore you your doughter hole and sound: and eke that I woll doe you so much, that ye shall haue honour in this case.

When Melibe had heard the wordes of his wife Prudence, he saied thus: I see well that the wordes of Salomõ be sooth: For he saieth, The wordes that bee spoken discretly by ordinaunce, been Honicombes, for they yeuen sweetnesse to the soule, and holsomnesse to the body. And wife, because of thy sweet wordes, and eke for I haue proued & assaied thy great Sapience and thy great trouth, I woll gouerne me by thy counsaile in all thing.

Now sir, (qd. dame Prudence) and sithens that ye vouchsafe to be gouerned by my counsaile, I woll enforme you how that yee shall gouerne your selfe, in chosing of your counsailours. Ye shall first in all your werke, meekely beseeching to the high God, that he would be your counsailour, and shapeth you to such entent that hee yeue you counsaile and comforte, as taught Thobie his sonne. At all times thou shalt blesse God, and praie him to dresse thy wayes, and loke eke that thy counsailes been in him euermore. Saint James saieth, if any man of you haue needc of sapience, aske it of God. And afterwarde, then shullen ye take counsaile in your selfe, and examine well your owne thoughts, of such

thinges as you thinken that beene best for your profit. And then shall yee drive fro your heart things that bee contrarious to good counsaile: that is to say, ire, couetise, and hastinesse.

First, he that asketh counsaile of himselfe, certes he must be withouten ire and wrath in himselfe, for many causes. The first is this: He that hath great ire and wrath in himselfe, he weneth alway that he may doe thing that he may not do. And secondly, he that is irous and wrothfull, he may not well deeme: And hee that may not well deeme, may not well counsell. The third is this, hee that is irous and wroth, as saieth Seneke, may not speake but blamefull things, and with thilke vicious wordes hee stirreth other folke to anger and to ire. And eke sir yee must drive couetise out of your heart. For the Apostle sayth, That couetise is the roote of all harmes. And trusteth right well, that a couetous man ne can not deeme ne thinke, but only to fulfill the end of his couetise: and certes that ne may neuer be accomplished, for euermore, the more haboundance that he hath of richesses, the more hee desireth. And sir yee must also drive out of your heart hastinesse: For certes yee may not deme for the best a suddaine thought that falleth in your heart, but ye must aduise you on it full oft: For as yee haue heard here before, the common prouerb is this, He that sone deemeth, sone repenteth.

Sir, ye ne be not alway in like disposition, for certes some thing that seemeth somtime to you that is good for to doe, another time it seemeth to you the contrarie.

And when yee han taken counsaile in your selfe, and han deemed by good deliberation such thing as you seemeth best, than rede I you that yee keepe it secret. Bewray yee not your counsaile to no person, but if so bee that yee wene likerly, that through your bewraying, your condition shall bee to you the more profitable. For Jesus Sirake saith: Neither to thy foe ne to thy friend discouer not thy secret, ne thy folly: for they woll yeue you audience and looking, and suppostation in your presence, and scorne you in your absence. Another Clerke sayeth, That scarsly shall you finde any person that may keepe counsaile secretly. The booke saieth, While that thou keepest the counsaile in thine heart, thou keepest it in thy prison: and when thou bewrayest to thy counsaile to any wight, hee holdeth thee in his snare. And therefore you is better to hide your counsaile in your heart, than to pray him to whom yee haue bewrayed your counsaile, that he woll keepe it close still. For Seneca saieth: If so be that thou maiest not thine owne counsaile hide, howe darest thou pray any other wight thy counsaile secret to keepe. But natheless, if thou wene likerly that thy bewraying of thy counsaile to a person woll make thy condition stonde in the better plight, then shalt thou tell him thy counsaile in this wise. First thou shalt make no semblant whether thee were leuer peace or warre, or this or that, ne shewe him not thy will ne thine entent: for trust well that commonly these counsailours beene flatterers, namely the counsailours of great lordes, for they enforce hem alway rather to speak pleasant wordes enclining to the lordes lust, than wordes that ben trewe or profitable: and therefore men say, that the rich man hath seld good counsaile, but if hee haue it of himselfe. And after that thou shalt consider thy friendes and thine enemies. And as touching thy friendes, thou shalt consider which of hem beene most faithfull and most wise, and eldest and most approued in counsailing: and of hem shalt thou aske thy counsaile, as the case requireth.

I say, that first yee shall call to your counsaile your friends that beene true. For Salomon saith: That right as the heart of a man deliteth in sauour that is sote, right so the counsaile of true frendes yeueth swetenesse to the soule. And hee saieth also, there may nothing be likened to the true friend: For certes gold ne siluer bee not so much worth as the good will of a true friend. And also he saieth, that a true friend is a strong defence, who so that it findeth hath a great treasure. Then shall ye also consider if that your true friends be discreet and wise: for the booke saith, Aske alway thy counsaile of them that bee wise. And by this same reason shall ye call to your counsaile your friends that beene of age, such as seeme and beene expert in many thinges, and been approoued in counsailing. For the booke saieth, That in olde men is Sapience, and in long time the prudence. And Tullius saieth, That great things beene not aye accomplished by strength, ne by deliuernesse of body, but by counsaile, by auctority of persons, and by Science: the which three things ne beene not feeble by age, but certes they enforce and encrease day by day, and then shall ye keep this for a generall rule. First shall yee call to your counsaile a fewe of you friends that been especiall. For Salomon saieth, Many friends haue thou, but among a thousand chuse thee one to bee thy counsailour: For all bee it so, that thou first ne tell thy counsaile but to a fewe, thou

mayest

mayest afterwarde tell it to mo folke, if it bee neede. But looke alway that thy counsaylours haue those conditions that I haue sayd before, that is to say, That they be true, wise, and of old experience. And worke not alway in euery need by one Counsailer alone: for sometimes behoueth it to bee counsailed by many. For Salomon sayth, Saluation of things is where as there be many counsaylers.

Now haue I told you of which folke yee shall be counsailed: now woll I tell you which counsaile yee ought to eschew. First yee shall eschew the counsailing of fooles. Salomon sayth, Take no counsaile of a foole: for hee woll counsaile but after his owne lust and his affection. The booke sayth, that the propertie of a foole is this: He troweth lightly harme of euery man, and lightly troweth all bountie in himselfe. Thou shalt eschew the counsailing of all flatterers, which as enforcen hem rather to praise your person by flatterie, than for to tell you the soothfastnesse of things. Wherefore Tullius sayth, Among all the pestilence that been in friendship, the greatest is flatterie. And therefore it is more need that thou eschew and dread flatterers, than any other people. The booke saith, Thou shalt rather flee fro the sweete wordes of flattering and praising, than fro the eagre words of thy friends that saith the sooths. Salomon saith, That the words of a flatterer is a snare to catch innocence. He sayth also, He that speaketh to his friend wordes of flatterie and of pleasaunce, he setteth a net before his feet to catch him. And therefore Tullius sayth, Encline not thine eares to flatterers, ne take no counsaile of flatterers. And Caton sayeth, Auise thee well, and eschew the wordes of sweetnesse and of pleasaunce. And eke thou shalt eschew the counsailing of thine old enemies that been reconciled. The booke sayth, That no wight retourneth safely into the grace of his old enemie. And Isope sayth, Ne trust not to hem, to which thou hast sometime had war or enmity, ne tell hem not thy counsaile. And Seneck telleth the cause why it may not be, for he sayth, There as great fire hath long time endured, that there dwelleth some vapour of heat. And therefore saith Salomon, In thine old foe trust thou neuer. For sikerly though thine enemie be reconciled, and make the signe of humilitie, and loute to thee with his head, trust him neuer: for certes he maketh thilke faigned humility more for his profite, than for any humility, or for any loue of thy person, because that hee deemeth to haue victory ouer thy person by such fained countenaunce, the which victorie he might not haue by strife or warre. And Petrus Alphons sayeth, Make no fellowship with thine old enemies, for if thou do hem bounty, they woll-len peruert it to wickednesse. And eke thou must eschew the counsailing of hem that been thy seruaunts, and bearen thee great reuerence: for peraventure they saine it more for dread than for loue. And therefore saith a Philosopher in this wise: There is no wight perfitly true to him that he dredeth. And Tullius sayth, There is no might so great of any emperour that long may endure, but he haue loue of the people and dread. Ye shall eschew also the counsailing of folke that been dronkelewe, for they ne can no counsaile hide. For Salomon sayth, There nis no priuity there as reigneth dronkennesse. Ye shall haue also in suspect the counsailing of such folk as counsaile you one thing priuely, and counsaile you the contrarie openly. For Cassidorie sayeth, That it is a manner of sleight to hinder his enemy when he sheweth to done a thing openly, and werketh priuily the contrary. Thou shalt haue also in suspect the counsailing of wicked folke, that be alway full of fraud. And Dauid sayth, That blisfull is the man that hath not followed the counsailing of shrews. Thou shalt also eschew the counsailing of yong folke, for her counsailing is not ripe, as Salomon saith.

Now sir, sithens I haue shewed you of such folke as yee shall bee counsailed of, and follow it: now woll I teach you how yee shall examine your counsaile. After the doctrine of Tullius, in examining of your counsailers, ye shall consider many things.

First, thou shalt consider thilke thing that thou purposest, and vpon that thing that thou wolt haue counsaile, that very trueth be said and conserued, this is to say, Tell truly thy tale, for he that sayeth false, may not well be counsailed in that case, of which hee lieth. After this, thou shalt consider the things that accorden to that thou purposest for to doe by thy counsailours, if reason accord thereto, and eke if thy might may attaine therto: and if the more part and the better part of your counsailours accorden thereto or no. Then shalt thou consider what thing shall follow of her counsailing: As hate, peace, warre, grace, profite, or domage, and many other things: and in all things thou shalt chuse the best, and weiue all other things. Then shalt thou consider of what root is engendred the matter of thy counsaile, and what fruit it may conceiue and engender. Thou shalt eke consider all the causes, from whence they bee

ſprong. And when thou haſt examined thy counſaile, as I haue ſaid, and which partie is the better and more profitable, and haſt approoued it by many wiſe folke and old, then thou ſhalt conſider, if thou maieſt performe it and make of it a good end. For certes reaſon will not that any man ſhall begin a thing, but if he might performe it as him ought: ne no wight ſhould take vpon him ſo heauie a charge, but that he might bere it. For the prouerbe ſayth, He that too much embraceth diſtraineth little. And Caton ſaith, Aſſay to doe ſuch things as thou haſt power to done, leaſt the charge oppreſſe thee too ſore, that thee behoueth weiue thing that thou haſt begunne. And if ſo be that thou be in dout, whether thou maieſt performe a thing or none, chuſe rather for to ſuffer than to begin. And Peter Alphons ſaieth, If thou haſt might to doe a thing, of which thou muſt repent, it is better holde thy tongue ſtill than for to ſpeake. Then maieſt thou vnderſtond by ſtronger reaſons, that if thou haſt power to perfourme a werke, of which thou ſhalt repent thee, then is it better thou ſuffer than begin. Well faine they that defenden euery wight to aſſay a thing of which he is in doubt, whether he may performe it or none. And after when ye haue examined your counſaile (as I haue ſaid before) and know well that yee may performe your empriſe, conferme it then ſadly till it bee at an end.

Now it is reaſon and time that I ſhewe you when and wherfore that ye may chaunge your counſaile, withouten reproofe. Soothly, a man may change his purpoſe and his counſaile, if the cauſe ceaſeth, or when a newe caſe betideth. For the law ſaith, That vpon things that newly betideth, behoueth newe counſaile. And Seneke ſaieth, If thy counſaile is come to the eares of thine enemies, chaunge thy counſaile. Thou maieſt alſo chaunge thy counſaile, if ſo be thou find that by error or by any other cauſe, harme or dammage may betide. Alſo if thy counſaile be diſhoneſt, other els come of diſhoneſt cauſe, chaunge thy counſaile. For the law ſaith, That all beheſts that be diſhoneſt, ne been of no value: And eke, If ſo be that it bee vnpoſſible, or may not gladly be perfourmed or kept.

And take this for a generall rule, That euery counſaile that is enforced ſo ſtrongly, that it may not be chaunged for no condition that may betide, I ſay that ilke counſail is wicked.

MElibeus, when he had heard the doctrine of his wife Dame Prudence, aunſwerd in this wiſe. Dame (qd. he) as yet vnto this time ye han well taught me, as in gouernaile how I ſhall gouern me in the chuſing and in the withholding of my counſaile: But now would I faine that ye would condiſcend in eſpecial, how that ye ſeemeth by our counſailours that wee haue choſe in this preſent need.

My lord (qd. ſhe) I beſeech you in all humbleſſe, that yee will not wilfully replie againſt my reaſons, ne diſtemper your hert, though I ſpeake thing that you diſpleaſe, for God wote as in mine entent, I ſpeake it as for your beſt and for your honour and profit eke, and ſoothly I hope that your benignity will take it in patience. And truſteth me well that your counſaile in this caſe ne ſhould not (as to ſpeak properly) be called a counſailing, but a motion or a mouing of folly, in which counſaile ye haue erred in many a ſundry wiſe.

Firſt yee haue erred in the aſſembling of your counſailours: For firſt yee ſhould haue cleped a few folke to your counſaile, and after yee might haue ſhewed it to mo, if it had bee neede. But ye haue cleped to your counſaile a great multitude of people, full chargeous and full nopous for to heare. Alſo yee haue erred, for there as yee ſhould haue onely cleped to your counſaile your trew friends, olde and wiſe, ye haue cleped ſtraunge folke, yong folke, falſe flatterers, and enemies reconciled, and folk that done you reuerence withouten loue. And eke yee haue erred, for yee haue brought with you to your counſaile, ire, couetiſe, and haſtineſſe, the which three things been contrary to euery good counſaile, honeſt and profitable: the which three things yee haue not deſtroyed neither in your ſelfe ne in your counſailours, as ye ought. Ye haue erred alſo, for yee haue ſhewed to your counſailours your talent and your affections to make warre anon, and for to do vengeaunce, and they haue eſpied by your words to what thing ye beene enclined: and therefore han they rather counſailed you to your talent, than to your profite. Ye han erred eke, for it ſeemeth that you ſufficeth to haue bee counſailed by theſe counſailours onely, and with little auiſement, whereas in ſo high and in ſo great a need, it had been neceſſarie mo counſailours, and more deliberation to performe your empriſe. Ye han erred alſo, for ye haue not examined your counſaile in the foreſaid matters, ne in due manner, as the caſe requireth. Ye haue erred alſo, for yee made no diuiſion betweene your true friends and your fained counſailours: ne yee haue not knowne the will of your trewe counſailours and friends, old, and wiſe, but ye haue caſt all her words in an hochpot, and enclined your heart

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to the more part and to the greater number of fooles than of wise men. And therfore the counsaylings that beene at congregations and multitudes of folke, there as men take more regard to the number, than to the sapience of persons: ye seene well, that in such counsaylings fooles han the maistrie. Melibeus answered and said ayen: I graunt well that I haue erred, but there as thou hast told me here before, that hem is not too blame that chaungeth his counsaile in certaine case, and for certaine and iust cause, I am all redie to chaunge my counsailours right as thou wouldest deuise. The Prouerbe sayth, For to done sinne, is mannish, but certes for to persteuer long in sinne, is werke of the Diuell.

To this sentence answereth anone dame Prudence, and said: Examineth (qd. she) well your counsaile, and let vs see which of hem hath spoke most reasonably, and taught you best counsaile. And for as much as the examination is necessarie, let vs begin at Surgiens and Physicians, that first spake of this matter. I say that Physiciens and Surgiens haue saied you in your counsayle discreetly, as hem ought: and in her speech said full wisely, that to the office of hem appertaineth to done to euery wight honour and profite, and no wight to annoy, and after her craft to done great diligence vnto the cure of hem which they haue in her gouernaunce. And sir, right as they haue answered wisely and discreetly, right so read I that they beene highly and souerainly guerdoned for her noble speech, and eke for they shull more done their ententife businesse in the curation of your doughter. For all be it so they been your friends, therfore shullen ye not suffer, that they serue you for nought, but ye ought therafter guerdon hem, and pay hem her largesse. And as touching the proposition, which the Physicians entreteden in this case, this is to saine, that in maladies is, That contrarie is warished by another contrary: I would faine know how ye vnderstond thilke text, and what is your sentence. Certes (qd. Melibeus) I vnderstond it in this wise: Right as they han doe me a contrary, so should I done hem another, for right as they han venged hem vpon me & done me wrong, right so woll I venge me vpon hem, and done hem wrong, and then haue I cured one contrary by another.

Lo lo (qd. dame Prudence) how lightly is euery man enclined to his own desire and his owne pleasaunce. Certes (qd. she) the wordes of the Physicians ne should not beene vnderstond in that wise: for certes wickednesse is not contrarie to wickednesse, ne vengeaunce is not contrarie to vengeaunce, ne wrong to wrong, but euery of hem encreaseth and engendreth other. But certes the words of the Physicians should be vnderstond in this wise, for good and wickednesse ben two contraries: and peace and warre, vengeaunce and sufferaunce, discord and accord, and many other things: But certes, wickednesse shall be warished with goodnesse, discord by accord, warre by peace, and so forth in other things. And thereto accordeth saint Paule the Apostle in many places: He sayth, Ne yeeld not harme for harme, ne wicked speech for wicked speech, but doe well to hem that done to thee harme, and blesse them that saith thee harme. And in many other places he admonisheth peace and accord. But now woll I speke of the counsaile which was yeue vnto you by men of Lawe, and the wise folke, and old folke, that sayden all by one accord as ye heard before, That ouer all things ye shall done your businesse and diligence to keepe your person, and to warnstore your house: And they said also, that in this case ye ought to werchen full wisely and with great deliberation. And sir, as to the first point, that toucheth the keeping of your person: ye shall vnderstond, that he that hath warre, shall euer deuoutly and meekly praien before all things, that Jesu Christ of his mercie woll haue him in his protection, and to be his soueraigne helper at his need: For certes in this world there nis no wight that may be counselled and ikept sufficiently without the keeping of our lord Jesu Christ. To this sentence accordeth the Prophet Dauid that sayth: If God ne kept the Citty, in idle waketh hee that it keepeth. Now sir, then should hee commit the keeping of your person to your true friends, that been approued and iknow, and of him should ye aske helpe, your person to keep. For Caton saith: If thou haue need of helpe, aske it of thy friends, for there nis none so good a Physician as thy true friend. And after this then shall yee keepe you fro all straunge folke, and fro liers, and haue alway in suspect her companie. For Peter Alphons saieth: Ne take no company by the way, of no straunge man, but if so bee that thou hast knowen him of lenger time: And if so be that he fall into thy companie, peraduenture without thine assent and good will, enquire then as subtelly as thou canst, of his conuersation, and of his life before, and faine thy way, saying thou wouldest goe thider as thou wolt not goe: and if he beare a speare, hold thee on the right side of him, and if he beare a sword, hold thee on the

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left side of him. And then shall ye keepe you wisely from all manner of such people as I haue saied you here before, and hem and her counsaile eschew. And after this then shall yee keepe you in such manner, that for any presumption of your bodily strength, that ye despise not ne account not the might of your aduersary so lite, that yee let the keeping of your person for your presumption, For euery wise man dredeth his enemie. And Salomon sayth: A very foole is he that of al hath drede: But certes he that thorow hardnesse of his heart and through the hardinesse of himselfe, hath too great presumption, him shall euill betide. Then shall ye euermore encounter, waite, embushments, and all espiaile. For Seneke sayeth: The wise man that dredeth harmes, escheweth harmes: He ne falleth into no perils, that perill escheweth. And all be it so, that thou seeme that thou be in secret place, yet shalt thou alway done dilligence in keeping of thy person, this is to say, ne be not negligent to keepe thine owne person, not onely for thy greatest enemy, but also for thy least enemy. Seneke sayth, A man that is well aduised, he dreadeth his least enemie. Ouid sayth, That the litle weesell woll slee the great Bull and the wild Hart. And the Prouerbe sayth, That a little thorne woll greeue a king full sore, and a little hound woll hold the wild Boze. But natheless, I say not thou shalt be so coward, that thou doubt where as is no drede. The book saith, That somemen haue great lust to deceiue, but yet they dread to bee deceiued. And keepe thee fro the companie of scorners: For the booke sayth, With scorners ne make no company, but flie her words as venome.

Now as to the second point, whereas your wise Counsaylours counsayled you to warnestore your house with great dilligence, I would faine know how yee vnderstond thilke wordes, and what is your sentence.

Melibeus answered and said, certes I vnderstond it in this wise, that I shall warnestore mine house with toures, such as haue castles and other maner edifices, and armure, and archeries, betweene which things I may my person and my house so keepe and defend, that mine enemies shullen be in dread mine house to approch. To this sentence answered anon Prudence. Warnishing (qd. he) of high toures and of high edifices, is with great costages and with great trauaile, and when that they ben accomplished, yet bin they not worth a straw, but if they been defended with true friends, that ben old and wise. And vnderstondeth well, that the greatest and the strongest garnison that rich men may haue, as well to keepen her person as her goods, is, that they be beloued with her subiects, and with her neighbours. For thus sayth Tullius, That there is a manner garrison, that no man may vanquish ne discomfite, and that is a lord to be beloued of his citizens, and of his people.

Nowe sir, as to the third point, whereas your olde and wise Counsaylours saied, that ye ought not suddainly ne hastily proceed in this need, but that yee ought purueyen and apparaile you in this case, with great dilligence and deliberation. Verely, I trow that they saied right truly and right sooth. For Tullius sayth: In euery deed or thou begin it, apparaile thee with great dilligence. Then say I, in vengeaunce taking, in warre, in battaile, and in warne-storing, or thou begin, I rede that thou apparaile thee thereto, and do it with great deliberation. For Tullius sayeth: The long apparailing tofore the battaile, maketh short victorie. And Cassiodorus sayth: The garrison is stronger, when it is long time aused. But now let vs speake of the Counsayle that was accorded by your neighbours, such as done you reuerence without loue, your olde enemies reconciled, your flatterers, that counsailed you certaine things priuely, and openly counsayled you the contrarie. The young folke also, that counsayled you to venge you, and to make warre anon. Certes sir, as I haue saied before, ye haue greatly erred to clepe such manner of folke to your counsaile, which counsailours ben ynough repreoued by the reasons aforesaid. But natheless, let vs now discend to the speciall. Ye shull first proceed after the doctrine of Tullius. Certes the trouth of this matter or of this counsaile needeth not dilligently to enquire, for it is wel wist, which they been that han done you this trespas and villanie, and how many trespassours, and in what manner they haue done all this wrong to you, and all this villany. And after this, then shull ye examine the second condition, which Tullius addeth in this matter. For Tullius putteth a thing, which that he clepeth consenting: this is to say, who ben they, and which been they, and how many, that consenten to thy counsaile in thy wilfulnesse, to done hastie vengeaunce. And let vs consider also who been they, and how many they beene that consented to your aduersaries. As to the first point, it is well knowen which folke they bee that consented to your hastie wilfulnesse. For truly, all tho that counsaile

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you to maken suddaine warre, ne be not your friends. Let see now which beene they that ye holden so greatly your friends, as to your person: For albeit so that ye be mighty and rich, certes ye been but alone: for truly yee ne haue no child but a doughter, ne ye haue no brethren ne cousins Germaines, ne none other nigh kinrede, wherefore your enemies should stint to plead with you, ne to destroy your person. Ye know also, that your richesse mote bee dispended in diuerse parties. And when that euery wight hath his part, they wollen take but little regard to venge your death. But thine enemies ben three, and they haue many brethren, children, cousins, and other nigh kinrede: and though so were, that thou haddest slaine of hem two or three, yet dwelleth there ynowe to auenge her death, and to slea thy person. And though so be that your kinrede be more stedfast and siker than the kinne of your aduersaries, yet neuerthelesse your kinrede is but after kinrede, for they ben but little sibbe to you, and the kinne of your enemies ben nigh sibbe to hem. And certes as in that, her condition is better than is yours. Then let vs consider also of the counsayling of hem that counsayled you to take suddaine vengeaunce, whether it accord to reason or non: And certes yee know well nay, for as by right and reason, there may no man take vengeaunce of no wight, but the iudge that hath iurisdiction of it, when it is graunted him to take vengeaunce hastely, or attemperately, as the Law requireth. And yet moreouer of thilke word that Tullius clepeth consenting, thou shalt consent, if that thy might and thy power may consent and suffice to thy wilfulnesse, and to thy counsaylours: And certes, thou mayest well say nay, for sikerly as for to speake properly, We may doe nothing but such thing as we may done rightfully: and certes rightfully ye may take no vengeaunce, as of your own proper authority. Then may ye see that your power ne consenteth not, ne accordeth not with your wilfulnesse. Nowe let vs examine the third point, that Tullius clepeth consequence. Thou shalt vnderstond, that the vengeaunce that thou purposest for to take, is consequent, and thereof followeth another vengeaunce, perill, and warre, and other dammages withouten number, of which wee be not ware, as at this time. And as touching the fourth point, that Tullius clepeth engendring, thou shalt consider, that this wrong which that is done to thee, is engendred of the hate of thine enemies, and of the vengeaunce taking vpon hem, that would engender another vengeaunce, and muckell sorrow and wasting of richesse, as I sayed ere.

Now sir, as touching the fift point, that Tully cleapeth causes, which is the last point, thou shalt vnderstond, that the wrong that thou hast receiued, hath certaine causes, which that clerkes callen oryen, and effycien. and causa longinqua, and causa propinqua, that is to say, the ferre cause, and the nigh cause. The ferre cause is almighty God, that is cause of all things. The neere cause, is the three enemies. The cause accidentall was hate. The cause material, ben the fiue wounds of thy doughter. The cause formall, is the maner of their werking, that brought ladders, and clambe in at thy windowes. The cause finall was for to slea thy doughter, it letted not in as much as in them was. But for to speake of the ferre cause, as to what end they should come, or finally, what shall betide of them in this case, ne can I not deme, but by coniecting and supposing: For we shall suppose, that they shall come to a wicked end, because that the booke of Decrees sayth: Seld or with great paine ben causes brought to a good end, when they ben badly begun.

Now sir, if men would aske me, why that God suffred men to do you this villany. Truly I cannot well answer, as for no soothfastnesse. For the Apostle sayeth, That the sciences, and the iudgements of our Lord God Almightie been full deepe, there may no man comprehend ne search hem. Nathelesse by certain presumptions and coniectings, I hold and beleeue, that God, which that is full of iustice and of rightuousnes hath suffred this betide, by iust cause reasonable.

Thy name is Melibe, this is to say, a man that drinketh Honey. Thou hast dronke so much honey of sweet temporall richesse, and delices of honours of this world, that thou art dronke, and hast forgotten Jesu Christ thy creatour: Thou ne hast not doen to him such honour and reuerence as thee ought, ne thou ne hast not taken keepe to the words of Ouid that sayth: Under the Honey of the goods of thy bodie is hid the venome that slaeth thy soule.

And Salomon sayth: If it so be that thou hast fonnd honey, eat of the same honey that that sufficeth: for if so bee that thou eat of the same honey out of measure, thou shalt spewe, and also be needy and poore. And perauenture Almightie God Jesu Christ hath thee in dispight, and hath tourned away fro thee his face, and his eares of misericorde and mercie. And also he hath suffred and giue licence, that thou thus shouldest bee punished and chastised,

fed in the maner that thou hast trespassed and offended. Thou hast done sinne against our Lord Christ, for certes the three enemies of mankind, that is to say: the flesh, the fiend, and the world, thou hast suffered hem entre into thine heart wilfully, by the windowes of thy body, and hast not defended thy selfe sufficiently ayenst their assaules, and their temptations, so that they haue wounded thy soule in fiue places, this is to say: the deadly sinnes that ben entred into thy hart by thy fiue wits. And in the same manner our Lorde Christ hath would and suffered, that thy three enemies beene entered into thy hous, by the windowes, and haue wounded thy doughter in the forsaied manner.

Truly (qd. Melibe) I see well that yee enforce you much by words to ouercome me, in such manner, that I shall not venge mee on mine enemies, shewing me the perils and the euils that might fall of this vengeaunce: but who so would consider in all vengeaunces the perils and euils that might sue of vengeance taking, a man would neuer take vengeaunce, and that were harme: for by the vengeaunce taking ben the wicked men discouered fro the good men. And they that haue will to doe wickednesse, restraine their wicked purpose, when they see the punishing and chastising of the trespasours: and yee say more, That right as a singular person sinneth, in taking vengeaunce of another man, right so sinneth the iudge, if hee doe no vengeaunce of hem that haue defended. For Seneke sayeth thus: That maister hee sayth is good, that preueth shrewes. And as Catoneze saith: A man dredeth to do outrages, when he wot and knoweth, that it displeaseth to the Iudges and soueraignes. And another sayth: The iudge that dreadeth to doe right, maketh men shrewes. And saint Poule the Apostle sayeth in his Epistle, when he writeth vnto the Romanes, That the Iudge beare not the speare without cause, but they beare it to punish the shrewes and misdoers, and for to defend the good men.

If ye will then take vengeaunce of your enemies, ye shull retourne and haue your recourse to the Iudge, that hath the iurisdiction vpon hem, and he shall punish hem, as the law asketh and requireth.

Aha, saied Melibe, this vengeaunce liketh me nothing, I bethink me now, and take heed how that fortune hath nourished mee fro my childhood, and hath holpe me to passe many a strong paas: Now I would assay her, trowing with Gods helpe, that she shall helpe mee my shame for to auenge.

Truly saied Prudence, if yee will worke by my counsaile, yee shall not assay fortune by no way: ne yee shall not leane or bow vnto her, after the words of Seneeke: For things that been foolishly doen, and that been done in hope of fortune, shall neuer come to good end. And as the same Seneke sayth: The more clere and the more shining that fortune is, the more brittle and the sooner broke she is. Trusteth not in her, for she is not stedfast ne stable. For when thou troweste to be most sure and stedfast of her helpe, she will faile and deceiue thee. And whereas ye say, that fortune hath nourished you fro your childhood, I say that in so much ye shall the lesse trust in her, and in her wit. For Seneke saith: What man that is nourished by fortune, she maketh him a great foole. Now then sith ye desire and aske vengeaunce, and the vengeaunce that is done after the law, and before the iudge, ne liketh you not, and the vengeaunce that is doen in hope of fortune, is perillous and vncertaine, then haue yee none other remedie, but for to haue your recourse vnto the soueraine iudge, that vengeth all villanies and wrongs. And he shall venge you, after that himselfe witnesseth, where as he saith: Leaue the vengeaunce to me, and I shall doe it.

Melibeus answerd, if I ne venge me of the villanie that men haue doen to me, I summon or warne hem, that haue doen to me that villanie, and all other, to doe me another villany. For it is written: If thou take no vengeaunce of an old villany, thou summonest thine aduersaries to doe thee a new villanie: and also for my sufferaunce, men would doe me so much villanie, that I might neither beare it ne sustain it, and so should I be put and holden ouer low. For men sain, In misell suffring shal many things fail vnto thee, which thou shalt not now suffer.

Certes (qd. Prudence) I graunt you, that ouermuch suffraunce is not good, but yet ne followeth it not therof, that euery person to whom men doe villanie, should take of it vengeaunce: for that appertaineth and longeth all onely to Iudges, for they should venge the villanies and iniuries: and therefore those two authorities, that yee haue saied before, beene only vnderstond in the Iudges: For when they suffer ouermuch the wrongs and villanies to bee doen, without punishment, they summon not a man all onely to doe newe wrongs, but they commaund it. Also a wise man sayth, That the Iudge that correcteth not the sinner, commaundeth and biddeth him doe sinne. And the Iudges and soueraines might in their lond so much suffer

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of the shrews and misdoers, that they should by such suffraunce, by processe of time, woxe of such power and might, that they should put out the Judges and the Soueraignes from their places, and at last, make hem lese her Lordships.

But let vs now suppose, that ye haue leue to venge you: I say yee be not of might and power, as now to venge you: for if ye woll make comparison vnto the might of your aduersaries, yee should find in many thinges, that I haue shewed you er this, that their condition is better than yours, and therefore say I, that it is good as now, that ye suffer and be patient.

Furthermore, ye know well, that after the ☞ common law, It is a woodnesse, a manne to striue with a stronger, or a more mightie man than hee is himselfe: and for to striue with a man of euen strength, that is to say, with as strong a man as hee is, it is perill: and for to striue with a weaker man, it is folly, and therefore should a man flie striuing, as mikell as he ☞ might. For Salomon sayeth: It is a great worship to a man to keepe him fro noise and ☞ strife: And if it so befall and hap, that a man of greater might and strength than thou art, doe thee greeuaunce: studie and busie thee rather to still the same greeuaunce, than for to ☞ venge thee. For Seneke sayth, That he putteth him in great perill, that striueth with a greater man than he is himselfe. And Caton ☞ sayth, If a man of higher estate or degree, or more mightie thā thou, do thee annoy or greeuaunce, suffer him: for he that once hath greeued thee, may another time releeue thee and helpe thee. Yet set I case ye haue licence for to venge you, I say that there been full many things that shall restrain you of vengeance taking, and make you for to encline to suffer, and for to haue patience in the wrongs that haue been doen to you. First and formost, if ye woll consider the faults that beene in your owne person, for which faults God hath suffered you haue this tribulation, as I haue saied to you here before. For the Poet sayeth, ☞ That we ought patiently take the tribulations that come to vs, when that wee thinke and consider, that wee haue deserued to haue ☞ them. And saint Gregorie sayth, That when a manne considereth well the number of his defaults and of his sinnes, the paines and the tribulations that he suffereth, seeme the lesse vnto him. And in as much as him thinketh his sinnes more heauie and greeuous, in so much seemeth his paine the lighter and the easier vnto him. Also yee owe to encline and bow your heart, to take the patience of our Lord Jesu Christ, as sayeth saint Peter in his Epistles. Jesu Christ he saith hath suffred for vs, and yeuen ensample to euery man to follow and sue him, for hee did neuer sinne, ne neuer came there a villainous word out of his mouth. When men cursed him, he cursed hem not. And when men bete him, he manaced hem not. Also the great patience, which Saints that been in Paradice haue had in tribulation that they haue suffered, without her desert or guilt, ought much stirre you to patience. Furthermore, ye shull enforce you to haue patience, considering that the tribulations of this world but little while endure, and soone passen been and gone, and the ioy that a man seeketh to haue by patience in tribulations is perdurable: After that the Apostle sayth in his Epistle, The ioy of God he ☞ sayeth, is perdurable, that is to say, euerlasting. Also troweth and beleeueth stedfastly, that he is not well norished and well taught, that cannot haue patience, or woll not receiue patience. For Salomon sayth, That the doc- ☞ trine and the wit of a man is knowne by patience. And in another place he sayeth, That hee that is patient, gouerneth him by great prudence.

And the same Salomon saith: The angrie ☞ and wrothfull man maketh noises, and the patient man attempreth and stilleth hem. He saith also, It is more worth to be patient than to be right strong. And he that may haue the lordship of his owne heart, is more to praise, than he that by his force or strength taketh great cities. And therefore saieth saint James in his Epistle, That patience is a great vertue ☞ of perfection.

CErtes (qd. Melibee) I graunt you Dame Prudence, that patience is a great vertue of perfection, but euery man may not haue the perfection that yee seeke, ne I am not of the number of right perfit men: For mine heart may neuer be in peace, vnto the time it bee auenged. And albeit so, that it was great perill to mine enemies to doe mee a villanie in taking vengeaunce vpon me, yet tooke they no heed of the perill, but fulfilled her wicked will and her courage: and therefore mee thinketh men ought not repreue me, though I put mee in a little perill for to auenge mee, and though I do a great excesse, that is to say, that I venge one outrage by another.

Ah (qd. dame Prudence) ye say your will as you liketh: but in no case of the world a man should not doe outrage ne excesse, for to venge him. For Catlodor sayth, That as euill doth ☞ he that vengeth him by outrage, as hee that

doth the outrage. And therefore ye shall venge you after the order of right, that is to say, by the law, and not by excesse, ne by outrage. And also if you woll venge you of the outrage of your aduersaries, in other maner thã right commaundeth, ye sinne. And therefore sayth ☞ Seneck: That a man shal neuer venge shrewdnesse by shrewdnesse. And if ye say that right asketh to defend violence by violence, and fighting by fighting: certes ye say sooth, when the defence is doen without interuall, or without tarrying or delay, for to defend him, and not for to venge him. And it behooueth, that a man put such attemperaunce in his defence, that men haue no cause ne matter to repreue him, that defendeth him of outrage and excesse, for els were it againe reason. Parde yee know well, that yee make no defence as now, for to defend you, but for to venge you: and so sheweth it, that ye haue no will to doe your deede attemperately, and therefore me thinketh that patience is good. For Salomõ ☞ saieth, That he that is not patient, shall haue great harme.

CErtes (saied Melibe) I graunt you, that when a man is impatient and wrothe of that that toucheth him not, and that appertaineth not vnto him, though it harme ☞ him, it is no wonder. For the law saith, That hee is culpable that entermetteth or medleth with such things, as appertaineth not vnto ☞ him. And Salomon saith, That he that entreineth of the noise or strife of another manne, is like to him that taketh a straunge hound by the eares: For right as hee that taketh a straunge hound by the eares, is otherwhile bitten by the hond, right so in the same wise, it is reason that he haue harme, that by his impatience medleth him of the noise of another man, whereas it appertaineth not vnto him. But yee know well, that this deed, that is to say, my greefe and my disease, toucheth me right nigh. And therefore though I bee wroth and impatient, it is no merueile: and sauing your grace, I cannot see that it might greatly harme me, though I took vengeaunce, for I am richer and more mightie than mine enemies bee: And well know ye, that by money and by hauing great possessions, beene all things of this world gouerned. ☞ And Salomon sayth, All these things obey to money.

When Prudence had heard her husbond auaunt him of his richesse and his money, dispraising the power of his aduersaries, shee spake and saied in this wise: Certes deare sir, I graunt you that yee bee rich and mightie, and That the richesse is good to hem that haue well gotten hem, and that well can vse them. For right as the bodie of a manne may not liue without the soule, no more may it liue without the temporall goodes, and by richesse may a manne get him great friendes. And therefore sayeth Pamphilus: If a Nerthes doughter he sayeth be rich, she may chese of a thousand menne, which shee woll take to her husbond: for of a thousand one woll not forsake her ne refuse her. And this Pamphilus saith also: If thou be right happie, that is to say, if thou bee rich, thou shalt find a great number of fellowes and friendes. And if thy fortune chaunge, farewell friendship and fellowship, for thou shalt bee alone withouten any compaine, but if it be the companie of poore folke. And yet sayeth this Pamphilus moreouer, That they that been bond and thrall of linage, shall be made worthy and noble by the richesses. And right so as by the richesses there come many goodnesses, right so by pouertie come there many harmes and euils: For great pouertie constraineth a manne to doe many euils. And therefore calleth Cassiodor Pouertie the mother of ruine, that is to say, the mother of ouerthrowing or of falling downe. And therefore sayeth Peter Alfolce: One of the greatest aduersities of this world, is when a free man by kinde or of birth is constrained by pouertie to eate the almose of his enemie. And the same sayeth Innocente in one of his bookes: He sayth, That sorrowfull and mishap is the condition of a poore begger, for if he aske not his meat, hee dieth for hunger, and if he aske, he dieth for shame: and algates necessity constraineth him to aske. And therefore sayeth Salomon, That better is to die, than for to haue such pouertie. And as the same Salomon sayth: Better it is to die of bitter death, than for to liue in such wise. By these reasons that I haue said vnto you, and by many other reasons that I could say, I graunt you that richesses been good to hem that hem well getten, and to hem that well vsen tho richesses: And therfore woll I shew you how ye shall behaue you in gathering of riches, and in what manner she shullen vse hem.

First, Yee shall get hem withouten great desire, by good leisure, sokingly, and not ouer hastily, for a manne that is too desirous to get richesse, habandoneth him first to theft and to all other euils. And therefore sayeth Salomon: He that hasteth him too busily to were rich, he shall bee none innocent. Hee sayeth also, That the richesse that hastily commeth to a manne, soone and lightly goeth and passeth from

from a man, but that richesse that commeth little and little, wexeth alway and multiplieth. And sir, ye shall get richesse by your wit and by your trauaile, vnto your profite, and that without wrong or harme doing to any other person. For the Law sayeth, There maketh no manne himselfe rich, if hee doe harme to another wight: this is to say, that nature defendeth and forbiddeth by right, that no manne make himselfe rich, vnto the harme of another person. And Tullius sayth, That no sorrow, ne no dread of death, ne nothing that may fall vnto a man, is so much ayenst nature, as a man to encrease his owne profite, to the harme of another manne. And though the great and mightie menne get richesses more lightly than thou, yet shalt thou not bee idle ne slowe to doe thy profite, for thou shalt in all wise flie idlenesse. For Salomon sayth, That idlenesse teacheth a man to doe many euils. And the same Salomon sayeth, That he that trauaileth and busieth him to tilthe his land, shall eat bread: but he that is idle, and casteth him to no businesse ne occupation, shall fall into pouertie, and die for hunger. And he that is idle and slow, can neuer find conuenable time for to doe his profite. For there is a verifier sayeth, That the idle manne excuseth him in Winter, because of the great cold, and in Summer because of the heat. For these causes (sayth Caton) waketh, and encline you not ouer much for to sleepe, for ouer much rest nourisheth and causeth many vices. And therefore sayeth saint Hierome, Do some good deeds, that the diuel which is our enemie, ne find you not vnoccupied, for the deuill ne taketh not lightly vnto his working, such as hee findeth occupied in good workes.

Then thus in getting richesses ye must flie idlenesse. And afterward yee shall vse the richesses, which yee haue got by your wit and by your trauaile, in such manner, that men hold you not too scarce ne too sparing, ne foole large, that is to say, ouer large a spender: for right as men blame an auaricious man, because of his scarcitie and chincherie, in the same wise is he to blame, that spendeth ouer largely. And therefore saith Caton: Vse (sayth he) the richesses that thou hast gotten in such manner, that men may haue no matter ne cause to call thee nother wretch ne chinche: for it is a great shame to a man to haue a poore heart and a rich purse. Hee sayth also, the goods that thou hast gote, vse them by measure, that is to say, spend measurably, for they that foolishly waste and dispend the goods that they haue, when they haue no more proper of her owne, then they shape hem to take the goods of another manne. I say then that ye shall flie auarice, vsing your richesse in such manner, that men say not that your richesses been buried, but that yee haue hem in your might, and in your welding. For a wise man reproueth the auaricious man, and sayth thus in these verses two. Whereto and why burieth a manne his goods by his great auarice, and knoweth well, that needes he must die, for death is the end of euery man, as in this present life? And for what cause or encheson ioineth he him, or knitteth he him so fast vnto his goods, that al his wits mow not discouer him, ne depart him fro his goods, and knoweth well, or ought to know, that when he is dead, he shall nothing beare with him out of this world.

And therefore saieth saint Augustine, That the auaricious manne is likened vnto hell, that the more it swalloweth, the more desire it hath to swallow and deuour. And as well as yee would eschew to be called an auaricious man or chinche, as well should yee keepe and gouerne you in such a wise, that menne call you not foole large. Therefore saith Tullius: The goods of thine house ne should not be hid ne kept so close, but that they might be opened by pity and debonairte, that is to say, to yeue hem part that haue great neede. Ne thy goods should not be so open, to be euery mannes goods. Afterward, in getting of your richesses, and in vsing hem, ye shall alway haue three things in your heart, that is to say, Our Lord God, conscience, and good name. First, ye shall haue God in your heart, and for no richesse yee should doe any thing, which may in any manner displease GOD your creatour and maker. For after the word of Salomon, It is better to haue a little good with the loue of GOD, than to haue much good and treasure, and lese the loue of his Lord GOD. And the Prophet sayth, That better it is to bee a good manne, and haue little good and treasure, than to bee holden a shrewe, and haue great richesse. And yet I say furthermore, that yee should alway doe your businesse to get you richesse, so that yee get hem with good conscience. And the Apostle sayeth, That there nis thing in this world, of which wee should haue so great ioy, as when our conscience beareth vs good witnesse. And the Wise man sayeth: That the substaunce of a man is full good, when sinne is not in mannes conscience. Afterward, in getting of your richesses, and in vsing of hem, yee must haue great businesse and great diligence, that your good name bee alway kept

and conserued. For Salomon sayeth, That better it is, and more it auaileth a man to haue a good name, than for to haue many richesses: And therefore hee sayeth in another place: Do great diligence saith Salomon, in keeping of thy friends, and of thy good name, for it shall lenger abide with thee, than any treasure, be it neuer so precious. And certes, he should not bee called a great Gentleman, that after God and good conscience all things left, ne dooth his diligence and businesse, to keepe his good name. And Cassiodor sayth, That it is a signe of a gentle heart, when a manne loueth and desireth to haue a good name. And therefore sayeth saint Augustine, That there been two things that been right necessarie and also needfull: and that is good conscience, and good loue, that is to say: good conscience to thine owne person inward, and good loue for thy neighbour outward. And hee that trusteth him so much in his good conscience, that hee despiseth and setteth at nought his good name or loue, and recketh not though he keepe not his good name, nis but a cruell churle.

Sir, now haue I shewed you how ye should doe in getting richesses, and how yee should vse hem: and I see well that for the trust that ye haue in your richesses, ye woll moue warre and battaile. I counsaile you that ye begin no warre, in trust of your richesses, for they ne suffice not warres to maintaine. And therefore sayeth a Philosopher: That man that desireth and would algates haue warre, shall neuer haue suffisaunce: for the richer that he is, the greater dispences must he make, if he woll haue worship and victorie. And Salomon saith, That the greater riches that a mã hath, the more dispendours he hath. And therfore sir, albeit so, that for your richesses ye may haue much folke, yet behoueth it not, ne it is not good to begin warre, whereas ye may in other manner haue peace, vnto your worship and profite: For the victorie of battailes that been in this world, lieth not in great number or multitude of people, ne in the vertue of man, but it lieth in the will and in the hond of our Lord God almightie. And therfore Judas Machabeus, which was Gods knight, when hee should fight against his aduersarie, that had a greater number and a greater multitude of folke, and stronger than was his people of Machabe, yet he recomforted his little companie, and saied right in this wise: Also lightly (saied he) may our Lord God Almightie yeue victorie to a fewe folke, as to many folke. For the victorie of a battaile commeth not by the great number of people, but it commeth from our Lorde GOD of heauen. And deare sir, for as much as there is no manne certaine, if it be worthie that God yeue him victorie or not, after that Salomon sayeth, Therefore euery man should greatly dreade warres to begin: and because that in battels fall many perils, and happeth other while, that as soone is the great man slaine, as the little man. And as it is written in the second booke of Kings: The deeds of battailes ben aduenturous, and nothing certaine, for as lightly is one hurt with a speare, as another: and for there is great perill in warre, therefore should a man flie and eschew warre in as much as a man may goodly. For Salomon sayeth, Hee that loueth perill, shall fall in perill.

After that Dame Prudence had spoken in this manner, Melibe answerd and said: I see well dame Prudence, that by your fair words and your reasons that yee haue shewed mee, that the warre liketh you nothing: but I haue not yet heard your counsaile, how I shall doe in this need.

Certes (saied shee) I counsaile you that ye accorde with your aduersaries, and that yee haue peace with hem. For saint James sayth in his Epistle: That by concorde and peace, small riches were great: and by debate and discorde, riches decay. And yee know well, that one of the greatest and moste soueraigne thing that is in this world, is vnity and peace. And therefore sayeth our Lord Jesu Christ to his Apostles, in this wise: Well happy beene they that loue and purchase peace, for they be called the children of God. Ah, saied Melibe, now see I well, that ye loue not mine honour, ne my worship. Yee know well that mine aduersaries haue begun this debate and brige by their outrage. And yee see well, that they ne require ne pray me of peace, ne they aske not to bee reconciled. Woll ye then that I goe meeke me, and obey me to hem, and crie hem mercie? For soth that were not my worship. For right as men say, ouergreat humblenes engendreth dispraising, so fareth it by too great humilitie or meekenesse.

Then began dame Prudence to make semblaunt of wrathe, and sayed: Certes sir, saue your grace, I loue your honour and profite, as I doe mine owne, and euer haue doe, ye, ne none other neuer see the contrary: And yet, if I had saied, that yee should haue purchased peace and reconciliation, I ne had much mistake mee, ne saied amisse. For the Wise man sayeth: The discention beginneth by another man, and the reconciling beginneth by thy selfe. And the Prophet saith: Flie shrewdnesse

and

and doe goodneſſe, ſeeke peace and follow it, in as much as in thee is. Yet ſay I not, that yee ſhould rather purſue to your aduerſaries for peace, than they ſhould to you: for I know well that ye ben ſo hard hearted, that ye woll doe nothing for me. And Salomon ſayth: He that hath ouer hard an heart, he at laſt ſhall miſhap or miſbetide.

When Melibe had heard dame Prudente make ſemblaunt of wrath, hee ſaied in this wiſe. Dame, I pray you that yee be not diſpleaſed of thing that I ſay, for yee know well that I am angry and wroth, and that is no wonder: and they that been wroth, wote not well what they doe, ne what they ſay. Therefore the Prophet ſayth: That troubled eyen haue no cleare ſight. But ſay and counſaile me as you liketh, for I am ready to doe right as ye woll deſire: And if ye repreue me of my folly, I am the more holden to loue and praiſe you. For Salomon ſaith, That he that repreueth him that doth follie, he ſhall find greater grace, than hee that deceiueth him by ſweete words.

Then ſaied Dame Prudence, I make no ſemblaunt of wrath ne of anger, but for your great profit. For Salomon ſaith: He is more wroth, that repreueth or chideth a foole for his follie, ſhewing him ſemblaunt of wrath, than hee that ſupporteth him and praiſeth him in his miſdoing, and laugheth at his folly. And this ſame Salomon ſaith afterward: That by the ſorrowfull viſage of a man: that is to ſay, By the ſorie and heauie countenance of a man, the foole correcteth and amendeth himſelfe.

Then ſaid Melibe, I ſhall not conne anſwere vnto ſo many faire reaſons as ye put to me and ſhew: ſay ſhortly your will and your counſaile, and I am all ready to performe and fulfill it.

Then Dame Prudence diſcouered all her will vnto him and ſaid: I counſaile you (ſaid ſhee) aboue all things that ye make peace betweene God and you, and bee reconciled vnto him and to his grace, for as I haue ſaied you here before, God hath ſuffred you to haue this tribulation and diſeaſe for your ſinnes: and if yee doe as I ſay you, God woll ſend your aduerſaries vnto you, and make hem fall at your feet, ready to doe your will and your commaundement. For Salomon ſayeth, When the condition of man is pleaſaunt and liking to God, he chaungeth the hearts of the mans aduerſaries, and conſtraineth hem to beſeech him of peace and of grace. And I pray you let me ſpeake with your aduerſaries priuely, for they ſhall not know that it bee of your will or your aſſent: And then when I know their will and their entent, I may counſaile you the more ſurely.

Dame ſaid Melibeus, doth your will and your liking, for I put me wholly in your diſpoſition and ordinaunce.

Then dame Prudence, when ſhee ſaw the good will of her huſband, delibered and tooke aduiſe in her ſelfe, thinking how ſhee might bring this neede vnto a good concluſion and to a good end: And when ſhee ſaw her time, ſhee ſent for theſe aduerſaries to come vnto her in a priuie place. And ſhewed wiſely vnto hem the great goods that come of peace, and the great harmes and perils that been in warre, and ſaid to hem in a goodly manner: how that hem ought haue great repentaunce of the iniurie and wrong that they had done to Melibeus her lord, and vnto her and to her doughter.

And when they heard the goodly words of Dame Prudence, they were ſo ſurpriſed and rauiſhed, and had ſo great ioy of hir, that wonder was to tell.

Ah lady (ſaid they) yee haue ſhewed vnto vs the bleſſing of ſweetneſſe, after the ſaying of Dauid the Prophet. For the reconſiling which we be not worthy to haue in no manere. But we ought require it with great contrition and humility, that ye of your goodneſſe haue preſented vnto vs. Now ſee we wel, that the ſcience and cunning of Salomon is full true, for he ſaith: That ſweet words multiply and encreaſe friends, and maketh ſhrewes to be debonaire and meeke.

Certes (ſaid they) wee put our deed and all our matter and cauſe, all wholly in your good will, and been ready to obey at the commaundement of our lord Melibeus. And therefore deere and benigne lady: wee pray and beſeech you as meekely as wee can and may, that it like vnto your great goodneſſe to fulfill indeed your goodly words. For wee conſider and know, that wee haue offended and greeued our lord Melibeus out of meaſure, to forth, that wee bee not of power to make him amends. And therefore wee oblige and bind vs and our friends, for to doe all at his will and commaundement: but peraduenture he hath ſuch heauineſſe and ſuch wrath to vs ward, becauſe of our offence, that he woll enioyne vs ſuch a paine, as wee mowe not beare ne ſuſtaine. And therefore noble ladie, wee beſeech your womanly pitee to take ſuch aduiſement in this neede, that wee ne our friends be not diſherited ne deſtroied, through our folly.

Certes (ſaid Prudence) it is an hard thing

and right perillous, that a man put him all vtterly in arbitration and iudgement, and in the might and power of his enemie: For Salomon sayth: Leueth me, and yeueth credence to that I shal say: Ne yeueth neuer the power ne gouernaunce of thy goods, to thy sonne, to thy wife, to thy friend, ne to thy brother: ne yeue thou neuer might ne mastry ouer thy body while thou liuest. Now, sith he defendeth that a man should not yeue to his brother ne to his friend, the might of his body. By a stronger reason he defendeth and forbiddeth a man to yeue himselfe to his enemy. And natheless, I counsaile you that yee mistrust not my lord: for I wot well and know verely, that he is debonaire and meeke, large, courteous, and nothing desirous ne couetous of goods ne riches. For there is nothing in this world that he desireth, saue onely worship and honour. Furthermore I know, and am right sure, that he shall nothing doe in this need, without my counsaile: and I shall so werke in this case, that by the grace of our Lord God, ye shall be reconciled vnto vs.

Then said they with one voice, worshipfull lady, we put vs and our goods al fully in your will and disposition, and been ready to come, what day that it liketh vnto your noblesse to limit vs or assigne vs for to make our obligation and bond, as strong as it liketh vnto your goodnesse, that we mow fulfill the will of you and of my lord Melibe.

Whē dame Prudence had herd the answer of these men, shee bad hem goe ayen priuely, and she returned to her lord Melibe, and told him how she found his aduersaries full repentaunt, knowledging full lowly her sinnes and trespas, and how they were ready to suffer all paine, requiring and praying him of mercy and pitie.

Then said Melibe, He is well worthy to haue pardon and forgyuenesse of his sinne, that excuseth not his sinne, but knowledgeth and repenteth him, asking indulgence. For Seneke saith, There is the remission and forgyuenesse, where as the confession is: for confession is neighbour to innocence. And therfore I assent and confirme me to haue peace, but it is good that we do nought without the assent and will of our friends.

Then was Prudence right glad and ioyfull, and said: Certes sir, ye haue well & goodly answerd: for right as by the counsell, assent, and helpe of your friends, yee haue ben steered to venge you and make war: Right so without her counsaile shall ye not accord you, ne haue peace with your aduersaries. For the law saith: There is nothing so good by way of kind, as a thing to be vnbound by him that it was bound.

Then dame Prudence, without delay or tarying, sent anone her messenger for her kinsfolke and her olde friendes, which that were true and wise: and told hem by order, in the presence of Melibe, all the matter, as it is aboue expressed and declared. And praied hem that they would say their aduise and counsaile, what best were to doe in this need. And when Melibeus friends had taken her aduise and deliberation of the forsaid matter, and had examined it by great businesse and diligence. They gaue full counsaile for to haue peace and rest, and that Melibe should receiue with good hert his aduersaries to forgyuenes and mercy.

And when dame Prudence had herd the assent of her lord Melibe, and the counsaile of his friends accord with her will and her entention, she was wondrously glad in her hart, and saied: There is an old Prouerbe (saied she) That the goodnesse that thou mayst do this day, doe it, and abide it not, ne delay it not till the next day. And therefore I counsayle, that yee send your messengers, such as be discreet and wise vnto your aduersaries: telling hem on your behalfe, that if they will treate of peace and accord, that they shape hem without delay or tarrying, to come vnto vs: which thing performed was indeed. And when these trespassours and repenting folke of her follies, that is to say, the aduersaries of Melibeus, had heard what these messengers said vnto hem, they were right gladde and ioyfull, and answered full meekely and benignely, yelding grace and thankes to her lord Melibeus, and to all his companie: and shope hem without delay to goe with the messengers, and obeyed the commaundement of her lord Melibeus. And right anone they tooke her way to the court of Melibe, and tooke with hem some of their true friendes, to make faith for hem, and for to be her borowes: And when they were comen to the presence of Melibe, he said to hem these words: It stondeth thus, said Melibe, and sooth it is, that causelesse and without skill and reason, ye haue done great iniuries and wrongs to me and my wife Prudence, and to my doughter also, for ye haue entred into my house by violence, & haue done such outrage, that all men know well that ye haue deserued death. And therefore woll I know and wete of you, whether ye wol put the punishing and the chastising and the vengeaunce of this outrage, in the will of me and of my wife, or ye woll not.

Then

Then the wisest of hem three answerd for hem all, and said. Sir (said he) we know wel that we been unworthy to come to the court of so great a lorde and so worthy as ye be, for we haue so greatly mistaken vs, and haue offended and agilted in such wise againe your high lordship, that truely wee haue deserued the death, but yet for the great goodnesse and debonairte, that all the worlde witnesseth of your person, wee submit vs to the excellence and benignitie of your gracious lordship, and been ready to obey to all your cõmandements, beseeching you, that of your mercifull pite ye woll consider our great repentance and lowe submission, and graunt vs forgiuenesse of our outragious trespasse and offence: For well we know, that your liberall grace and mercie streccheth further into the goodnes, than doen outragious gilt and trespasses into the wickednesse. All bee it that cursedly and damnably we haue agilted against your hie lordship.

THan Melibe tooke hem vp fro ỹ ground full benignly, and receiued her obligations and her bondes, by her othes vpon her pledges and borowes, and assigned hem a certaine day to returne vnto his court for to receiue and accept sentence and iudgement, that Melibeus would command to be done on hem, by the causes aforesayd, which things ordained, euery man returned to his house.

And when dame Prudence saw her time, she fained and asked her lorde Melibe, what vengeance hee thought good on his aduersaries.

To which Melibe answerd, and said: Certes (said hee) I thinke and purpose mee fully to disherite hem of all that euer they haue, and for to put them in exile for euer.

Certes said Dame Prudence, this were a cruell sentence, and much ayenst reason. For ye be rich inough, and haue no neede of other mens riches. And ye might lightly in this wise get you a couetous name, which is a vicious thing, and ought to be eschewed of euery good man. For after the saying of the Apostle, Couetise is roote of all harmes. And therfore it were better to you to lese so much good of your owne, than for to take of their good in this maner. For better it is to lese good with worship, than to winne good with villanie and shame. And euery man ought to do his diligence and his businesse, to get him a good name. And yet shall hee not onely busie him in keeping his good name, but he shal also enforce him alway to doe some thing, by which he may renew his good name. For it is written, That the olde good lose of a man or good name, is soone gone and past when it is not renued. And as touching that yee say, that yee woll exile your aduersaries: that thinketh me much ayenst reason, and out of measure, considering the power that they haue yeue you vpon them selfe. And it is written: That he is worthy to lose his priuilege, that misuseth the might and power that is giuen him. And set case, ye might enioyne hem that paine by right and law, which I trowe ye may not do: I say yee might not put it to execution, for peraduenture then it were like to turne to the warre, as it was before. And therefore if yee woll that men doe your obeisaunce, ye must demeane you more curteously, that is to say: Ye must yeue most easie sentences and iudgement. For it is written: He that most curteously commandeth, to him men must obey. And therefore I pray you, that in this necessitie and in this need ye cast ye to ouercome your heart. For as Seneck saieth, Hee that ouercommeth his heart, ouercommeth twise. And Tullie saith: There is nothing so commẽdable in a great lord, as when he is debonaire and meek, and appeaseth him lightly. And I pray you that ye woll now forbeare to do vengeaunce in such a manner, that your good name may by kept and conserued, and that men may haue cause and matter to praise you of pite and mercy: and that ye haue no cause to repent you of thing that is done. For Seneke saieth: He ouercommeth in an euill maner, that repenteth him of his victory. Wherefore I pray let mercy be in your heart, to theffect, and entent, that God almightie haue mercy vpon you in his last iudgement. For saint James saith in his Epistle: Iudgement without mercy shall be doe to him, that hath no mercy of another wight.

WHen Melibe had heard the great skilles and reasons of dame Prudence, and her wise informations and teachings, his heart gan encline to the will of his wife: considering her true entent, confirmed him anon and assented fully to worke after her counsaile: and thanked God, of whom procedeth all goodnesse and vertue, that him had sent a wife of so great discretion. And when the day came that his aduersaries should appeare in his presence, hee spake to hem goodly, and said in this wise.

All be it so, that of your pride and high presumption and follie, and of your negligence and vnconning, yee haue misborne you, and trespassed vnto mee, yet for as mikell as I see and behold your great humilitie, and that ye

be sory and repentant of your giltes, it constraineth mee to doe you grace and mercy: Wherefore I receiue you to my grace, and forgeue you holy all the offences, iniuries, and wronges, that yee haue doen agenst mee and mine, to theffect and ende, that God of his endles mercie woll at the time of our dying forgeue vs our giltes, that we haue trespassed to him in this wretched world. For doubtlesse if we be sory and repentant for the sinnes and giltes, which wee haue trespassed in the sight of our Lorde God: hee is so free and so merciable, that he woll forgeue vs our giltes, and bring vs to the blisse that neuer shall haue end. Amen.

¶ The Monkes Prologue.

WHen ended was the tale of Melibee
And of Prudence, and her benignite,
Our host saide, as I am faithful man.
And by the precious corps Madrian,
I had leuer then a barell of ale,
That Goodlefe my wife had heard this tale:
For she nothing is of such patience,
As was this Melibeus wife Prudence.
By Gods bones, when I bete my knaues,
She bringeth me the great clubbed staues,
And cryeth, slee the dogs euerichone,
And break of them both backe and bone.
And if that any neighbour of mine
Woll not in Church to my wife incline,
Or dee so hardie, to her to trespace, (face,
When she commeth home she rampeth in my
And cryeth, false coward, wreke thy wife:
By corpus Domini, I woll haue thy knife,
And thou shalt haue my distaffe, and go spin:
Fro day till night, she woll thus begin.
Alas, she saith, that euer I was shape
To wed a milkesop, or a coward ape,
That woll be ouerlaide with euery wight,
Thou darest not stond by thy wiues right.
This is my life, but if that I woll fight,
And out at doore anon I mote me dight,
And els I am lost, but if that I
Be like a wilde lion, foole hardy.
I wote well she woll doe me slee some day
Some neighbour or other, and then go my way,
For I am perilous with knife in honde,
All bee it that I dare not her withstonde:
For she is bigge in armes by my faith,
That shall he finde, that her misdoth or saith.
But let vs passe away from this mattere.
My lord he said, sir Monk, be merry of chere,
For ye shall tell vs a tale truely.
Lo, Rochester stondeth here fast by,
Ride forth mine owen lord breke not our game,
But by my troth I know not your name,
Whether I shall call you my lord Dan John
Dan Thomas, Dan Robert, or Dan Alban.
Of what house be ye, by your father kin?
I vow to God, thou hast a full faire chin,
It is a gentle pasture there thou gost,
Thou art not like a pinaunt or a ghost.
Upon my faith thou art some officere,
Some worthy Sexten, or some Celerere.
For by my fathers soule, as to my dome,
Thou art a maister, when thou art at home,
No poore cloisterer, ne no poore nouice,
But a gouernour both ware and wise,
And therewithall of brawne and bones,
A well faring person for the nones:
I pray to God yeue him confusion,
That first thee brought into religion.
Thou wouldest be a trede foule aright,
Haddst thou as great leaue, as thou hast might
To performe all thy lust in ingendrure,
Thou haddest begotten many a creature.
Alas, why wearest thou so wide a cope?
God yeue me sorow, and I were Pope,
Not only thou but euery mightie man,
Though he were shore high vpon his pan,
Should haue a wife, for al this world is lorn,
Religion hath take vp all the corn
Of treding, and borell men ben shrimpes:
Of feble trees ther commeth wretched imps.
This maketh that our heires be so slender
And feeble, that they may not well engender.
This make that our wiues woll assay
Religious folke, for that they may pay
Of Venus payments better than mow we:
For God wote no lussheburghs payen ye.
But be not wroth my lord though I play,
Full oft in game a sooth haue I heard say.
This worthy Monke took al in patience,
And said, I woll do my diligence,
As ferre as sounceth into honestie.
To tell you a tale, ye two or three:
And if ye list to herken hitherward,
I woll you saine the life of saint Edward,
Or els tragidies first I woll tell,
Of which I haue an hundred in my cell.
Tragedie is to tell a certaine story
As old bookes vs maken memorie,
Of hem that stood in great prosperitie,
And be fallen out of hie degree
In to miserie, and ended wretchedly:
And they ben versified commonly
Of six feet, which men call exametron:
In prose eke ben endighted many on
And in mitre, many a sundry wise.
Lo, this ought inough you to suffice.
Now hearkeneth, if you list for to here,

But

But first I beseech you in this matere,
Though I by order tell not these things,
Be it of Popes, Emperours, or kings,
After her ages, as men written finde,
But tell hem some before and some behinde,
As it commeth now to my remembrance,
Haue me excused of mine ignorance.

¶ The Monkes tale.

A Tragicall discourse of such as haue fallen from high estate to extreame miserie.

I Will bewaile in manner of tragedie
The harme of hem, that stode in high degree,
And fell so, that there nas no remedie
To bring hem out of their aduersitie.
For certaine when that fortune list to flie,
Ther may no man of her ẏ course withholde:
Let no man trust on blinde prosperitie,
Beth ware by this ensample yong and olde.

Lucifer.

At Lucifer, though he an Angell were
And not a man, at him will I begin.
For though fortune may nat Angell dere
From high degree, yet fell he for his sinne
Down into hell, where he is yet inne.
O Lucifer, brightest of Angels all,
Now art thou Sathanas, ẏ maist not twin
Out of miserie, in which thou art fall.

Adam.

Lo Adam, in the field of Damascene
With Gods owne finger iwrought was he,
And not begotten of mans sperm vncleane,
And welt all Paradise sauing o tree:
Neuer wordly man had so high degree
As Adam, till he for misgouernance
Was driuen out of his high prosperitie
To labour, and to hell, and to mischance.

Sampson.

Lo, Sampson, which that was annunciat
By the Angell, long or his natiuitie:
And was to God Almightie consecrat,
And stode in nobles while he might see:
Was neuer such and another as was he,
To speake of strength, and thereto hardinesse.
But to his wiues tolde he his secree, (nesse.
Through which he slough him for wretched=

Sampson this noble & mighty champion
Withouten weapon, saue his hands twey,
He slough and all to rent the Lion
Toward his wedding, walking by the wey:
His false wife coulde him so please, and pray,
Till she his counsaile knewe, and she vntrew,
Unto his foes his counsaile gan bewray,
And him forsoke, and tooke another new.

An hundred foxes tooke Sampson for yre,
And all her tailes hee together bond:
And set the foxes tailes all on fire,
For he in euery taile hath put a brond.
And they brent all the corne in that lond,
And all her oliues, and her vines eke:
A thousand men eke he slough with his hond,
And had no weapen, but an asse cheke.

When they were slaine, so thristed him, ẏ he
Was well nie lorne, for which he gan to prey,
That God wold of his paine haue some pite,
And send him drinke, or els mote he dey:
And of this asse cheek, that was so drey,
Out of a wang toth, sprang anon a well,
Of which he drunke inough shortly to sey,
Thus halp him God, as Iudicum can tell.

By very force at Gasa on a night,
Maugre the Philistins of that cite,
The gates of the town he hath vp plight,
And on his backe icaried hem hath he
High on an hill, where as men might hem se.
O noble mightie Sampson, lefe and dere,
Had thou not told to women thy secre,
In all this world ne had be thy pere.

This Sampson neither sider drāk ne wine,
Ne on his head came rasour none ne shere,
By precept of the messenger diuine:
For all his strength in his haires were,
And fully twenty winter yere by yere
Of Israel he had the gouernance:
But after soon shall he weep many a tere.
For women shall bring him to mischance.

Unto his lemman Dalida he told,
That in his haires all his strength lay,
And falsely to his foes she him sold,
And sleeping in her barme vpon a day
She made to clip or shere his haires away:
And made his fomen all his craft espien,
And when that they him found in such aray,
They bound him fast, and put out his eyen.

But er his haires were clipped or ishaue,
Ther was no bōd with which mē might him
But now is he in prison in a caue, (bind,
Whereas they made him at ẏ querne grinde.
O noble Sampson, strongest of mankind:
O whildom iudge in glory & riches, (blind,
Nowe mayest thou weepen with thine eyen
Sith thou art frō wele fall to wretchednesse.

The end of this caitife was, as I shall sey:
His

His fomen made a feaſt vpon a day,
And made him as their foole before hem play:
And this was in a temple of great aray.
But at the laſt he made a foule afray,
For he two pillers ſhoke, and made hem fall.
And down fell the temple all, and there it lay,
And ſlough himſelfe, and eke his fomen all.

This is to ſay, the princes eucrichone,
And eke three thouſand bodies were ther ſlain
With falling of the great temple of ſtone.
Of Sampſon now woll I no more ſain:
Beth ware by this example old and plain,
That no men tell her counſaile to her wiues
Of ſuch thing, as they would haue ſecret fain,
If that it touch her limmes or her liues.

Of Hercules.

Of Hercules the ſouereigne Conquerour,
Singen his werkes, laud, and high renown:
For in his time, of ſtrength he bare the flower,
He ſlough and raft the ſkinne of the lion,
And of the Centaurs laid the boſte adown:
He Harpias ſlew, the cruell birds fell,
He the golden apples raft fro the dragon:
He drew out Cerberus the hound of hell.

He ſlew the cruell tirant Buſirus,
He made his horſe to fret him fleſh and bone:
He ſlough the very ſerpent venemous:
Of Achelous two hornes brake he that one.
And he ſlew Cacus in a caue of ſtone,
He ſlough the gyant Antaeus the ſtrong,
He ſlough the griſely Boze, and that anon,
And bare his head vpon his ſpeare long.

Was neuer wight ſith the world began,
That ſlough ſo many monſters, as did he,
Throughout the wide world his name it ran,
What for his ſtrength, & what for his bounte,
And euery realme went he for to ſee,
He was ſo ſtrong, ỹ no man might him let,
And at both worlds ends, he for Trophe
In ſtede of bounds, of braſſe a pillour ſet.

A lemman had this noble champion
That hight Deianire, as freſh as May:
And as theſe clerkes maken mention,
She hath him ſent a ſhert freſh and gaie:
Alas this ſhert, alas and well awaie
Enuenomed was ſubtilly withall,
That er he had weared it halfe a day,
It made his fleſh all fro his bones fall.

But natheleſſe, ſome clerkes her excuſen
By one that hight Neſſus, that it maked:
Be as may be, I woll her not accuſen,
But on his body the ſhert he were al naked,
Till the fleſh was with the venim flaked:
And when he ſaw none other remedie,
In hote coles he hath himſelfe raked,
For with no venim dained he to die.

Thus ſterfe this worthy mighty Hercules.
Lo, who may truſt in fortune any throw,
For him that foloweth of the world the pres,
Or he beware, is ott laid full lowe:
Full wiſe is he, that himſelfe can know.
Beware, for when that fortune liſt to gloſe,
Then waiteth ſhe her man downe to throwe
By ſuch a way, as he would leaſt ſuppoſe.

Nabuchodonoſor.

The mightie trone, the precious treſore,
The glorious ſceptre, and royall maieſtie,
That hath the king Nabuchodonoſore.
With tonge vnneth may diſcriued be:
He twiſe wan Hieruſalem that cite,
The veſſell of the temple he with him lad:
At Babilon was his ſouereigne ſee,
In which his glorie and his delight he had.

Of Hieruſalem, he did do gelde anon,
The fayreſt children of the blood royall,
And make each of hem to been his thrall:
Among all other Daniel was one,
That was the wiſeſt of eucrichone,
For he the dremes of the king expouned:
Where as in Caldee clerkes were there none
That wiſt to what fine his dreme ſounded.

This proude king let make a ſtatu of gold
Sixty cubites long, and ſeuen in bredc,
To the which image, both yong and old
Commanded he lout, and haue in dred,
Or in a fornes, ful of flames rede
He ſhould be deed, that would not obey:
But neuer would aſſent to that dede
Daniel, ne his yong felowes twey.

This king of kings ſo proud and elate
Weend God, that ſitteth in maieſtie,
Ne might him nat bereue of his eſtate:
But ſodainly he loſt his dignitie,
And like a beaſt him ſeemed for to be,
And ete hey as an oxe, and lay therout
In raine, and with wilde beaſts walked he,
Till a certaine time was come about.

And like an Egles fethers were his heeres,
And his neiles alſo like birds clawes were,
God releeued him at certaine yeeres,
And yaue him wit, & then with many a tere
He thonked God, and all his life in fere
Was he to doe amiſſe, or more treſpace:
And ere that he layed was on his bere,
He knew that God was ful of might & grace.

Bal=

Balthaser.

His sonne, which that hight Balthasare,
That held ỹ reign after his faders day,
He by his fader could not beware,
For proude he was of heart, and of array:
And eke an Idolastre was he aie.
His high estate assured him in pride.
But fortune cast him downe, and there he lay,
And suddenly his reigne gan deuide.

A feast he made vnto his lords all
Upon a time, he made hem blith be,
And then his officers gan he call
Goth bring forth all the vessels (qd. he)
Which that my father in his prosperitie
Out of the temple of Hierusalem beraft,
And to our Gods thonkes yelden we,
Of honour, that our elders with vs laft.

His wife, his lords, and his concubines
Ate drunken, whiles her appetites last,
Out of these noble vessels soundrie wines.
And on a wall this king his eyen cast,
And saw an hond armelesse, that wrote fast,
For feare of which he quoke, and sighed sore:
This hond that Balthaser made sore agast,
Wrote (Mane techel phares) and no more.

In al that londe, Magicien was ther non,
That could expoune what this letter ment,
But Daniel expouned it anon,
And said, O king, God, thy father sent
Glory and honour, reign, treasour, and rent,
And he was proud, and nothing God he drad:
And therfore great wrath God vpō him sent,
And him beraft the reigne that he had.

He was out cast of mans company,
With Asses was his habitation:
And eate haie, as a beast, in wete and drie,
Till that he knew by wit and reason,
That God of heauen hath domination
Ouer euery reigne, and euery creature:
And then had God of him compassion,
And him restored his reigne and his figure.

Eke thou that art his sonne, art proud also,
And knowest all these things prively:
And art rebell to God, and his fo.
Thou dranke eke of his vessels boldly,
Thy wife eke, and thy wenches sinfully
Dronke of the same vessels sundry wins,
And heried false gods cursedly,
Therefore to thee shapen great pine is.

This hond was sent fro God, ỹ on the wal
Wrote (Mane techel phares) trust me:
Thy reigne is doen, thou wotest not all,
Diuided is thy realme, and it shall be
To Medes and to Perciens giuen (qd. he)
And that same night, the king was slaw:
And Darius occupied his dignitie,
Though he thereto had neither right ne law.

Lordings, here ensample mowe ye take,
How that in lordship is no sikernesse:
For when that fortune woll a man forsake,
She beareth away his reigne, & his richesse:
And his friends, both more and lesse.
And what man hath friends, thrugh fortune,
Mishap woll make hem enemies as I gesse.
This prouerbe is full soth, and full commune.

Zenobia.

Zenobia of Palmerie Queene
(As writeth Perciens of her noblesse)
So worthy was in armes, and so keene,
That no wight passed her in hardinesse,
Ne in linage, ne in other gentilnesse:
Of kings blood of Perce she is descended,
I say that she had not most of fairenesse,
But of her shape shee might not be amended.

From her childhood I find that she fled
Office of a woman, and to wood she went:
And many a wilde Hartes blood she shed
With arrowes broad, that she to hem sent.
She was so swift, that she hem hent,
And when that she was elder, she would kill
Lions, Libards, and Beeres all to rent,
And in her armes weld hem at her will.

She durst the wild beasts dennes to seeke,
And renne in the mountaines all the night,
And sleepe vnder a bush, and she could eke
Wrastell by very force and by very might
With any pong man, were he neuer so wight:
There might nothing in her armes stond:
She kept her maidenhead from euery wight,
To no man dained she to be bound.

But at last her friendes hath her maried
To Odenat, a prince of that countrie:
All were it so, that she hem long taried.
And ye shall understond, how that he
Had such fantasies like as had she:
But natheles, when they were knit in fere,
They liued in ioy and in felicitie,
For ech of hem had other lefe and dere.

Saue one thing, shee nolde neuer assent
By no way, that he should by her lie
But ones, for it was her plaine entent
To haue a childe, the world to multiply:
And also so sone as she might espie,
That she was not with child with that deed,

Then

Then would she suffer him to do his fantasie
Eftsones, and not but ones out of dreed.

And if she were with child at that cast,
No more should he with her play that game
Till fully fourtie dayes were past:
Then would she ones suffer him the same.
All were this Odenat wild or tame,
He gate no more of her, for thus she saied,
It was to wiues lecherie and shame,
In other case if men with hem plaied.

Two sonnes by this Odenat had she,
The which she kept in vertue and lettrure,
But now vnto our tale again turne we:
I say that so worshipfull a creature
And wise therewith, and large with measure,
So penible in warre, and curteis eke,
Ne more labour might in war endure
Was non, though al this world mē wold seek.

Her rich aray ne might not be told,
As well in vessell as in her clothing:
She was all clad in pierrie and in gold,
And eke she left not for none hunting
To haue of sundry tongues full knowing,
When that she leiser had for to entend
To learne in bookes was all her liking
How she in vertue her life might dispend.

And shortly of this storie for to treat:
As doughtie was her husbond as she.
So that they conquered many reignes great
In the Orient, with many a faire cite
Appertainaunt vnto the maiestie
Of Rome, and with strength held thē full fast
Ne neuer might her foemen doe her gle,
All the while that Odinates dayes last.

Her battailes, who so list hem for to rede
Againe Sapor the king, and other mo,
And how all this proces fill in dede,
Why she conquered, and her title therto,
And after of her mischiefe and her wo,
How that she was besieged, and itake,
Let him to my maister Petrarke go,
That writeth ynough of this, I vndertake.

When Odenat was dead, she mightily
The realmes held, and with her owne honde
Ayenst her foes she fought so truely
That ther nas no prince ne king in all ỹ lond
But were full glad, if they that grace fond
That she ne should vpon his londe warrey:
With her they made aliaunce by bond
To be in peace, and let hem ride and play.

The Emperour of Rome Claudius,
Ne him before, the Romain Galien
Ne durst neuer be so corragious,
Ne non Armen, ne non Egipcien
Ne Surrien, ne none Arabien
Within the field, that durst with her fight,
Lest that she would hē with her hondes slen,
Or with her meine put hem to flight.

In kings habite wenten her sonnes two
As the lawfull heires of her realmes all.
And Hermanno and Titamallo
Her names were, as Perciens hem call.
But aie fortune hath in her honie gall:
This mightie Queene, may no while endure,
Fortune out of her reigne made her to fall
To wretchednesse, and to misauenture.

Aurelian, when that the gouernance
Of Rome came into his hondes twey,
He shope vpon this Queene to do vengeance,
And with his legions he tooke his way
Toward Zenobia, and shortly for to say,
He made her flie, and at last her hent,
And fettered her, and eke her children tway,
And wan the lond, & home to Rome he went.

Emongest other things that he wan,
Her chair, that of gold was wrought & pierre,
This great Romaine, this Aurelian
Hath with him lad, that for men should it see:
All before his triumph walked she
With golden chaines on her necke hanging,
Crowned she was, as after her degre,
And full of pierre charged her clothing.

Alas fortune, she that whilom was
Redefull to kings and to Emperours,
Now gaureth all the people on her alas:
And she that helmed was in stark stoures,
And wan by force townes strong, and toures,
Shall on her head now weare autremite:
And she that bare the sceptre full of floures,
Shall beare a distaffe her cost for to quite.

Nero.

Although that Nero were as vicious,
As any fende, that lieth full low adown:
Yet he, as telleth vs Suetonius
All this world had in subiection,
Both East and West, and Septentrioun.
Of Rubies, Saphires, and of Perles white
Were all his clothes broudred vp and down,
For he in gemmes greatly gan delite.

More delicate, more pompous of aray,
More proude, was neuer Emperour than he,
That ilke cloth that he had weared o day,
After that time, he nold it neuer see:

Nettes

Nettes of gold thzede had he great plente,
To fish in Tiber, when him list to play,
His lusts were as law, in his degre,
Foz foztune as his friend would him obay.

He Rome bzent foz his delicacie,
The Senatours he slue vpon a day,
To heare how her wiues would weepe & crie:
And slow his bzother, and by his sister lay.
His mother made he in a pitous aray,
Foz he her wombe let slit, to behold
Where he conceiued was, so welaway,
That he so little of his mother told.

No teares out of his eyen foz that sight
Ne came, but saied, a faire woman was she:
Great wonder is, that he coud oz might
Be Domisman of her dead beaute:
The wine to bzing him commaunded he,
And dzanke anon, none other wo he made.
When might is ioined vnto cruelte,
Alas, too deepe will the venune wade.

In youth a maister had this Emperour
To teach him lettrure, and courtesie,
Foz of mozalite he was the flour.
And in his time, but if his bookes lie,
And whiles his maister had of him maistrie,
He made him so cunning and so souple,
That long time it was oz tyzannie,
Oz any vice durst in him encouple.

Senek his maister was, of which I deuise,
Because Nero had of him such dzede,
Foz he foz his vices would him chastise
Discreetly as by wozd, and not by dede,
Sir he would say, an Emperour mote nede
Be vertuous, and hate tyzannie.
Foz which he made him in a bathe to blede
On both his armes, till he must die.

This Nero had eke a customaunce
In youth ayenst his maister to rise:
And afterward, him thought great grenaũce,
Because he often would him chastise.
Therefoze he made him die in this wise.
He chose in a bathe to die in this manere,
Rather than to haue another turmentise:
And thus hath Nero slaine his maister dere.

Now fell it so, that foztune list no longer
The high pzide of Nero to cherishe:
Foz tho he were strong, yet was she stronger,
She thought thus, by God I am too nice
To set a man, that is fulfilled of vice,
In high degree, and an Emperour him call:
By God out of his seat I woll him trice,
When he least weneth, soonest shall he fall.

The people rose vpon him on a night
Foz his defaut, and when he it aspied,
Out of his dozes anon he hath him dight
Alone, and there he wend haue been allied,
He knocked fast, and aye the mozе he cried,
The faster shet they the dozes all:
Tho wist he well he had himselfe beguiled,
And went his way, no lenger durst he call.

The people cried and rombled vp and doun,
That with his eares he heard how they saied
Where is this false tyzant: this Neroun,
Foz feare full neere out of his wit he bzaied,
And to his gods right pitously he pzaied
Foz succour, but it might not betide:
Foz dzede of this him thought that he deid,
And ran into a garden him to hide.

And in this garden found he chozles twey
Sitting by a fire great and red,
And to the chozles two he gan to pzey
To slea him, and to gird off his hed,
That to his body, when he were ded,
Were no despite done foz his defame.
Himselfe he slough, he could no better red,
Of which foztune lough and had then game.

Holofernes.

WAs neuer capitaine vnder a king
That reigned mo put in subiection,
Ne stronger was in field of all thing
As in his time, ne greater of renoun,
Ne mozе pompous in high pzesumptioun,
Than Holoferne, which foztune aye kist,
And so licourously lad him vp and doun,
Till that he dead was ere that he wist.

Not onely that this wozld had of him awe
Foz lesing of richesse and liberte:
But he made euery man renie his lawe,
Nabuchodonosoz was lozd, saied he:
None other God should honoured be.
Ayenst his hest, there dare no wight trespace,
Saue in Bethulia, a strong cite,
Where Eliachem was pziest of that place.

But take keepe of the death of Holoferne:
Amid his host he dzonke lay all night
Within his tent, large as is a berne.
And yet foz all his pompe and all his might,
Judith, a woman, as he lay vpright
Sleeping, his head off smote, and fro his tent
Full pziuely she stole from euery wight,
And with his head vnto her toun she went.

Antiochus.

WHat needeth it of king Antiochus
To tell his high and roiall maieste,

His great pride, and his worke venemus,
For such another man nas neuer as he,
Redeth what that he was in Babylone,
And redeth the proud wordes that he seid,
And why he fill from his prosperite,
And in an hill how wretchedly he deid.

Fortune him had enchaunsed so in pride,
That verily he wend he might attain
Unto the sterres vpon euerie side,
And in a balaunce to wey each mountain,
And all the floudes of the sea restrain:
And Gods people had he most in hate,
Hem would he slea in torment and in pain,
Wening that God ne might his pride abate.

And for that Machanore and Timothe
By Jewes were venquished mightily,
Unto the Jewes such an hate had he,
That he bad greithe his chare full hastely,
And swore and saied, full dispitously:
Unto Hierusalem he would eftsone
To wreche his yre on it full cruelly,
But of his purpose was he let full sone.

God for his manace him so sore smote,
With inuisible wound, ale incurable,
That in his guttes carke so and bote,
That his paines was importable:
And certainly the wreche was reasonable,
For many a mans guttes did he paine,
But from his purpose, cursed and damnable,
For all his smert, he nolde him not restraine.

But bade anon, aparaile his host
And sodainly or he then was ware,
God daunted all his pride, and all his bost:
For he so sore fell out of his chare,
That all his limmes and his skinne to tare
So that he no more might go ne ride
But in a chaire, men about him bare
All forbruised both backe and side.

The wreche of God him smote so cruelly,
That in his bodie wicked wormes crept,
And therewithall he stanke so horribly,
That none of all his meine that him kept,
Whether that he woke or els slept,
Ne might not of him the stinke endure.
And in his mischiefe he wayled and wept,
And knew God, Lord of euerie creature.

To all his host, and to himselfe also
Full lothsome was the stinke of his caraine,
No man might him beare to ne fro.
And in his stinke, and in his horrible paine,
He sterfe full wretchedly on a mountaine.
Thus hath this robber, and this homicide,
That many a man made to wepe and plaine,
Such guerdon, as belongeth to pride.

Alexander.

The storie of Alexander is so commune,
That euerie wight, þ hath discretioun,
Hath hard somwhat or al, of his fortune:
This wide world, as in conclusioun,
He wan by strength, and for his renoun
They were glad for peace vnto him send
The pride of man, and bost he layed adoun
Where so he came, vnto the worlds end.

Comparison might yet neuer be maked
Betwixt him, and another conquerour,
For al this world, for dred of him hath quaked,
He was of knighthood, & of freedome floure:
Fortune him made the heire of high honour.
Saue wine & women nothing might allwage
His high intent in armes and labour
So was he full of louing courage.

What price wer it to him, though I you told
Of Darius, and of a hundred thousand mo
Of Princes, Earles, and knights bold,
Which he conquered, and brought to wo:
I saie as ferre as a man may ride or go
the world was his, what shuld I more deuise:
For though I wrote and told you euer mo
Of his knighthood, it might not suffice.

Twelue yere he raigned, as I rede in Macha-
Philippes soune of Macedone he was (be:
That first was King of Greece, that countre,
O worthy gentle Alexander, alas
That euer should thee fall such a case:
Enpoisoned of thy folke thou were.
Thy fortune hath turned into an ace,
And yet for thee ne wept she neuer a tere.

Who shall yeue men teres to complaine
The death of gentlenesse, and of fraunchise,
That all the world welded in his demaine,
And yet him thought it might not suffice:
So full was his courage of high empryse,
Alas, who shall me helpe to endite
False fortune, and her poyson to despise,
The which of all this woe I wite.

Julius Cesar.

By wisedome, manhode, and high labour,
From humble bed to royall Maieste
Up rose he, Julius Conquerour
That all the Occident, by lond and see
Wan by strength of honde, or els by trete,
And vnto Rome made him tributarie:
And sith of Rome Emperour was he
Till that fortune were his aduersarie.

O mightie Cesar, that in Thessalie
Ayenst Pompey father thine in law,
That of the Orient had the chiualrie,
As ferre as that the day begynneth to daw:
Then through knighthood hast take vengeaunce,
Saue few folke, that with Pompeius fled,
Through which thou put all the orient in awe:
Thanke fortune, that so well thee sped.

But now a little while I woll bewaile
This Pompey, this noble gouernour
Of Rome, which that fled at this battaile.
I say one of his men, a false traitour
His head off smote, to win him fauour
Of Julius, and to him the head brought:
Alas Pompey, of the Orient conquerour,
That fortune vnto such a fine thee wrought.

To Rome againe repaireth Julius
With his triumph lauriate full hie,
But on a time Brutus Cassius,
That euer had of his high estate enuie,
Full priuely had made conspiracie
Ayenst this Julius in subtill wise:
And cast the place, in which he should die,
With bodkins, as I shall you deuise.

This Julius vnto the Capitoll went
Upon a day, as he was wont to gone,
And in the Capitoll anon him hent
This false Brutus, and his other fone,
And sticked him with bodkins anone
With many a wound, and thus they let him lie:
But neuer grutched he at no stroke but one,
Or els at two, but if his storie lie.

So manly was this Julius of hart,
And so well loued stately honeste,
That tho his deadly wounds so sore smart,
His mantle ouer his hips yet cast he,
For no man should see his priuite:
And as he lay in dying in a traunce,
And wist verily that die should he,
Of honestie yet had he remembraunce.

Lucan to thee this storie I recommend,
And to Sueton, and Valerie also,
That of this storie writen word and end:
How that to these great conquerours two
Fortune was first a friend, and sith a fo.
No man trust vpon her fauour long,
But haue her in await for euermo,
Witnesse on all the conquerours strong.

Cresus.

THe rich Cresus, whilom king of Lide,
Of which Cresus, Cirus sore him drad,
Yet was he caught amid all his pride,
And to breme, men to the fire him lad:
But such a rain doun fro the firmament shad,
That queint the fire, and made him to scape:
But to beware yet no grace he had,
Till fortune on the gallowes made him gape.

When he escaped was, he could not stint
For to begin a new aray again:
He wend well, for that fortune him sent
Such hap, that he escaped through the rain,
That of his foes he might not be slain,
And eke a sweuen vpon a night he met,
Of which he was so proud, and eke so fain,
That on vengeaunce he all his heart set.

Upon a tree he was, as him thought,
There Jupiter him wisshe, both back and side:
And Phebus eke a faire towell him brought
To drie him with, & therwith were his pride,
And to his doughter that stood him beside,
Which that he knew in his sentence habound,
He bad her tell what it signified,
And she his dreame right thus did expound.

The tree (qd. she) the gallows is to meane,
And Jupiter betokeneth snow and rain,
And Phebus with his towell so cleane,
Betokeneth the Sun beames, sooth to sain:
Thou shalt honged be, father, certain,
Raine shall thee wash, and sun shall thee drie:
Thus warned him full plat and full plain
His doughter, that called was Phanie.

And honged was Cresus the proud king,
His roiall throne might him not auaile:
Tragedie is none, ne other manner thing,
That can in singing crie ne bewaile,
But that fortune all day woll assaile
With vnware stroke, ỹ reignes ỹ been proud:
For when men trusteth her, then wol she faile,
And couer her bright face with a cloud.

Peter of Spaine.

O Noble, O worthy Petro glory of Spain,
Whom fortune held so high in Maiestie:
Well ought men thy pitous death complaine,
Out of thy lond thy brother made thee flee,
And after at a siege by subtilte
Thou were betraied, and lad vnto his tent,
Where as he with his owne hond slue thee,
Succeeding in thy reigne and in thy rent.

The field of snow, with the gle of black therin,
Caught with ỹ limrod, coloured as the glede,
He brewed his cursednesse, and all this sinne:
The wicked neste was werker of this dede,
Not Charles ne Oliuer, that tooke aye hede
Of trouth and honour, but of Armorike

Genillion Oliuer, corrupt for mede
Brought this worthy king in such a brike.

Petro king of Cipre.

O Worthy Petro, king of Cipre also,
That Alexandrie wan by high maistrie
Full many an heathē wroughtest thou
Of which thine own lieges had enuie: (wo,
And for no thing but for thy chiualrie,
They in thy bed han slain thee by the morow,
Thus can fortune her whele gouerne and gie,
And out of ioy bringen men to sorow.

Barnabo Uicount.

OF Millaine great Barnabo Uicounte,
God of delite, and scourge of Lumbardie,
Why should not I thine infortune account,
Sens in estate thou clomben were so high:
Thy brothers sonne, ỹ was thy double alie,
For he thy neuew was, and sonne in lawe,
Within his prison made thee to die,
But why ne how not I, that thou were slaw.

Hugeline of Pise.

OF the Erle Hugeline of Pise the langoure
There may no tongue it tell for pite:
But a little out of Pise stont a toure,
In which toure in prison put was he,
And with him bene his little children three,
The eldest scarsely fiue yere of age:
Alas fortune, it was a great cruelte
Such birds for to put in such a cage.

Damned was he to die in that prison
For Roger, which that bishop was of Pise
Had on him made a false suggestion,
Through which ỹ people gan vpon him rise,
And put him in prison, in such a wise,
As ye haue heard, and meat and drinke he had
So small, that vnneth it may suffise,
And therewithall it was full poore and bad.

And on a day befell, that in that houre,
When ỹ his meat wont was to be brought,
The gailour shette the doores of the toure,
He heard it well, but he spake right nought:
And in his heart anon there fill a thought,
That they for hunger would doe him dien,
Alas (qd. he) alas that I was wrought,
Therewithall the teares fill fro his eyen.

His yong sonne, that thre yere was of age,
Unto him said, father, why doe ye wepe?
When will the gailour bring our potage,
Is there no morsell bread that ye doe kepe?
I am so hungrie, that I may not sleepe,
Now would God that I might sleepe euer,
Then should not hunger in my wombe crepe,
There nis nothing but bread ỹ me were leuer.

Thus day by day, this childe began to cry,
Till in his fathers arme adowne it lay,
And said, farewell father, I mote die,
And kist his father, and deide the same day.
And when the wofull father did it sey,
For wo, his armes two he gan to bite,
And said alas fortune, and well away,
Thy false whele my wo all may it wite.

His children wend, that it for hunger was
That he his armes gnewe, and not for wo,
And saied: father, doe not so (alas)
But rather eat the flesh vpon vs two,
Our flesh thou yaue vs, take our flesh vs fro
And cate inough: right thus they to him seid
And after that with a day or two
They laid hem in his lap adoun, and deid.

Thus ended is this mighty Earle of Pise,
Himselfe dispeired eke, for hunger starke:
Of this tragedie, it ought inough suffice
From high estate fortune away him carke.
Who so woll heare it in a longer wise
Readeth he the great poete of Italie
That hight Dante, for he can it all deuise
Fro point to point, not a word woll he faile.

¶ Here stinteth the knight the Monke of his tale, and here followeth the Prologue of the Nonnes Priest.

HO (qd. the knight) good sir no more of this:
That ye haue said, is right ynough iwis,
And mokel more: for little heauinesse
Is right inough to much folke, I gesse,
I say for me, it is a great disease,
Where as men haue be in welth and ease,
To heare of her suddaine fall, alas:
And the contrary is ioy and solas,
As when a man hath been in poore estate,
And climbeth vp, and wexeth fortunate,
And there abideth in prosperite:
Such things is gladsome, as thinketh me,
And of such thing were good for to tell.
Ye (qd. our host) by Saint Poules bell
Ye say right soth, this Monke clappeth loud,
He spake, how fortune couered with a cloud
I wote not what, and also of a Tragedie
Right now ye heard: And perdy no remedie
It is for to bewailen ne complaine
That that is done, and als it is a paine,

As

As ye haue ſaid, to heare of heauinneſſe.
Sir monke no more of this, ſo God you bleſſe,
Your tale anoyeth all the companie,
Such talking is not worth a butterflie,
For therein is there no diſport ne game:
Therfore ſir monk, dan Piers by your name,
I pray you heartely, tell vs ſom what els,
For ſikerly, nere clinking of your bels
That on your bridle honge on euery ſide,
By heauen king, that for vs all dide,
I ſhould ere this han fall down for ſlepe,
Although the ſlough had been neuer ſo depe:
Then had your tale all be tolde in vaine.
For certainely, as that thefe clerkes ſaine,
Where as a man may haue none audience,
Nought helpeth it to tell his ſentence.
And well I wote the ſubſtaunce is in me,
If any thing ſhall well reported be.
Sir, ſay ſom what of hunting I you pray.
Ne (qd. this Monke) I haue no luſt to play:
Now let another tell, as I haue told.
Then ſpake our hoſt with rude ſpeech & bold,
And ſaied vnto the Nonnes Prieſt anon,
Come nere ÿ prieſt, come hither thou ſir John.
Tell vs ſuch a thing, as may our herts glad,
Be blithe, though thou ride vpon a iade:
What though thy horſe be both foule & lene,
If he woll ſerue thee, recke not a bene:
Looke that thy heart be merry euermo.
Yes ſir (qd. he) yes hoſt, ſo mote I go:
But I be merry, I wis I woll be blamed,
And right anon, his tale he hath atamed,
And thus he ſaid, vnto vs euerichon,
This ſweet preeſt, this goodly man ſir John.

¶ The Nonnes Prieſt his tale.

Of a Cocke and an Henne: the morall whereof is to embrace true friendes, and to beware of flatterers.

A Poore widdowe ſomdele ſtept in age,
Was whilom dwelling in a poore cotage
Beſide a greue, ſtonding in a dale:
This widowe of which I tell you my tale,
Sens the day that ſhe was laſt a wife,
In patience, led a full ſimple life.
For litle was her cattell and her rent:
By huſbondry, of ſuch as God her ſent,
She found her ſelf, & eke her doughters two:
Three large ſowes had ſhe, and no mo:
Three kine, and eke a ſheep that hight Mall,
Well ſooty was her boure, and eke her hall,
In which ſhe ete many a ſlender mele.
Of poinant ſauce ne knew ſhe neuer adele,
Ne deinty morcell paſſed through her throte:
Her diet was accordaunt to her cote.
Repletion ne made her neuer ſicke,
A temperate diet was her phyſicke,
And exerciſe, and hearts ſuffiſaunce:
The gout let her nothing for to daunce,
Ne apoplexie ſhent not her hed:
No wine dranke ſhe, white ne red,
Her bord was moſt ſerued with white & black,
Milk & broun breed, in which ſhe fond no lack:
Sclinde bacon, and ſometime an eye or twey,
For ſhe was as it were a manner dey.
A yerd ſhe had, enclоſed all about
With ſticks, and drie dicked without:
In which ſhe had a cocke hight Chaunteclere,
In all the land, of crowing nas his pere.
His voice was merrier than the merry orgon
On maſſe daies, that in the churches gon:
Well ſikerer was his crowing in his loge,
Than is a clocke, or in an abbey an orloge.
By nature he knew eche aſſentioun
Of the equinoctiall in the toun.
For when degrees xv. were aſcended,
Then crew he, it might not be amended.
His combe was redder than the fine corall,
And battelled, as it had be a caſtle wall.
His bill was blacke, as any iet it ſhone,
Like aſure were his legs and his tone:
His nailes whiter than the lilly flour,
And like the burned gold was his colour.
This gentle cocke had in gouernaunce
Seuen hens, to done on his pleaſaunce:
Which were his ſuſters and his paramours,
And wonder like to him, as of colours:
Of which the faireſt hewed in the throte,
Was called faire damoſell Pertelote.
He ſtethered her a hundred times a day,
And ſhe him pleaſeth all that euer ſhe may.
Curteis ſhe was, diſcreet, and debonaire,
And compenable, and bare her ſelfe ſo faire
Sens the time that ſhe was ſeuennight old,
That truliche ſhe hath the hert in hold
Of Chaunteclere, looking on euery lith:
He loueth her ſo, that wel was him therwith,
But ſuch a ioy it was to heare him ſing,
When that the bright ſunne gan to ſpring
In ſweet accord: my leſe is ferre in lond.
For that time, as I haue vnderſtond,
Beaſts and birds coulden ſpeake and ſing.
And it ſo fell, that in the dawning,
As Chaunteclere among his wiues all
Sat on his perch, that was in the hall,
And next him ſat his faire Pertelote,
This Chaunteclere gan to grone in his throte,
As a man that in his dreme is dreched ſore:
And when that Pertelot thus herd him rore,

She was agast, and said heart dere,
What aileth you to grone in this manere?
Ye be a very sleper, fie for shame:
And he answered thus, by God madame,
I pray you, that ye take it not in griefe:
By God I mette I was in such mischiefe
Right now, that yet mine hert is sore afright.
Now God (qd, he) my sweuen hede a right,
And keepe my body out of foule prisoun.
Me mette, that I romed vp and down
Within your yerde, wher I saw a beest, (areest
Was like an hound, and would haue made
Vpon my body, and would haue had me deed,
His colour was betwixt yellow and reed,
And tipped was his taile, and both his eeres
With black, vnlike the remnant of his heeres.
His snout small, with glowing eyen twey:
Yet for his looke almost for feare I dey:
This causeth me my groning doubtles.
Away (qd. she) fie for shame heartlesse
Alas (qd she) for by that God aboue
Now haue ye lost my heart and all my loue,
I cannot loue a cowarde by my faith:
For certes, what so any woman saith,
We all desire, if that it might be,
To haue husbonds, hardy, wise and free,
And descrete, ne no niggard ne no foole,
Ne him that is agast of euery toole,
Ne none auantour by that God aboue,
How durst ye say for shame, vnto your loue,
That any sweuen might make you aferde?
Haue ye no mans heart, and haue a berde?
Alas, and con ye be aferd of sweuenis,
Nothing but vanitie god wotte in sweuen is.
Sweuens ben engendred of replecions,
And oft of fume, and of complecions.
When humors ben too habūdant in a wight:
certes this dreme, which ye haue met to night
Commeth of the great superfluitie
Of red color that is in you parde,
Which causen folke to dred in her dreames
Of arrowes, and of fire with red lemes,
Of red beasts that wollen hem bite,
Of conteke, and of wasps great and lite,
Right as the humour of melancholie,
Causeth many a man in sleepe to cry,
For feare of great bulles, and of beres blake,
Or els that black deuils woll hem take.
Of other humours could I tell also,
That werke a man in slepe much wo:
But I woll passe, as lightly as I can.
Lo Caton, which that was so wise a man
Said he not thus, do not force of dreames?
Now sir (qd. she) whē we flie fro the bemes,
For Gods loue, as taketh some laxatiue:
Vp perill of my soule, and of my life
I counsell you the best, I woll not lie,
That both of collor, and of melancholie
Ye purge you, and for ye shull not tarie,
Though in this town, be none Apotecarie,
I shall my selfe two herbes techen you,
That shall be for your heale, & for your prow
And in our yerde, tho hearbs shall I finde
The which haue her propertie by kinde
To purge you bineth, and eke aboue:
Forgetteth not this for Gods owne loue:
Ye be right colericke of complection,
Ware the sunne in his ascention
Ne finde ye not repleate of humours hote:
For if it do, I dare wel lay a grote,
That ye shall haue a feuer terciane,
Or els an ague that may be your bane.
A day or two ye shall haue digestiues
Of wormes, or ye take your laxatiues,
Of laurel, centorie, and of femetere,
Or els of elder berries, that grow there,
Of Catapuce, or of gaitres bereis,
Of yuie growing in our yard, that merry is.
Plucke hem vp as they grow, and eat hem in:
Be merry husbond, for your father kin,
Dredeth no dreme, I can say no more.
Madame (qd. he) gramercy of your lore.
But nathelesse, as touching dan Caton,
That of wisedome hath so great renoun,
Though he bad no dreames for to drede,
By God, men may in old bookes rede,
Of many a man, more of authoritie
Then euer Caton was so mote I thee.
That all the reuers saith of his sentence,
And haue well found by experience,
That dreames be significations
As well of ioy, as of tribulations,
That folke endure in this life present:
There nedeth to make of this non argumēt:
The very prefe sheweth it indeed.
One of the greatest authours that men rede,
Saith thus: that whilom two felowes went
On pilgrimage in full good intent,
And happed so they came into a town,
Where as there was such congregatioun
Of people, and eke of strait herbigage,
That they ne found as much as a cottage,
In which they both might ylodged be.
Wherefore they mote of necessite
As for that night depart company,
And each of hem goeth to his hostelry,
And tooke his lodging as it would fall.
That one of hem was lodged in a stall,
Farre in a yerd, with oxen of the plough:
That other man was lodged well ynough,
As was his auenture, or his fortune,
That vs gouerneth all, as in commune.
And so befell, long or it were day
This man met in his bed, there as he lay,
How that his fellow gan vpon him call,
And said (alas) for in an oxes stall

This

This night shall I be murdered, there I lie:
Now helpe me dere brother or I die,
In all hast, come to me (he said.)
This man out of his sleepe for feare abraid:
But when he was waked of his sleepe,
He turned him, and tooke of this no keepe,
Him thought his dreame was but a vanite:
Thus twise in his sleepe dreamed he.
And at the third time, yet his felaw,
Came as him thought, and said, I now am slaw:
Behold my bloudy wounds, deepe and wide,
Arise up early, in the morrow tide,
And at the West gate of the toun (qd. hee)
A cart full of dung there shalt thou see,
In which my body is hid full priuely,
Doe thou that cart arresten boldely.
My gold caused my death, sooth to saine,
And told him euery point how he was slaine
With a full pitous face, pale of hew:
And trust wel, his dreme he found right trew.
For on the morrow, as soone as it was day,
To his fellowes inne he tooke the way:
And when that he came to the oxes stall,
After his fellow he began to call.
The hosteler answerd him anone,
And said, sir, your fellow is igone,
As soone it was day he went out of toun:
This man gan fall in suspection
Remembring of his dreames that he mette,
And forth he goeth, no lenger would he lette,
Unto the West gate of the toune, and fond
A dung cart, as it were to dung lond,
That was araied in the same wise
As ye haue heard the dead man deuise:
And with hardy heart he gan to crie
Uengeaunce and iustice of this fellonie:
My fellow murdred is this same night,
And in this cart he lieth, gaping upright.
I crie out on the ministers (qd. he)
That shoulden keepe and rule this cite:
Harow alas, here lieth my fellow slaine.
What should I more of this tale saine?
The people out start, and cast the cart to ground,
And in the middle of the dung they found
The dead man, that murdred was all new.
O blisful God, that art so good and trew,
Lo, how thou bewrayest murder alway.
Murder woll out, that see we day by day:
Murder is so waitsome and abhominable
To God, that so iust is and reasonable,
That he ne woll it suffer hylled to bee:
Though it abide a yeare, two, or three,
Murder woll out, this is my conclusioun.
And right anon, the ministers of the toun
Haue hent the carter, and fast him pined,
And eke the hosteler so fast enguined,
That they beknew her wickednesse anone,
And were hanged up by the necke bone.
Here may ye see that dreames ben to drede.
And certes, in the same lefe I rede,
Right in the next chapter after this,
I gabbe not, so haue I ioy and blis:
Two men would haue passed ouer the see
For certaine causes to a ferre countree,
If the wind ne had be contrarie,
That made hem in a city to tarie,
That stood full merry upon an hauen side:
But on a day, ayenst an euen tide,
The wind gan chaunge, and blew as hem lest,
Jolly and glad they went to rest,
And cast hem full early for to saile,
But herken, to one man fell a great meruaile.
That one of hem in sleeping as he lay,
He mette a wonders dreme, again the day:
Him thought a man stood by his beds side,
And him commaunded, that he should abide,
And said him thus, if thou to morrow wend,
Thou shal be dreint, my tale is at an end.
He woke, and told his fellow what he met,
And praied him his voyage for to let,
As for that day, he prayd him for to abide.
His fellow that lay by his beds side,
Gan for to laugh, and scorned him full fast:
No dreme (qd. he) may so my hart agast,
That I woll let for to doe my things:
I set not a straw for thy dreamings,
For swenens ben but vanities and japes:
Men meten all day of oules and of apes,
And eke of many a mase therewithall,
And dremen of thing that neuer was, ne shall,
But sith I see that thou wolt here abide,
And thus slouthen wilfully thy tide,
God wot it rueth me, and haue good day,
And thus he took his leue, and went his way.
But ere he had halfe his course ysailed,
I not why, ne what mischaunce it ailed,
But casuelly the ships bottome to rent,
And ship and men under the water went
In sight of other ships there beside,
That with hem sailed at the same tide.
And therefore, faire Pertelot so dere,
By such ensamples old maist thou lere,
That no man should be too recheleste
Of dreames, for I say thee doubtlesse,
That many a dreme full sore is for to drede.
Lo, in the life of saint Kenelme, we rede,
That was Kenelphus sonne, the noble king
Of Mercenryke, how Kenelm mette a thing:
A little ere he were murdred on a dele,
His murder in his vision he sele:
His norice him expouned euery dele
His swenen, and bad him keepe him wele
For treason, but he was but seuen yere old,
And therefore little tale he thereof told
Of any dreame, so holy was his hert:
By God I had rather than my shert,

That ye haue herd his legend, as haue I.
Dame Pertelot, I ſay to you truly,
Macrobius, that writeth the auiſion
In Affricke of the worthy Scipion,
Affirmeth dremes, and ſaieth that they been
Warning of things, that we afore ſeene.
And furthermore, I pray you looketh well
In the old Teſtament, of Daniell,
If he held dreames for vanitee.
Read eke of Joſeph, and there ſhall ye ſee
Whether dremes ben ſómtime, but I ſay not all,
Warning of things that after ſhall fall.
Looke of Egipt the king, ỳ hight Pharao,
His baker and his butteler alſo,
Wheder they felt none effect in dremes?
Who ſo woll ſeeke acts of ſundry remes,
May rede of dreames many a wonder thing.
Lo Creſus, which that was of Lide king,
Mette he not that he ſat vpon a tree,
Which ſignified he ſhould honged bee?
Lo Andromacha, that was Hectors wife,
That day that Hector ſhould leſe his life,
She dreamed in the ſame night before,
How the life of Hector ſhould be lorne,
If that day he went vnto battaile:
She warned him, but it might not auaile,
He went for to fight neuertheleſſe,
But he was ſlaine anone of Achilles.
But that tale is all too long to tell,
And eke it is nigh day, I may not dwell.
Shortely I ſay, as for concluſion,
That I ſhall haue of this auiſion
Aduerſity: and I ſay furthermore,
That I ne tell of laxatiues no store,
For they ben venomous, I wot it wele:
I hem deſie, I loue hem neuer adele.
But let vs ſpeke of mirth, and ſtint all this,
Madame Pertelot, ſo haue I blis,
Of one thing God hath me ſent large grace:
For when I ſee the beautie of your face,
Ye ben ſo ſcarlet red about your eyen,
It maketh all my dread for to dien.
For all ſo ſiker, as In principio
Mulier eſt hominis confuſio.
Madame, the ſentence of this latine is,
Woman is mans ioy and his blis:
For when I fele on night your ſoft ſide,
Albeit that I may not on you ride,
For that our perch is made ſo narrow, alas,
I am ſo full of ioy and of ſolas,
That I deſie both ſweuen and dreme:
And with ỳ word he flew doun fro the beme,
For it was day, and eke the hennes all:
And with a chucke he gan hem for to call,
For he had found a corne lay in the yerd:
Royall he was, and no more aferd:
He feddred Pertelot twenty time,
And trode her eke as oft, ere it was prime.
He looketh as it were a grim lioun,
And on his toes he romed vp and doun.
Him deigned not to ſet his foot to the ground:
He chucked, when he had a corne yfound,
And to him then ran his wiues all.
As royall as a prince in his hall,
Leaue I this Chaunteclere in his paſture:
And after woll I tell of his aduenture.
When ỳ month in which the world began,
ỳ hight March, in which God firſt made man
Was complete, and paſſed were alſo
Sith March began, thirtie dayes and two,
Befell that Chaunteclere in all his pride,
His ſeuen wiues walking him beſide,
Caſt vp his eyen to the bright ſunne,
That in the ſigne of Taurus was irunne
Twenty degrees and one, & ſomewhat more:
He knew by kind, and by none other lore,
ỳ it was prime, & crew with a blisfull ſteuen:
The ſunne he ſaid is clombe vp to heuen
Forty degrees & one, & ſomewhat more I wis,
Madame Pertelot, my worlds blis,
Herken how theſe blisfull birds ſing,
And ſee the freſh floures how they gan ſpring.
Full is mine heart of reuell, and ſollas.
But ſuddainely him fell a ſorrowfull caas:
For euer the latter end of ioy is wo,
God wote, worldly ioy is ſoone ago:
And if a rethore could faire endite,
He in a chronicle might ſafely write
As for a ſouraine notabilite.
Now euery wiſe man herken to me,
This ſtory is all ſo true I vndertake,
As is the booke of Launcelot du lake,
That women holden in full great reuerence:
Now woll I turne ayen to my ſentence.
A colfox (full of ſleight and iniquitee)
That in the groue had wonned yeares three,
By high imagination afore caſt,
The ſame night through the hedge braſt
Into the yerd, there Chaunteclere the faire
Was wont and eke his wiues to repaire:
And in a bedde of worts ſtill he lay,
Till it was paſſed vndern of the day,
Waiting his time, on Chaunteclere to fall:
As gladly done theſe homicides all,
That in await lie to murder men.
O falſe murder, lurking in thy den:
O new Scariot, and new Ganilion,
O falſe diſſimuler, O Greeke Sinon
That broughteſt Troy vtterly to ſorrow,
O Chaunteclere, accurſed be the morrow,
That thou in thy yerd flew from the beames:
Thou were full well warned by thy dremes,
That ilke day was perilous to thee.
But what ỳ God afore wote, muſt needs bee
After the opinion of certaine clerkis,
Witneſſe of him that any clerke is,

That

That in schole is great altercation
In this matter, and great disputation
And hath been, of an hundred thousand men.
But I ne cannot boult it to the bren,
As can the holy doctour saint Austin,
Or Boece, or the bishop Bradwardin,
Whether that Gods worthy forewéting
Straineth me needly to doe a thing:
(Needly clepe I simple necessite)
Or if the free choice be graunted me
To do the same thing, or do it nought,
Though God forewot it, or it was wrought:
Or of his weting straineth neuer a dele,
But by necessitie condicionele,
I will not haue to done of such matere,
My tale is of a cocke, as ye shall here,
That took his counsaile of his wife with sorow
To walke in the yerd upon the morow,
That he had met the dreme, as I you told.
Womens counsailes been often full cold:
Womens counsaile brought us first to wo,
And made Adam fro paradice to go,
There as he was full merry, and well at ease.
But for I not, whom I might displease
If I counsaile of wemen would blame,
Passe ouer, I said it in my game. (tere,
Rede th authors, where they trete of such mat-
And what they say of women, ye mow here.
These ben the Cockes wordes, and not mine,
I can of women no harme deuine.

Faire in the sond, to bath her merely,
Lieth Pertelot, and all her sustres by
Ayenst the sunne, and Chaunteclere so free,
Sung merrier than the Mermaid in the see.
For Philiologus, sayeth vtterly,
How that they singen well and merely.

And so befell as he cast his eie
Among the wortes on a butterflie,
He was ware of the fox that lay full low,
Nothing then list him for to crow,
But cried cocke, cocke, and vp he stert,
As one that was affraid in his hert.
For naturally beasts desireth to flee
Fro her contrarie, if he may it see,
Tho he neuer erst had seene it with his eie.
This Chaunteclere, when he gan him espie,
He would haue fled, but the fox anone
Said: gentle sir alas, what will ye done?
Be ye afraid of me that am your friend?

Now certes, I were worse than a fiend,
If I to you would harme or villanie:
I am not come your counsaile to espie.
But truly the cause of my comming
Was only for to heren how ye sing:
For soothly ye haue as merry a steuen,
As any angell hath, that is in heuen,
Therewith ye haue of musicke more feeling,
Than had Boece, or any that can sing.
My lord your father, God his soule bless.
And eke your mother of her gentilesse
Haue in my house ben, to my great ease:
And certes sir, full faine would I you please.
But for men speaken of singing, I will sey,
So mote I brouken well mine eyen twey,
Saue you, ne herd I neuer man so sing,
As did your father in the morning.
Certes it was of heart, all that he song,
And for to make his voice the more strong,
He would so paine him, that with both his eyen
He must winke, so loud he must crien,
And stonden on his tiptoes therewithall,
And stretchen forth his necke long and small.
And eke he was of such discretion,
That there was no man in no region,
That him in song or wisdome might passe.
I haue well red dan Burnel the asse
Among his verses, how there was a Cocke,
For that a preests sonne yaue him a knocke
Upon his legs, while he was yong and nice,
He made him for to lese his benefice.
But certaine there is no comparison
Betwixt the wisdome and discretion
Of your father, and of his subtilty.
Now singeth sir, for saint charity,
Let see, can ye your father counterfete?

This Chaunteclere his wings gan to bete,
As a man that could not his treason espie,
So was he rauished with his flatterie.

Alas ye lords, many a false flatterour
Is in your court, and many a false lesingour,
That pleaseth you well more, by my faith,
Than he that soothfastnesse vnto you saith.
Readeth Ecclesiast of flatterie,
Beware ye lords of her trecherie.

This Chaunteclere stood high vpon his toos
Stretching his necke, and held his eyen cloos,
And gan to crowen loud for the nones:
And dan Russell the fox start vp at ones,
And by the gorget hent Chaunteclere,
And on his backe toward the wood him bere,
For yet was there no man that him sued.

O destinie, that mayst not be eschued:
Alas that Chaunteclere flew fro the beames,
Alas that his wife rought not of dreames:
And on a friday fell all this mischaunce.

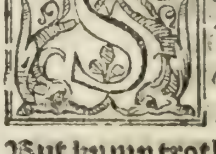
O Venus that art goddesse of pleasaunce,
Sithens that thy seruant was this chaunteclere,
And in thy seruice did all his powere,
More for delite, than the world to multiplie,
Why wouldest thou suffer him on thy day to die?

O Gaulfride, deere maister soueraine,
That when that worthy king Richard was slaine
With shot, complainedest his death so sore,
Why ne had I now thy science and thy lore,
The friday for to chide, as did ye?
For on a friday, sothly slaine was he.

Then

Than wold I shew you how ỹ I coud plaine,
For Chaunteclercs drede, and for his paine.
Certes such cry, ne lamentation
Nas neuer of Ladies made, whan that Ilion
Was won, & Pirrus with his bright sword
When he hent king Priam by the beard,
And slough him (as saieth Eneidos)
As made all the hens in the cloos,
When they had lost of Chaunteclere the sight:
But soueraynly dame Pertelot shright
Well louder than did Hasdrubalies wife,
When that her husbond hath lost his life,
And that the Romanes had brent Cartage.
She was so full of torment and of rage,
That wilfully into the fire she stert,
And brent her selfe, with a stedfast hert.
O wofull hennes, right so cryed ye,
As when that Nero brent the cite
Of Rome, cryed the senatours wiues,
For that her husbonds should lese her liues,
Withouten gilt Nero hath hem slaine.
Now woll I turne to my tale againe.
The sely widow, and her doughters two,
Heard the hennes crien and make such wo,
And out at the doze stert they anon,
And saw the foxe toward the wood gon,
And bare vpon his backe the Cocke away:
They cryed out harow and well away:
A ha the Foxe, and after hem they ran,
And eke with staues, many another man:
Ran Coll our dogge, Talbot, & eke Garlond,
And Malkin, with her distaffe in her hond:
Ran Cow & Calfe, and eke the very Hogges,
For they so sore aferd were of the dogges,
And shouting of men, and of women eke,
They ran ỹ they thoght her herts should breke.
They yelleu as loud feends do in hell:
The Duckes cried as men would hem quell:
The Geese for feare flew ouer the trees,
Out of the hiues came the swarme of Bees,
So hideous was the noise, a benedicite:
Certes Iacke Straw, ne all his meine,
Ne made neuer shoutes halfe so shrill,
When that they would any Flemming kill,
As that day was made vpon the Foxe.
Of brasse they blew the trompes and of boxe,
Of horne & bone, in which they blew & pouped
And therewith they shriked and shouted:
It semed, as though heauen should fall.
Now good men I pray you herken all.
Lo how fortune turneth sodainly
The hope and the pride of her enemy.
This Cocke that lay vpon the Foxe backe,
In all his drede, vnto the Foxe he spake,
And saied: good sir, if I were as ye,
Yet should I say, as wise God helpe me,
Turneth ayen, ye proud churles all:
A very pestilence vpon you fall,
Now am I come vnto this woods side,
Maugre your hed, the Cocke shall here abide,
I woll him eat in faith, and that anon.
The Foxe answerd, in faith it shall be don:
And as he spake the word, all sodainly
This Cocke brake from his mouth deliuerly,
And high vpon a tree he flew anon:
And when the Foxe saw that he was gon,
Alas (qd. he) O Chaunteclere, alas,
I haue (qd. he) done to you trespasse,
In as much as I made you aferd,
When I you hent, & brought out of your yerd.
But sir, I did it in no wicked entent:
Come downe, & I shall tell you what I ment,
I shall you say sothe, God helpe me so.
Nay then (qd. he) I shrew vs both two.
And first I shrew my selfe, both blood & bones,
If thou begile me ofter than ones:
Thou shalt no more with thy flatterie
Do me to sing with a winking eye.
For he that winketh, when he should see,
All wilfully, God let him neuer thee.
Nay (qd. ỹ Fox) but God yeue him mischance,
That is so indiscrete of gouernance,
That iangleth, when that he shold haue pees.
Lo, soth it is for to be recheles
And negligent, and trust on flatterie.
But ye that hold this tale for a lie
As of a Foxe, of a Cocke, and of a Hen,
Taketh the morality good men.
For saint Poule sayeth, All that writen is,
To our doctrine it is written wis.
Taketh the frute, and let the chaffe be still.
Now good God, if that it be thy will,
As saieth my Lord, so make vs all good men:
And bring vs to the high blisse. Amen.

¶ The Manciples Prologue.



Ir Nonnes Priest, our host saied anone,
I blessed be thy breech and eue-
rie stone:
This was a merrie tale of
Chaunteclere:
But by my troth, if thou were seculere,
Thou wouldest be a tredfoule aright:
For if thou haue corage as thou hast might
Thee were nede of hens, as I wene,
Ye more than seuen times seuentene.
See which braunes hath this gentle priest,
So great a necke, and such a large breest:
He loketh like a Sparhauke with his eyen,
Him needeth not his colours for to dien
With Brasill, ne with grain of Portingale.
But sir, yet faire fall you for your tale.
And after that, he with full merrie chere
Saied to another man, as ye shall here.

Wote

Wote ye not where stondeth a little towne,
Which that is called Bob vp and downe
Under the blee, in Canterburie way?
There gan our host to pape and to play,
And saied: sirs, what? Dunne is in the mire:
Is there no man for prater ne for hire,
That woll awake our fellow behind?
A theefe him might full lightly rob and bind:
See how he nappeth, see for cockes bones
How he woll fall from his hors atones.
Is that a Cook of London, with mischaunce?
Doe him comfort, he knoweth his penaunce:
For he shall tell a tale by my fey,
Although it be not worth a bottle of Hey.
Awake thou cook (qd. he) God yeue thee sorow
What eileth thee to sleepe by the morow?
Hast thou had fleen al night, or art thou drōk?
Or hast thou al night with some quean iswōk,
So that thou maiest not hold vp thine hed?
This Cooke ỹ was full pale, & nothing red,
Saied: sir hoste, so God my soule yblesse,
There is fallen on me great heuinesse,
But I not why, me were leuer to slepe,
Than the best gallon of wine in Chepe.
Well (qd. the Maniciple) if it may doe ease
To thee sir Cooke, and to no wight displease,
Which that here ride in this companie,
And that our hoste will of his courtesie,
I woll as now excuse thee of thy tale.
For in good faith thy visage is full pale:
Thine eyen dase, soothly as me thinketh,
And well I wot, thy breath full soure stinketh,
That sheweth wel thou art not wel disposed:
Of me certaine thou shalt not be glosed,
See how he gaipeth to this dronken wight,
As though he would vs swallow anon right.
Hold close thy mouth, by thy father kin:
The deuill of hell set his foot therein,
Thy cursed breath will infect vs all:
Fie stinking swine, fie foule mote thee befall.
Taketh heed sirs of this lustie man,
How sweet sir, woll ye iust at the wan,
Thereto me thinketh ye be well shape:
I trow that ye haue dronken wine ape,
And that is when as men play at straw.
And with his speech ỹ cooke waxed all wraw,
And on the Maniciple he gan to nod fast
For lacke of speech: & doun his hors him cast
Where as he lay, till that men him vp tooke:
This was a faire cheuisaunce of a cooke:
Alas that he ne had hold him by his ladill.
And ere that he ayen were in the sadill,
There was a great shouing to and fro
To lift him vp, and much care and wo,
So vnweldy was this selly palled gost:
And to the Maniciple then spake our host,
Because that drinke hath domination
Upon this man, by my saluation
I trow lewdly woll he tell his tale:
For were it wine, or old moistie ale
That he hath dronk, he speketh so in the nose,
And sniueleth fast, and eke hath the pose.
He also hath to doe more than ynough
To keepe him on his caple out of the slough:
And if he fall from his caple eftsone,
Then shall we all haue ynough to doen
In lifting vp againe his dronken coree.
Tell on thy tale, of him make I no force.
But yet Maciple, in faith thou art too nice,
Thus openly to reprene him of his vice:
Another day he woll peraventure
Reclaime thee, and bring thee to the lure:
I meane that he speake will of small things,
And for to pinch at thy reckenings
That were not honest, if it came to preue.
No (qd. ỹ Maciple) ỹ were a great mischeue:
So might he bring me into the snare.
Yet had I leuer pay for the Ware (striue:
Which he rideth on, than he should with me
I woll not wrath him, so mote I thriue:
That I spake, I saied it but in bourd.
And wote ye what, I haue here in my gourd
A draught of wine, ye of a ripe grape,
And right anon ye shall see a good pape.
This Cooke shall drinke therof, if I may,
Up paine of my life he woll not say nay.
And certainly, to tellen as it was,
Of this vessell the Cooke dranke fast, alas,
What needeth it, he dranke ynough before.
And when he had pouped in his horne,
To the Maniciple he tooke the gourd again,
And of the drinke the Cooke was full fain:
And thonked him in such wise as he coud.
Then gan our host to laugh wonder loud,
And saied: I see well it is necessary
Where ỹ we gon good drinke with vs to cary
For that will turne rancour and disease
To accord and loue, and many a word pease.
O Bacchus, yblessed be thy holy name,
That so canst turne earnest into game:
Worshipped and thonked be to thy deite.
Of that matter ye get no more of me.
Tell on thy tale thou Maniciple, I thee pray.
Well sir (qd. he) herkeneth what I say.

¶ The Manciples Tale.

Phœbus keepeth a white Crow, which can speak as a Iay. The crow accuseth his wife, of whom he was too jelous, to haue plaied false in his absence. Hereupon with an arrow he slaieth his wife: but after repenting of his rashnesse, he taketh reuenge of the Crow.

When Phebus dwelled here in earth adoun, (tioun:
As old bookes to vs make mencHe was the most lustie batchelor

Of

Of all the world, and eke the best archer:
He slough Phyton the serpent, as he lay
Sleeping agenst the Sunne vpon a day.
And many another noble worthy dede
He with his bow wrought, as men mow rede.
Play he could on every minstralcie,
And sing, that it was a melodie
To heren of his clere voice the soun.
Certes the king of Thebes, Amphioun,
That with his song, walled the cite,
Could neuer sing halfe so well as he:
And there to he was the seemelist man
That is or was sith the world began.
What needeth it his feture to discriue?
For in this world nas none so faire aliue.
He was therewith fulfilled of gentilnesse,
Of honour, and of perfite worthinesse.
This Phebus, ỹ was floure of bachelerie,
As well in freedome, as in chiualrie,
For his disport, in signe eke of victorie
Of Phyton, so as telleth vs the storie,
Was wont to beare in his hond a bow:
Now had this Phebus in his hous a crow
Within a cage yfostred many a day,
And taught it speech, as men teach a Jay.
White was this crow, as is a white Swan,
And counterfete the speech of every man
He could, when as he should tell a tale.
There was in all this world no Nightingale
Ne could by an hundred thousand dele
Sing so wonderly merry and wele.
Now had this Phebus in his hous a wife,
Which that he loued more than his life,
And night and day did euer his diligence
Her for to please, and doe her reuerence:
Saue onely, if I the sooth shall sain,
Jelous he was, and wold haue kept her fain.
For him were loth yaped for to bee,
And so is every wight in such degree:
But all for nought, for it auaileth nought:
A good wife, that is clene of werke & thought,
Should not be kept in none await certaine:
And truly the labour is in vaine
To keepe a shrew, for it will not be:
This hold I for a very nicete
To spill labour, for to keepe our wiues:
Thus writeth old clerkes in her liues.
But now to purpose, as I first began:
This worthy Phebus doth all that he can
To please her, wening through such pleasaunce
And for his manhood & for his gouernaunce
That no man should put him from her grace:
But God it wote, there may no man embrace,
As to distraine a thing, which that nature
Hath naturally set in a creature.
Take any bird, and put him in a cage,
And doe all thine entent, and thy corage,
To foster it tenderly with meat and drinke
Of all dainties that thou canst bethinke,
And keepe it also cleanely as thou may,
Although the cage of gold be neuer so gay,
Yet had this bird by twentie thousand fold,
Leuer in a forrest, that is wide and cold,
Goe eaten wormes, and such wretchednesse.
For euer this bird will doe his businesse
To escape out of his cage when he may:
His libertie the bird desireth aye.
Let take a Cat, and foster her with milke
And tender flesh, and make her couch of silke,
And let her see a Mouse go by the wall,
Anon she weiueth flesh, and couch, and all,
And euery deintie that is in that hous,
Such appetite hath she to eat the Mous.
Lo here hath lust his domination,
And appetite flemeth discretion.
A shee Wolfe hath also a villanous kind,
The leudest Wolfe that euer she may find,
Or least of reputation, that she will take
In time when her lust to haue a make.
All these ensamples speake I by those men
That been vntrue, and nothing by women.
For men haue euer a licorous appetite
On lower thing to performe her delite,
Than on her wiues, be they neuer so faire,
Ne neuer so true, ne so debonaire.
Flesh is so newfangle, with mischaunce,
That we ne con in nothing haue pleasaunce,
That sowneth vnto vertue any while.
Now this Phebus which thought no gile,
Deceiued was for all his solite:
For vnder him another had she,
A man of little reputation,
Nought worthy to Phebus in comparison:
The more harme is, it happeth oft so:
Of which there commeth much harme & wo.
And so befell, when Phebus was absent,
His wife anon hath for her lemman sent.
Her lemman, certes that is a knauish speech,
Forgeue it me, and that I you beseech.
The wise Plato saieth, as ye mow rede,
The word must needs accord with the dede.
If men should tell properly a thing,
The word must cousin be to the working.
I am a boistous man, right thus say I,
There is but little difference truly
Betwixt a wife that is of high degree,
(If of her body dishoneste be)
And a poore wench, any other than this,
If it so be they werke both amis.
But for the gentill is in estate aboue,
She shal be called his wench or his lemman:
And God it wote, mine owne dere brother,
Men lay as low that one as that other.
Right so betwixt a titlelesse tiraunt,
And an outlaw, or a theefe erraunt,
The same I say, there is no difference,

(To

(To Alexander was told this sentence)
That for the tyrant is of greater might
By force of meine to slea doune right,
And bren house and home, and make all plain,
Lo therfore is he called a captain.
And for the outlaw hath but small meine,
And maie not doe so great an harme, as he,
Ne bring a Countrey to so great mischiefe,
Men callen him an outlawe or a thiefe.
But for I am a man not textuele,
I woll not tell of textes neuer a dele.
I woll goe to my tale, as I began.
Whē Phebus wife had sent for her lēman,
Anon they wrought all their lust volage.
This white crowe, that hing aie in the cage,
Beheld their werke, and saied neuer a word:
And when home was come Phebus the lord,
This crowe sang, cuckow, cuckow, cuckow.
What bird (qd. Phebus) what singest thou?
Were thou not wont so merily to sing,
That to my hart it was reioysing
To heare thy voice? alas, what song is this?
By God (qd. he) I sing not amis:
Phebus (qd. he) for all thy worthinesse,
For all thy beaute, and thy gentilnesse,
For all thy song, and thy minstralcie,
For all thy waiting, blered is thine ye,
With one of little reputation,
Not worth to thee in comparison
The mountenance of a gnat, so mote I thriue:
For on the bedde, thy wife I saw him swiue,
What wol you more? ye crow anon him told,
By full sad tokens, and by words bold,
How that his wife had doen her lecherie
Him to great shame, and to great villanie,
And told him eft, he sawe it with his yen.
This Phebus gā away ward for to wryen.
Him thought his wofull hart brast a two.
His bowe he bent, and set therein a flo,
And in his ire he hath his wife slain:
This is the effect, there is no more to sain.
For sorrow whereof he brake his minstralsie:
Both Harpe and Lute, Getern, and Sautrie,
And eke he brake his arrowes, and his bowe,
And after that, thus spake he to the crowe.
Traitour (qd. he) with tong of Scorpion
Thou hast me brought to my confusion:
Alas that I was wrought, why nere I dedde.
O dere wife, O gemme, O lustie hedde,
That were to me so sad, and eke so true,
Now lyest thou dedde with face pale of hewe
Full giltlesse, that durst I sweare twis:
O rakell hond, to do so foule amis.
O troubled wit, O ye retchlesse,
That vnauised smitest guiltlesse.
O wan trust, full of false suspection,
Where was thy wit and thy discretion?
Oh euerie man beware of rekilnesse,
Ne trowe nothing, without strong witnesse.
Smite not to sone, er that thou wete why,
And be auised well and sikerly
Or ye doe any execution
Upon your ire, for suspection.
Alas, a thousand folke hath rekell ire
Fully fordoen, and brought hem in the mire.
Alas for sorowe I woll my selfe slc.
And to the crowe, O false theefe saide he,
I woll thee quite anon thy false tale.
Thou song whilom as any Nitingale,
Now shalt thou false theefe, thy song forgone,
And eke thy white fethers euerychone.
Ne neuer in all thy life shalt thou speake,
Thus shall men on a traitour be awreake.
Thou and thine offspring euer shall be blake
Ne neuer after sweet noise shall ye make
But euer crie ayenst tempest and raine,
In token, that through thee my wife is slaine.
And to the crow he stert, and that anon,
And pulled of his white fethers euerichon,
And made him black, & reft him of all his song
And eke his speech, & out at doore him slong
Unto the deuill, which I him betake:
And for this cause been all crowes blake.
Lordings, by this ensample I wol you pray
Beware, and take kepe what I say:
Ne telleth neuer no man in your life,
How that another man hath dight his wife,
He woll you hate mortally certain.
Dan Salomon, as wise Clerkes sain,
Teacheth a man to kepe his tong well:
But as I saied, I am not textuel.
But natheless, thus taught me my dame,
My sonne thinke on the crowe a Gods name:
My sonne kepe wel thy tong, & kepe thy frend
A wicked tong is worse then a fend:
My sonne, from a fende men may him blesse.
My sonne, God of his endlesse goodnesse,
Walled a tong with teeth, and lippes eke,
For man should him auise what he speke.
My sonne, full oft for too mikell speach,
Hath many a man be spilt, as Clerkes teach:
But for little speech spoken auisedly
Is no man shent, to speake generally.
My sonne, thy tong shouldest thou restrain,
At all times, but when thou doest thy pain
To speake of God in honour and prayere.
The first vertue sonne, if thou wolt lere,
Is to restrain, and kepe well thy tong:
Thus learne Children, when they be yong.
My sonne, of mikell speaking vnauised,
(There lesse speaking had inough sufficed)
Cometh mikell harme, thus was me taught,
In much speech there sinne wanteth naught.
Wostc thou wherefore a rakell tong serueth:
Right as a sword forcutteth and forkerueth
An arme on two, my dere sonne right so

A tongue cutteth friendship all atwo.
A iangler is to God abhominable,
Rede Salomon, so wise and honourable,
Rede Dauid in his Psalmes, rede Seneck,
My sonne speake not, ne with thy head beck:
☞ Dissimule as thou were deafe, if ỹ thou here
The ianglour speaketh of perlous mattere.
The Flemming saieth, learne if that thou lest,
☞ That little iangling causeth much rest.
☞ My sonne, If thou no wicked word hast said,
Thee dare not drede for to be bewraid:
But he that hath misdaied, I dare well saine,
He may by no way clepe his word againe.
Thing that is saied, is saied, and forth it goth,
Though him repent, or be neuer so loth,
He is thrall to him, to whom he hath saied
A tale, for which he is now euill apaied.
☞ My sonne beware, and be none authour new
Of tidings, whether they be false or trew.
Where so thou come, among high or low,
Keepe well thy tong, and thinke on the crow.

¶ The Plowmans Prologue.

THe Plowman plucked vp his plowe,
When Midsummer Moone was comen in,
And saied, his beastes should eat ynowe,
And lieg in the grasse vp to the chin:
They been feeble both Oxe and Cowe,
Of hem nis left but bone and skin:
He shoke off shere, and coulter off drowe,
And honged his harnis on a pin.

He tooke his tabard and his staffe eke,
And on his head he set his hat:
And saied he would saint Thomas seeke,
On pilgrimage he goth forth plat:
In scrippe he bare both bread and leekes,
He was forswonke and all forswat,
Mẽ might haue seen through both his chekes,
And euery wang tooth, and where it sat.

Our hoste beheld well all about:
And saw this man was Sunne yburnt,
He knew well by his senged snout,
And by his clothes that were to rent,
He was a man wont to walke about,
He nas not alway in cloyster ypent:
He could not religiously lout,
And therefore was he fully shent.

Our hoste him asked, what man art thou?
Sir (quoth he) I am an hine,
For I am wont to goe to plow,
And earne my meat ere that I dine:
To swette and swinke I make auow,
My wife and children therewith to find,
And serue God and I wist how,
But we leaud men been full blind.

For clerkes say we shullen be faine
For her liuelod swette and swinke,
And they right nought vs giue againe,
Neither to eat, ne yet to drinke:
They mowe by law, as they saine,
Us curse and damne to hell brinke,
Thus they putten vs to paine
With candles queint, and bels clinke.

They make vs thrals at her lust,
And saine we mow not els be saued:
They haue the corne, and we the dust,
Who speakes there againe, they say he raued.
What man (qd. our host) canst thou preach?
Come neere and tell vs some holy thing:
Sir (quoth he) I heard ones teach
A priest in pulpit a good preaching.

Say on (quoth our host) I thee beseech:
Sir, I am readie at your bidding:
I pray you that no man me reproch
While that I am my tale telling.

¶ The Plowmans Tale.

A complaint against the pride and couetousnesse of the Cleargie: made no doubt by Chaucer, with the rest of the Tales. For I haue seene it in written hand in Iohn Stowes Librarie in a booke of such antiquitie, as seemeth to haue been written neare to Chaucers time.

ASterne strife is stirred newe,
In many steedes in a stound,
Of sundry seeds that been sewe,
It seemeth that some been vnsound:
For some be great growne on ground,
Some been souple, simple, and small,
Whether of hem is falser found,
The falser foule mote him befall.

That one side is, that I of tell
Popes, Cardinals, and Prelates,
Parsons, Monkes, and Freres fell,
Priours, Abbots, of great estates:
Of heauen and hell they keepe the yates,
And Peters successours they been all,
This is deemed by old dates,
But falshed foule mote it befall.

The other side ben poore and pale,
And people put out of pease,
And seeme caitiues sore a cale,
And euer in one without encrease,
Icleped lollers and londlese:
Who toteth on hem they ben vntall
They ben araied all for the peace,
But falshed foule mote it befall.

Many a countrey haue I sought,
To know the falser of these two:
But euer my trauaile was for nought,
All so ferre as I haue go.
But as I wandred in a wro,
In a wood beside a wall,
Two foules saw I sitten tho
The falser foule mote him befall.

That one did plete on the Popes side
A Grifon of a grimme stature,
A Pellicane withouten pride
To these lollers laied his lure:
He mused his matter in measure,
To counsaile Christ euer gan he call:
The Grifon shewed a sharpe fupre.
But falshed foule mote it befall.

The Pellicane began to preach
Both of mercie and of meekenesse:
And saied that Christ so gan vs teach,
And meeke and merciable gan blesse:
The Euangely beareth witnesse,
A lambe he likeneth Christ ouer all,
In tokening that he meekest was,
Sith pride was out of heauen fall.

And so should euery Christened be:
Priestes, Peters successours
Beth lowliche and of low degree,
And vsen none earthly honours:
Neither croune, ne curious couetours,
Ne pillour, ne other proud pall,
Ne nought to cofren vp great treasours,
For falshed foule mote it befall.

Priestes should for no cattell plede,
But chasten hem in charite:
Ne to no battaile should men lede,
For inhaunsing of her owne degree.
Nat wilne sittings in high see,
Ne soueraignty in hous ne hall,
All worldly worship defie and flee:
For who willeth highnes, foule shal fall.

Alas who may such saints call,
That wilneth welde earthly honour:
As low as Lucifere such shal fall
In balefull blacknesse to builden her boure,
That eggeth the people to errour,
And maketh them to hem thrall:
To Christ I hold such one traitour,
As low as Lucifer such one shall fall.

That willeth to be kings peeres,
And higher than the Emperour:
And some that were but poore Freres,
Now wollen waxe a warriour.
God is not her gouernour,
That holdeth no man his permagall,
While couetise is her counsailour,
All such falshed mote need fall.

That high on horse willeth ride
In glitterande gold of great array,
Ipainted and portred all in pride,
No common knight may go so gay:
Chaunge of clothing euery day,
With golden girdles great and small
As boistous as is Beare at bay,
All such falshed mote need fall.

With pride punisheth they the poore,
And some they sustaine with sale,
Of holy church make they an hore,
And filleth her wombe with wine and ale:
With money fill they many a male,
And chaffren churches when they fall,
And telleth the people a leaud tale,
Such false faitours foule hem befall.

With chaunge of many manner meates,
With song and solas sitting long,
And filleth her wombe, and fast freres,
And from the meat to the gong:
And after meat with harpe and song,
And each man mote hem Lords call,
And hote spices euer among,
Such false faitours foule hem fall.

And mitres mo than one or two,
Ipearled as the queenes head:
A staffe of gold, and perrie to,
As heauie as it were made of lead,
With cloth of gold both new and redde,
With glitterande gold as greene as gall:
By dome they damne men to dedde,
All such faitours foule hem fall.

And Christs people proudly curse
With broad boke, and brasing bell:
To put pennies in her purse,
They wol sell both heauen and hell,
And in her sentence and thou wilt dwell,
They willen gesse in her gay hall,
And thou the sooth of hem will tell,
In great cursing shalt thou fall.

That is blessed, that they blesse,
And cursed that they curse woll:
And thus the people they oppresse,
And haue their lordships at full.
And many be marchaunts of wull,
And to purse pennies woll come thrall:
The poore people they all to pull,
Such false faitours foule hem fall.

Lords also mote to hem loute,
Obeysaunt to her brode blessing.
They riden with her royall route
On a courser, as it were a king,
With saddle of gold glittering,
With curious harneis quaintly crallit,
Stirrops gay of gold masshing,
All such falshed foule befall it.

Christes ministers clepen they beene,
And rulen all in robberie:
But Antichrist they seruen clene,
Attired all in tyrannie:
Witnesse of Johns prophecie,
That Antichrist is her admirall,
Tiffelers attired in trecherie,
All such faitours foule hem fall.

Who saith, that some of hem may sinne,
He shall be dome to be ded:
Some of hem woll gladly winne
All ayenst that which God forbed:
All holiest they clepen her head,
That of her rule is regall:
Alas that euer they eaten bread,
For all such falshed wol foule fall.

Her head loueth all honour,
And to be worshipped in word and dede,
Kings mote to hem kneele and coure,
To the Apostles that Christ forbede.
To popes hestes such taketh more hede,
Than to keepe Christs commaundement:
Of gold and siluer mote been her wede,
They holdeth him hole omnipotent.

He ordaineth by his ordinaunce
To parish priestes a powere:
To another a greater auaunce,
A greater point to his mistere.
But for he is highest in earth here,
To him reserues he many a point:
But to Christ that hath no pere,
Reserues he neither opin ne point.

So seemeth he aboue all,
And Christ aboue him nothing:
When he sitteth in his stall,
He damneth and saueth as him thinke,
Such pride tofore God doth stinke:
An angell bad John to him not knele,
But onely to God doe his bowing,
Such willers of worship must need cull feele.

They ne clepen Christ, but sanctus deus,
And clepen her head Sanctissimus:
They that such a sect sewis,
I trowe they taken hem amisse:
In earth here they haue her blisse,
Her high maister is Belial.
Christes people from hem wisse,
For all such false will foule fall.

They mowe both binde and lose,
And all is for her holy life:
To saue or damne they mow chose,
Betweene hem now is great strife.
Many a man is killed with knife,
To wete which of hem haue lordship shall,
For such Christ suffred woundes fiue,
For all such falshed will foule fall.

Christ said: Qui gladio percutit,
With sword surely he shall die:
He bad his priests peace and grith,
And bad hem not drede for to die.
And bad them be both simple and slie,
And carke not for no cattell,
And trusteth on God that sitteth on hie,
For all false shall full foule fall.

These wollen make men to swere
Ayenst Christes commaundement:
And Christes members all to tere
On roode, as he were new rysent.
Such lawes they maken by common assent:
Each one it throweth as a ball,
Thus the poore be fully shent,
But euer falshed foule it befall.

They vsen no simonie,
But sellen churches and priories:
Ne they vsen no enuie,
But cursen all hem contraries,
And hireth men by dates and yeares,
With strength to hold hem in her stall:
And culleth all her aduersaries.
Therefore falshed foule thou fall.

With purse they purchase personage,
With purse they paynen hem to plede,
And men of warre they woll wage
To bring her enemies to the dede:
And lordslues they woll lede,
And much take, and giue but small:
But he it so get from it shall shede,
And make such false right foule fall.

They halow nothing but for hire
Church, ne font, ne vestement,
And make orders in euerie shire,
But Priestes pay for the parchment.
Of riotours they taken rent,
Therewith they smere the shepes skall:
For many churches ben oft suspent
And all such falshed foule it fall.

Some liueth not in lecherie,
But haunt wenches, widowes, and wiues,
And punisheth the poore for putree.
Them selfe it vseth all their liues:
And but a man to them him shriues,
To heuen come he neuer shall,
He shall be cursed as be caitiues,
To hell they saine that he shall fall.

There was more mercy in Maximien,
And in Nero, that neuer was good,
Than is now in some of them,
When he hath on his furred hood.
They follow Christ that shed his blood
To heauen, as buckette into the wall:
Such wretches ben worse than wood,
And all such faitours foule hem fall.

They giue her almes to the riche,
To mainteynours, and men of lawe:
For to Lords they woll be liche,
An harlots sonne not worth an hawe
Sothfastnesse all such han slawe:
They kembe her crokettes with christall,
And drede of God they haue doune drawe,
Al such faitours foule hem fall.

They maken parsons for the pennie,
And Canons, and her Cardinals,
Unnethes amonges hem all is any,
That he ne hath glosed the gospell fals.
For Christ made neuer no Cathedrals,
Ne with him was no Cardinall,
With a redde hatte as vsen minstrals,
But falshed foule mote it befall.

Their tithing, and her offering both,
They clemeth it by possession,
Thereof nil they none forgo,
But robben men as raunsome.
The tithing of Turpe lucrum
With these maisters is vsuall.
Tithing of bybby, and larson
Will make falshood full foule to fall.

They taken to ferme her sompnours
To harme the people what they may:
To pardoners, and false faitours
Sell her scales I dare well say:
And al to holden great arate,
To multiply hem more metall.
They drede full little domes day,
When all such falshed shal foule fall.

Such harlottes shul men disclaunder,
For they shullen make hem free:
And ben as proude as Alexander,
And saine to the poore, woe be ye.
By yere eche Priest shal pay his fee
To encrease his lemmans call:
Such heerdes shul wel iuel thee,
And al such false shul foule fall.

And if a man be falsely famed,
And wol make purgatioun,
Than woll the Officers be agramed,
And assigne him fro toune to toun:
So need he must pay raunsome,
Though he be clene, as is Christall,
And then haue an absolution.
But al such false shull foule fall.

Though he be giltie of the dede,
And that he may money paie,
Al the while his purse wol blede,
He may vse it fro day to day:
The Bishops officers gone ful gay,
And this game they vsen ouer al,
The poore to pill is all their pray.
Al such false shul foule fal.

Alas, God ordained neuer such lawe
Ne no such craft of couetise:
He forbad it by his sawe,
Such gouernours mowen of God agrise,
For al his rules is right wise,
These new points ben papall,
And all Gods lawe they dispise.
All such faitours shul foule fall.

They saine that Peter had the key
Of heuen and hel, to haue and hold,
I trowe Peter tooke no money
For no sinnes that he sold:
Such successours ben to bold,
In winning al their wit they wral,
Her conscience is waxen cold:
And al such faitours foule hem fal.

Peter was neuer so great a fole
To leaue his key with such a lozell:
Or take such cursed soch a tole
He was adused nothing well.
I trowe they haue the key of hell,
Their master is of that place marshall,
For there they drellen hem to dwel:
And with false Lucifer there to fall.

They been as proud as Lucifarre,
As angry, and as enuious,
From good fayth they been full farre,
In couetise they been curious:
To catch cattle as couetous
As hound, that for hunger woll pall,
Ungodly, and vngracious,
And needly such fallhed shall foule fall.

The Pope and he were Peters heire,
Me thinke he erreth in this case:
When chose of bishops is in despaire
To chosen hem in diuers place:
A lord shall write to him for grace,
For his clerke anone pray he shall,
So shall he speed his purchase.
And all such false foule hem fall.

Though he can doe no good,
A lords prater shall be sped:
Though he be wild of will or wood,
Not vnderstanding what men han red:
A leud boster, and that God forbed.
As good a bishop is my horse ball:
Such a Pope is foule bested,
And at last he woll foule fall.

He maketh bishops for earthly thanke,
And nothing at all for Christs sake:
Such that been full fat and ranke,
To soule heale none heed they take.
All is well done what euer they make,
They shall answere at ones for all,
For worlds thanke such worch and wake.
And all such false shall foule fall.

Such that cannot say her Crede,
With prater shull be made prelates,
Nother can the Gospell rede,
Such shull now weld high estates.
The high gods friendship hem makes:
They toteth on her summe totall,
Such bere the keyes of hell yates.
And such false shal foule fall.

They forsake for Christs loue
Trauaile, hunger, thirst, and cold,
For they ben ordred ouer all aboue
Out of youth till they ben old.
By the dore they goe not into the fold,
To helpe their sheepe they nought trauall,
Hired men all such I hold,
And all such false foule hem fall.

For Christ our king they woll forsake,
And know him nought for his powerte:
For Christs loue they wol wake,
And drinke piement and ale aparte.
Of God they seeme nothing afeerd,
As lusty lueth, as did Lamual,
And driuen her sheepe into desert.
All such faitours shul foule fal.

Christ hath xii. Apostles here,
Now say they, there may be but one,
That may not erre in no manere,
Who leueth not this ben lost echone.
Peter erred, so did not Jhon:
Why is he cleped the principall?
Christ cleped him Peter, but himselfe ỹ stone:
All false faitours foule hem fall.

Why cursen they the croisery
Christes christen creatures?
For betweene hem is now enuy
To be enhaunsed in honours.
And Christen liuers with her labours,
For they leuin on no man mortal,
Been do to death with dishonours.
And al such false foule hem fal.

What knoweth a tillour at the plow
The Popes name, and what he hate?
His crede suffiseth to him inow,
And knoweth a cardinall by his hatte.
Thus is the poore vnrightly latte,
That knoweth Christ his God royal,
Such matters be not worth a gnatte.
But such false faitours foule hem fal.

A king shall kneele and kisse his show:
Christ suffered a sinful to kisse his fete.
Me thinketh he holdeth him high ynow,
So Lucifer did, that high set.
Such one me thinketh himselfe forpet,
Either to the trouth he was not cal
Christ that suffered wounds wete,
Shal make such falshed foule fal.

They laieth out her large nettes
For to take siluer and gold:
Fillen coffers, and sackes fettes,
There as they soules catch shold.
Her seruants be to them vnhold,
But they can doublin their rentall
To bigge hem castles, and bigge hem hold.
And all such false foule hem fall.

¶ Here endeth the first part of this tale, and here after followeth the second.

TO accorde with this worde fall,
No more English can I finde:
Shewe another nowe I shall,

For

For I haue much to say behinde:
How prests han the people pinde,
As curteis Christ hath me kende,
And put this matter in my minde:
To make these manner men amend.

Shortly to shend hem, and shew now
How wrongfully they werch and walke:
O high God, nothing they tell, ne how,
But in Gods word tilleth many a balke:
In hernes hold hem and in halke,
And preachen of tithes and offrend,
And vntruly of the Gospel talke.
For his mercy God it amend.

What is Antichrist to say?
But euen Christs aduersarie:
Such hath now ben many a day
To Christs bidding ful contrarie,
That from the truth cleane varry,
Out of the way they ben wend,
And Christs people vntruly carry.
God for his pitie it amend.

They liuen contrary to Christs life
In high pride against meekenesse,
Against suffraunce they vsen strife,
And anger ayenst soberneſſe,
Against wisdome wilfulnesse:
To Christs tales little tend,
Against measure outrageousnesse.
But when God wol it may amend.

Lordly like ayenst lowlinesse,
And demin al without mercie,
And couetise ayenst largesse,
Against trewth trecherie:
And against almesse enuie,
Against Christ they comprehend,
For chastitie they maintaine lecherie,
God for his grace this amend.

Against penaunce they vse delights,
Against suffraunce strong defence,
Ayenst God they vsen euil rights,
Ayenst pitie punishments:
Open euil ayenst continence,
Her wicked winning they worse dispend,
Soberneſſe they sette into dispence.
But God for his goodnesse it amend.

Why cleimen they wholy his powere,
And wranglen ayenst al his hests?
His liuing folow they nothing here,
But liuen worse than witlesse beests.
Of fish and flesh they louen feests,
As lords they ben brode ykends,
Of Gods poore they haten gests.
God for his mercy this amend.

With Diues such shal haue her dome,
That saine that they be Christes friendes,
And do nothing as they should done:
All such been falser than ben fiendes.
On the people they ley such bendes,
As God is in earth they han offend,
Succour fro such Christ now send vs.
And for his mercy this amend.

A token of Antichrist they be,
His careckes ben now wide iknow,
Receiued to preach shal no man be
Without token of him I trow.
Ech christen priest to preachen owe,
From God aboue they ben send,
Gods word to al folke for to show.
Sinful man for to amend.

Christ sent the poore for to preach,
The royall rich he did not so:
Now dare no poore the people teach,
For Antichrist is ouer all her foe.
Among the people he mote go,
He hath bidden all such suspend,
Some hath he hent, and thinketh yet mo,
But al this God may wel amend.

All they that han the world forsake,
And liuen lowly, as God bad,
Into her prison shullen be take,
Betin and bounden, and forth lad.
Hereof I rede no man be drad,
Christ said, his should be shend:
Ech man ought hereof be glad,
For God ful wel it wol amend.

They take on hem royall powere,
And say they haue swords two,
One curse to hel, one slee men here:
For at his taking Christ had no mo.
Yet Peter had one of tho,
But Christ, to Peter smite gan defend,
And into the sheath bad put it tho.
And all such mischeues God amend.

Christ bad Peter keepe his sheepe,
And with his sword forbade him smite:
Sword is no toole with sheepe to keepe,
But to shepheards that sheepe wol bite:
Me thinketh such shepheards ben to wite,
Ayen her sheepe with sword that contend,
They driue her sheepe with great despite.
But all this God may well amend.

So successours to Peter be they nought,
Whom Christ made cheefe pasture,

A swerd no shepheard ben ought,
But he would flea, as a butchoure.
For who so were Peters successoure,
Shoulde bere his shepe til his backe bend,
And shaddow hem from euery shoure.
And al this God may wel amend.

Successours to Peter ben these
In that, that Peter Christ forsooke,
That had leuer the loue of God lese,
Than a shepheard had to lese his hooke:
He culleth the sheepe as doth the Cooke
Of hem seeken the woll to rend,
And falsely glose the Gospell booke.
God for his mercy them amend.

After Christ had take Peter the kay,
Christ said, he must die for man:
That Peter to Christ gan withsay,
Christ bad him go behind Sathan:
Such counsailours many of these men han,
For worlds wele, God to offend
Peters successours they ben for than.
But al such God may wel amend.

For Sathan is to say no more,
But he that contrary to Christ is,
In this they learne Peters lore,
They sewen him when he did misse.
They follow Peter forsooth in this,
In al that Christ would Peter reprehend,
But not in that, that longeth to heuen blisse.
God for his mercy hem amend.

Some of the apostles they sewen in case
Of ought that I can understond,
Him that betrayed Christ, Judas,
That bare the purse in euery lond:
And al that he might set on hond,
He hidde and stale, and mispend,
His rule these traitors han in hond,
Almightie God hem all amend.

And at the last his lord gan tray
Curstedly through his false couetise:
So would these traine him for money,
And they wisten in what wise.
They be seker of the selfe enuise,
From all soothnesse they ben friend,
And couetise chaungen with queintise.
Almighty God all such amend.

Were Christ on earth here eftsoone,
These would damne him to die:
All his hestes they han forsdone,
And saine his sawes ben heresie:
And ayenst his commaundements they crie,
And damne all his to be brend,
For it liketh not hem such losengerie.
God almighty hem amend.

These han more might in England here,
Than hath the king and all his lawe:
They han purchased hem such powere,
To taken hem whom list not knawe:
And say that heresie is her sawe,
And so to prison wol hem send:
It was not so by elder dawe.
God for his mercy it amend.

The kings law wol no man deme
Angerliche without answere:
But if any man these misqueme,
He shal be baighteth as a bere:
And yet wel worse they wol him tere,
And in prison woll him pende,
In giues, and in other gere.
When God woll, it may amend.

The king taxeth not his men
But by assent of the comminalte:
But these ech yeare woll raunsome hem
Maisterfully, more than doth he.
Her scales by yeare better be,
Than is the kings in extend,
Her officers han greater fee.
But this mischefe God amend.

For who so woll proue a testament,
That is not all worth tenne pound,
He shall pay for the parchement
The third of the money all round.
Thus the people is raunsound:
They say such part to hem should apend,
There as they gripen, it goeth to ground.
God for his mercy it amend.

For a simple fornication
Twenty shillings he shall pay,
And then haue an absolution,
And al the yere vsen it forth he may:
Thus they letten hem go astray,
They recke not though the soule be brend,
These keepen cuill Peters kay.
And all such shepheards God amend.

Wonder is, that the parliament
And all the lords of this lond
Hereto taken so little entent,
To helpe the people out of her hond:
For they ben harder in their bond,
Worse beat, and bitter brend,
Than to the king is vnderstond.
God him helpe this to amend.

What Bishops, what religions

Lordshippes and possessions
More than Lordes, it semeth me:
That maketh hem lese charite:
They mowe not to God attende,
In earth they haue so high degre.
God for his mercie it amende.

The Emperour yaf the Pope somtime
So high lordeship him about,
That at last the silly kime
The proude Pope put him out.
So of this Realme is in dout:
But lordes beware, and them defende,
For now these folkes be wonders stout.
The King and Lordes now this amende.

¶ Thus endeth the second part of this tale, and hereafter followeth the third.

MOyses lawe forbode it tho,
That prestes should no lord-
shippes welde:
Christes gospell biddeth also,
That they should no lord-
shippes helde.
Ne Christes Apostles were neuer so bold,
No such Lordshippes to hem enbrace,
But smeren her shepe and kepe her fold.
God amend hem for his grace.

For they ne ben but counterfete,
Men may know hem by her fruite,
Her greatnesse maketh hem God forgete,
And take his mekenesse in dispite:
And they wer pore and had but lite,
They nold nat demen after the face,
But nourish her shepe, and hem not bite.
God amend hem for his grace.

Grikon.

What canst thou preach ayenst Chanons,
That men clepen seculere?
Pell. They ben curates of many tounes,
On earth they haue great powere:
They haue great prebendes and dere,
Some two or three, and some mo,
A personage to ben a playing fere,
And yet they serue the King also.

And let to ferme all that fare,
To whom that woll most giue therefore,
Some woll spend, and some woll spare,
And some woll lay it vp in store.
A cure of soule they care not fore,
So that they mowe much money take,
Whether her soules be wonne or lore.
Her profites they woll not forsake.

They haue a gadering procuratour.
That can the poore people enplede,
And robben hem as a rauinour,
And to his Lord the money lede:
And catch of quicke and eke of dede,
And richen him, and his Lord eke,
And to robbe can giue good rede,
Of folde and yonge, of hole and sicke.

Therewith they purchase hem lay fee
In londe, there hem liketh best,
And builde also as brode as a cite
Both in the East, and eke in the West:
To purchase thus they ben full prest,
But on the poore they woll nought spende,
Ne no good giue to Goddes gest,
Ne sende him some that all hath sende.

By her seruice such woll liue,
And trusse that other into treasure:
Though all her parish die vnshriue,
They woll nat giue a rose floure.
Her life should be as a mirrour,
Both to lered and to leude also,
And teache the people her lele labour,
Soche mister men ben all misgo.

Some of them ben hard nigges,
And some of hem been proude and gaie,
Some spende her goodes vpon gigges,
And finden hem of great araie:
Alas, what thinke these men to saie,
That thus dispenden Goddes good,
At the dreadfull domes daie
Soche wreches shull be worse than wood.

Some her churches neuer ne sie,
Ne neuer o pennie, thider ne send,
Though the poore parishens for hunger die,
O pennie on hem woll they not spend:
Haue they receiuing of the rent,
They recke neuer of the remenaunt,
Alas, the deuill hath cleane hem blent.
Soche one is sathanas sotournaunt.

And vsen horedome and harlottrie,
Couetise, pompe, and pride,
Slothe, wrath, and eke enuie,
And sewen sinne by euerie side.
Alas, where thinke such tabide:
How woll they accomptes yelde,
From high God they mowe hem not hide.
Soche willers witte is not worth a nelde.

They ben so rooted in richesses,
That Christes power is forpet,
Serued with so many messes,

Hem

Hem thinketh that Manna is no meat.
All is good that they mowen geat:
They wene to liue euermore,
But when God at dome is seat,
Soch treasour is a feble store.

Unneth mote they Matins saie
For counting and courtholding:
And yet he iangleth as a Iaie,
And vnderstont himselfe nothing.
He woll serue both Erle and King
For his finding and his fee,
And hide his tithing & his offring,
This is a feble charite.

Other they been proude, or couetous,
Or they been hard, or hungrie:
Or they ben liberall, or lecherous,
Or elis medlers with marchandry:
Or mainteiners of men with mastry,
Or stewardes, countours, or pleadours,
And serue God in Ypocrisie:
Soch Priests been Christes false traitours.

They been false, they been vengeable,
And begilen men in Christs name:
They been vnstedfast and vnstable,
To traie her Lord, hem thinketh no shame.
To serue God they been full lame,
Gods theeues, and falsely steale,
And falsely Gods worde defame:
In winning is her worldes weale.

Antichrist these serue all.
I praie thee who may say naie?
With Antichrist soch shull fall,
They followen him in deede and saie:
They seruen him in rich arraie,
To serue Christ such falsely fain,
Why, at the dreadfull domes day
Shull they not folowe him to pain?

That knowen hem selfe that they doen ill
Ayenst Christes commaundement,
And amend hem neuer ne will,
But serue Sathan by one assent?
Who saieth sothe he shall be shent,
Or speaketh ayenst her false liuing:
Who so well liueth shall be brent,
For soche been greater than the king.

Popes, Bishops, and Cardinals,
Chanons, Parsons, and Vicare
In Goddes seruice I trowe been fals,
That Sacraments sellen here:
And been as proude as Lucifere,
Eche man looke whether that I lie,
Who so speketh ayenst her powere,
It shal be holden hereste.

Loke how many orders take
Onely of Christ, for his seruice,
That the worldes goodes forsake:
Who so taketh orders otherwise,
I trowe that they shall sore agrise,
For all the glose that they conne.
All sewen not this assise,
In euill time they thus begonne.

Loke how many emong hem all
Holden not this hie waie,
With Antichrist they shullen fall:
For they wullen God betraie.
God amende them that best maie:
For many men they maken shende,
They weten well the sothe I say.
But the deuill hath foule hem blende.

Some on her churches dwell
Apparailled poorely, proude of port:
The seuen sacraments they doen sell,
In cattell catching is her comfort:
Of eche matter they wollen mell,
To doen hem wrong is her disport,
To afraie the people they been fell,
And hold hem lower than doeth the Lord.

For the tithing of a Ducke
Or of an Apple, or an Aie,
They make men swere vpon a boke,
Thus they foulen Christes faie.
Soche bearen euill heauen kaie:
They mowen assoile, they mowe shriue,
With mennes wiues strongly plaie,
With true tillers sturte and strriue,

At the wrastling, and at the wake.
And chiefe chauntours at the nale
Market beaters, and medling make,
Hoppen and houten with heue and hale:
At faire fresh, and at wine stale:
Dine and drinke, and make debate:
The seuen sacraments set a saile,
How kepe soche the kaies of heauen gate?

Mennes wiues they wollen hold,
And though that they been right sorye,
To speake they shull not be so bold,
For sompning to the Consistorye:
And make hem saie mouth I lie,
Though they it sawe with her eye,
His lemman holden openly,
No man so hardy to aske why.

He woll haue tithing and offring
Maugre whosoeuer it grutch:

And twise on the day he woll sing,
Goddes priestes were none soche.
He mote on hunting with dogge and bich,
And blowen his horne, and crien hey,
And sorcerie vsen as a witch.
Soche kepen euill Peters key.

Yet they mote haue some stocke or stone,
Gaily painted, and proudly dight,
To maken men leuen vpon,
And saie that it is full of might:
About such men set vp great light,
Other soche stockes shull stande thereby,
As darke as it were midnight,
For it maie make no maistrie,

That it leud people see mow.
Thou Mary, thou worchest wonder things:
About that, that men offren to now,
Hongen brooches, ouches, and rings.
The priest purchaseth the offerings,
But he nill offer to none Image:
Woe is the soule that he for sings,
That preacheth for soche a pilgrimage.

To men and women that been poore,
That been Christes awne likenesse
Men shullen offer at her doore,
That suffre hunger and distresse:
And to soche Images offer lesse,
That mow not feele thurst ne cold.
The poore in spirite gan Christ blesse.
Therfore offreth to feble and old.

Bucklers brode, and swordes long
Baudrike, with baselardes kene,
Soche toles about her necke they hong:
With Antichrist soche priestes been.
Vpon her deedes it is well seen
Whome they seruen, whom they honouren,
Antichristes they been clene,
And Goddes goodes falsely deuouren,

Of scarlet and grene gaie gounes,
That mote bee shape of the newe:
To clippen and kissen they counten in tounes
The damoseles that to the daunce sewe.
Cutted clothes to shewe her hewe,
With long pikes on her shone,
Our Goddes Gospell is not true,
Either they seruen the deuill or none.

Now been priestes pokes so wide,
That men must enlarge the vestiment:
The holy Gospell they doen hide,
For they contrarien m raiment.
Soche priestes of Lucifer been sent,
Like conquerours they been araied,
The proude pendaunts at her ars is ipent.
Falsely the trueth they han betraied.

Shrift siluer soche wollen aske
And woll men crepe to the crouche
None of the Sacraments saue aske
Without mede shall no man touch:
On her Bishop their warant vouch
That is lawe of the decre:
With mede and money thus they mouch.
And this they sain is charite.

In the middes of her Masse
They nill haue no man but for hire:
And full shortly let forth passe,
Such shull men find in each shire,
That Parsonages for profite desire,
To liue in liking and in lusts:
I dare not saine, Sans ose ie dire,
That such been Antichrists priests.

For they yet the bishops why,
Or they mote been in his seruice:
And holden forth her harlottry,
Such prelates been of feeble emprise.
Of Gods graine such men agrise,
For such matters that taken mede:
How they excuse hem, and in what wise,
Me thinketh they ought greatly drede.

They saine that it to no man longeth
To reproue them though they erre:
But falsely Goddes goodes they fongeth
And therewith meintein wo and werre.
Her deedes should be as bright as sterre,
Her liuing leud mannes light:
They saie the Pope may not erre,
Nede must that passe mannes might.

Though a priest lye with his lemman all night,
And tellen his felowe, and he him,
He goth to Masse anon right,
And saieth he singeth out of sinne:
His birde abideth him at his Inne,
And dighteth his diner the meane while,
He singeth his Masse for he would winne,
And so he weneth God begile.

Hem thinketh long till they be met,
And that they vsen forth all the pere,
Emong the folke whan he is set,
He holdeth no man halfe his pere:
Of the Bishop he hath powere
To soile men, or els they been lore,
His absolution may them skere,
And wo is the soule that he singeth for.

The Griffon began for to threte,

And saied, of Monkes canst thou ought?
The Pellican said, they been full grete,
And in this world much wo hath wrought:
Saint Benet that her order brought,
Ne made hem neuer on such manere,
I trowe it came neuer in his thought,
That they should vse so great powere.

That a man should a Monke lord call,
Ne serue on knees, as a king:
He is as proud as prince in pall,
In meat, and drinke, and all thing:
Some wearen mitre and ring,
With double Worsted well ydight,
With royall meat and rich drinke,
And rideth on a courser as a knight.

With hauke and with hounds eke,
With brooches or ouches on his hood:
Some say no Masse in all a weeke,
Of deintes is her most food.
They haue lordships and bondmen:
This is a royall religion.
Saint Benet made neuer none of hem
To haue lordship of man ne toun.

Now they ben queint and curious,
With fine cloth clad, and serued cleane:
Proud, angrie, and enuious,
Mallice is much that they meane.
In catching, craftie and couetous,
Lordly they liuen in great liking,
This liuing is not religious,
Accrding to Benet in his liuing.

They ben clerkes, her courts they ouersee,
Her poore tenaunce fully they slite:
The higher that a man amerced be,
The gladlier they woll it write:
This is farre from Christes powerty,
For all with couetise they endite,
On the poore they haue no pity,
Ne neuer hem cherish, but euer hem bite.

And commonly such been comen
Of poore people, and of hem begete,
That this perfection han inomen,
Her fathers riden not but on her fete,
And trauailen sore for that they eate,
In powert liueth yong and old:
Her fathers liuerey drought and weate,
Many hungrie meales, thurst, and cold.

And all this these Monkes han forsake
For Christes loue and saint Benicte:
To pride and ease haue hem take,
This religion is cuill beseate:
Had they been out of religion,
They must haue hanged at the plowe,
Threshing and diking fro toune to toune
With sorrie meat, and not halfe ynowe.

Therefore they han this all forsake,
And taken to riches, pride and ease:
Full few for God woll Monkes hem make,
Little is such order for to praise:
Saint Benet ordained it not so,
But bad hem be churchliche,
In churchliche manner liue and go,
Boistous in earth, and not lordliche.

They disclaunder saint Benet,
Therefore they haue his holy curse:
Saint Benet with hem neuer met,
But if they thought to robbe his purse.
I can no more hereof tell,
But they ben like tho before,
And cleane serue the deuill of hell,
And ben his treasure and his store.

And all such other counterfaitours,
Chanons, Canons, and such disguised,
Been Gods enemies and traitours,
His true religion han foule despised.
Of Freres I haue told before
In a making of a Crede,
And yet I could tell worse and more,
But men would werien it to rede.

As Gods goodnesse no man tell might,
Whit ne speake, ne thinke in thought,
So her falshed, and her vnright,
May no man tell that euer God wrought.
The Griffon saied, thou canst no good,
Thou came neuer of no gentle kind,
Other I trowe thou warest wood,
Or els thou hast lost thy mind.

Should holy church haue no hedde?
Who should be her gouernaile?
Who should her rule, who should her redde?
Who should her forthren, who should auaile?
Ech man shall liue by his trauaile,
Who best doeth, shall haue most mede:
With strength if men the church assaile,
With strength men must defend her nede.

And the Pope were purely poore,
Needie, and nothing ne had,
He should be driuen from doore to doore,
The wicked of him nolde not be drad:
Of such an head men would be sad,
And sinfully liuen as hem lust:
With strength to amend such be made,
With wepen Wolues from sheepe be wust.

If the Pope and Prelates would
So begge, and bid, bow, and borrow,
Holy church should stand full cold,
Her seruaunts sit and soupe sorrow:
And they were noughtie soule and horow,
To worship God men would wlate:
Both on euen and on morow
Such harlottrie men would hate.

Therefore men of holy church
Should be honest in all thing,
Worshipfully Gods workes werch.
So seemeth it to serue Christ her king
In honest and in cleane clothing,
With vessels of gold and clothes rich,
To God honestly to make offring:
To his Lordship none is liche.

The Pellican cast an huge crie,
And saied, Alas, why saiest thou so:
Christ is our head that sitteth on hie,
Heads ne ought we haue no mo:
We ben his members both also,
And father he taught vs to call him als,
Maisters to be called defended he tho:
All other maisters ben wicked and fals,

That taketh maistrie in his name,
Ghostly, and for yearthly good:
Kings and lords should lordship haue,
And rule the people with mild mood.
Christ for vs that shed his blood
Bad his priests no maistership haue,
Ne carke not for cloth ne food,
From euery mischecke he will hem saue.

Her rich clothing shall be righwisenesse,
Her treasure true life shall be:
Charity shall be her richesse,
Her Lordship shall be vnite:
Hope in God her honeste,
Her vessell cleane conscience,
Poore in spirit, and humilite,
Shall be holy churches defence.

What, saied the Griffon, may thee greue,
That other folkes faren wele?
What hast thou to doen with her liue?
Thy falshed eth man may fele.
For thou canst no cattell gete,
But liuest in lond as a lorell,
With glosing getteſt thou thy mete:
So fareth the deuill that wonneth in hell.

He would that eth man there should dwell.
For he lueth in cleane enuie,
So with the tales that thou doest tell
Thou wouldest other people destrie
With your glose, and your heresie:
For ye can liue no better life,
But cleane in Hypocrisie,
And bringest thee in woe and strife.

And therewith haue not to doen,
For ye ne haue here no cure:
Ye serue the Deuill, neither God ne man,
And he shall paie you your hire.
For ye woll fare well at feastes,
And warme clothed for the cold,
Therefore ye glose Goddes hestes,
And begile the people yong and old.

And all the seauen Sacraments
Ye speake ayenst, as ye were slie:
Ayenst tithinges, offringes, and tents,
And on our Lordes bodie falsely lie.
And all this ye doen to liue in ease,
As who saieth, there been none soothe:
And sain the Pope is not worth a peale,
To make the people ayen him groche.

And this commeth in by fendes
To bring the christen in distaunce:
For they would that no man were frendes.
Leaue thy chattring with mischaunce:
If thou liue well, what wilt thou more?
Let other men liue as hem list,
Spende in good, or keepe in store:
Other mens conscience neuer thou nist.

Ye han no cure to answere fore:
What meddle ye, that han not to doen?
Let men liue as they han doen yore,
For thou shalt answere for no man.
The Pellican sayd, sir, naie,
I dispised not the Pope:
Ne no Sacrament, soth to saie,
But speake in charite and god hope.

But I dispise her hye pride,
Her richesse, that should be poore in spirite:
Her wickednesse is known so wide,
They serue God in false habite:
And tournen meknesse into pride,
And lowlinesse into high degree,
And Goddes wordes tourne and hide.
And that am I moued by charite,

To let men to liue so,
With all my cunning and my might.
And to warne men of her wo,
And to tellen hem trouth and right.
The Sacraments be soule heale,
If they been vsed in good vse,
Ayenst that speake I neuer a deale:
For then were I nothing wise.

But they that vsen hem in misse mancre,
Or set hem vp to any sale,
I trow they shall abie hem dere,
This is my reason, this is my tale:
Who so taketh hem vnrightfullichc
Ayenst the ten commaundements,
Or by glose wrechedliche
Selleth any of the Sacraments,

I trow they doe the deuill homage,
In that they weten they doe wrong:
And thereto I dare well wage,
They seruen Sathan for all her song.
To tithen and offren is holesome like,
So it be done in due mannere:
A man to housel, and to shrine,
Wedding, and all the other in fere,

So it be nother sold ne bought,
Ne take ne giue for couetise:
And it be so taken, it is nought,
Who selleth hem so, may sore agrise.
On our Lords body I doe not lie,
I say sooth through true rede,
His flesh and blood through his misterie
Is there, in the forme of brede:

How it is there, it needeth not striue,
Whether it be subget or accident,
But as Christ was, when he was on liue,
So is he there verament:
If Pope or Cardinall liue good liue,
As Christ commaunded in his Gospell,
Ayenst that will I not striue:
But me thinketh they liue not well.

For if the Pope liued as God bedde,
Pride and highnesse he should despise,
Richesse, couetise, and croune on hedde,
Weekenesse and pouerte he should vse.
The Griffon saied he should abie:
Thou shall be brent in balefull fire,
And all thy sect I shall destrie,
Ye shall be hanged by the swire.

Ye shullen be hanged and to draw,
Who giueth you leaue for to preach
Or speake against Gods law,
And the people thus falsely teach?
Thou shalt be cursed with booke and bell,
And disseuered from holy church,
And cleane ydamned into hell,
Otherwise but ye will worch.

The Pellican saied, that I ne drede,
Your curling is of little value.
Of God I hope to haue my mede,
For it is falshed that ye sewe.
For ye been out of charite,
And wilneth vengeaunce, as did Nero:
To suffren I will ready be,
I drede not that thou canst do.

Christ bad ones suffer for his loue:
And so he taught all his seruaunts,
And but thou amend for his sake aboue,
I drede not all thy maintenaunce.
For if I drede the worlds hate,
Me thinketh I were little to praise:
I drede nothing your highestate,
Ne I drede not your disease.

Will ye tourne and leaue your pride,
Your high port, and your richesse,
Your curling should not go so wide,
God bring you into rightwisenesse:
For I drede not your tirannie,
For nothing that ye can done,
To suffer I am all readie,
Siker I recke neuer how soone.

The Griffon grinned as he were wood,
And looked loucly as an Owle,
And swore by cocks heart blood,
He would him teare euery doule:
Holy church thou disclaundrest foule,
For thy reasons I will thee all to race,
And make thy flesh to rot and moule,
Losell, thou shalt haue hard grace.

The Griffon flew forth on his way,
The Pellican did sit and weepe,
And to himselfe he gan say:
God would that any of Christs sheepe
Had heard, and ytaken keepe
Of each word that here saied was,
And would it write and well it keepe:
God would it were all for his grace.

Plowman.

I answerd, and saied I would,
If for my trauaile any man would pey:
Pelli. He saied yes, these that God han sold,
For they han store of money:
Plowman. I saied, tell me and thou may,
Why tellest thou mens trespace?
Pellican. He said, to amend hem in good fay,
If God will giue me any grace.

For Christ himselfe is likened to me,
That for his people died on rood:
As fare I, right so fareth he,
He feedeth his birds with his blood.
But these doen euill ayenst good,
And ben his foen vnder friends face,
I told hem how her liuing stood:
God amend hem for his grace.

Plow=

Plowman.

What aileth the Griffon, tell why
That he holdeth on the other side?
Pelli. For they two been likely,
And with her kinds rouen wide.
The foule betokeneth pride:
As Lucifer, that high flew was,
And sith he did him in euill hide:
For he agilted Gods grace.

As bird flieth vp in the aire,
And liueth by birds that been meke
So these been flow vp into despaire,
And shenden silly soules eke:
The soules that been in sinnes seke,
He culleth hem kneele: therefore alas.
For byterie Gods forbode breke:
God amend it for his grace.

The hinder part is a Lioun,
A robber and a rauinere,
That robbeth the people in earth doune,
And in earth holdeth none his pere:
So fareth this foule both ferre and nere,
And with temporell strength the people chase,
As a Lion proud in earth here.
God amend hem for his grace.

Pellican.

He flew forth with his wings twaine,
All drouping, dased, and dull:
But soone the Griffon came againe,
Of his foules the earth was full:
The Pellican he had cast to pull,
So great a number neuer seene there was,
What manner of foules tellen I woll,
If God woll giue me of his grace.

With the Griffon comen foules fele,
Rauns, Rokes, Crowes, and Pie,
Gray foules, agadred wele,
I gurde aboue they would hie:
Gledes and Buzzards weren hem by,
White moles and puttockes token her place,
And lapwings, that well conneth lie,
This fellowship han forgard her grace.

Long the Pellican was out,
But at last he commeth againe:
And brought with him the Phenix stout,
The Griffon would haue flow full faine:
His foules that flewen as thicke as raine,
The Phenix tho began hem chace,
To flie from him it was in vaine,
For he did vengeaunce and no grace.

He slew hem downe without mercie,
There astart neither free ne thrall,
On him they cast a rufull crie,
When the Griffon doun was fall:
He beat hem not, but slew hem all,
Whither he hem drouc, no man may trace:
Under the earth me thought they yall,
Alas they had a feeble grace.

The Pellican then asked right,
For my writing if I haue blame,
Who woll for me fight or flight?
Who shall shield me from shame?
He that had a maid to dame,
And the lambe that slaine was
Shall shield me from ghostly blame,
For earthly harme is Gods grace.

Therefore I pray euery man,
Of my writing haue me excused:
This writing writeth the Pellican,
That thus these people hath despised.
For I am fresh fully aduised,
I nill not maintaine his manace,
For the deuill is often disguised,
To bring a man to euill grace.

Writeth the Pellican and not me,
For hereof I nill not auow:
In high ne in low, ne in no degree,
But as a fable take it ye mowe:
To holy church I will me bow,
Eche man to amend him Christ send space:
And for my writing me allow
He that is almighty for his grace.

¶ The Parsons Prologue.

BVt that the Plowman had his tale ended,
The sonne fro the south side is descended,
So low, that it was not to my sight
Degrees of fiue and twenty on hight
Two at clocke it was, so as I gesse,
For enleuen foot, a lite more or lesse,
My shadow was at that time, as there
Of such feet as my length parted were
In fiue feet equall of proporcion:
Therewith the moones exaltation,
I meane Taurus, alway gan ascend,
As we were entring at the thropes end:
For which our Hoste, as he was wont to gie
Aye in this case, this iolly companie
Said in this wise, lordings euerichone
Now lacketh vs no tale more than one:
Fulfilled is my sentence and my decree.
Who woll now tell vs a tale, let see:
Almost fulfilled is my ordinaunce:
I pray to God so yeue him right good chance,
That telleth this tale to vs lustely,

Sir prieſt(qd.he)art thou a vicary,
Or art thou a Parſon,ſay ſooth by thy fay,
Be what thou be,breke thou not our play.
For euery man,ſaue thou,hath told his tale,
Unbokell,and ſhew vs what is in thy male.
For truly me thinketh by thy chere,
Thou ſhouldeſt knit vp well a great matere.
Tell vs a fable anon,for cockes bones.

This Parſon him anſwerd all at ones:
Thou getteſt fable none told of me,
For Poule,that writeth to Timothe,
Repreueth hem that waiuen ſoothfaſtneſſe,
And tracheth fables,and ſuch wretchednеſſe.
Why ſhould I ſow draffe out of my fiſt,
When I may ſow wheat,if that me liſt?
For which I ſay,if that ye liſt to here
Morality,and of vertuous matere,
And then,if ye wol peue me audience,
I would full faine at Chriſts reuerence
Done you pleaſaunce leſull,as I can:
But truſteth well,I am a ſotherne man,
I cannot reſt,rum,ram,ruf,by letter,
And God wote,rime hold I but little better.
And therefore if ye liſt,I woll not gloſe,
I woll you tell a little tale in proſe,
To knit vp all this feaſt,and make an end:
And Ieſu for his grace wit me ſend
To ſhew you the way in this voyage
Of thilke perſit glorious pilgrimage,
That hight Hieruſalem celeſtiall.
And if you vouchſafe,anon I ſhall
Begin vpon my tale,for which I pray
Tell your aduiſe,I cannot better ſay.

But natheleſſe,this meditation
I put it aye vnder the correction
Of clerkes,for I am not textuell,
I take but the ſentence,truſteth well.
Therefore I make proteſtation,
That I woll ſtand to correction.

Upon this word we haue aſſented ſone:
For as it ſeemed,it was for to done,
To end in ſome vertuous ſentence,
And for to peue him ſpace and audience:
And bad our hoſt he ſhould to him ſay,
That all we to tell his tale him pray.

Our hoſt had the words for vs all:
Sir prieſt(qd.he)now faire mote you befall,
Say that what ye liſt,for we ſhall gladly here.
And with that word he ſaid in this manere,
Telleth(qd.he)your meditatioun,
But haſteth you,the ſunne woll adoun.
Beth fructuous,and that in little ſpace,
And to do well God ſend you his grace.

¶ The Parſons Tale.

A Sermon againſt diuers greeuous ſins,and remedies for the ſame,perſuading men to penitence.

Ieremie.vi. State ſuper vias, & videte, & interrogate de ſemitis antiquis, que ſit via bona, & ambulate in ea: & inuenietis refrigerium animabus veſtris.

OUr ſweet lord God of heauen,that no man woll periſh, but woll that wee turne al to the knowledge of him, and to the bliſſull life that is perdurable,admoniſheth vs by the Prophet Ieremie, that ſayth in this wiſe: Standeth vpon the wayes, and ſeeth and aſketh of old pathes: that is to ſay, of olde ſentences, which is the good way, and walketh in that way, and yee ſhall finde refreſhing for your ſoules,&c. Many been the wayes eſpirituels that lead folke to our Lord Ieſu Chriſt,and to the reigne of glory: Of which wayes,there is a full noble way,& full conenable, which may not faile to man ne to woman, that through ſinne hath miſgone fro the right way of Hieruſalem celeſtiall: and this way is called penitence, of which, man ſhould gladly hearken and enquire with al his hert, to wete,what is penitence, and which is called penitence, and how many manners been of actions or werkings of penitence,and how many ſpeces ther ben of penitence, and which things appertain and behoue to penitence, and which things diſtourbe penitence.

Saint Ambroſe ſayth, That penitence is the plaining of man for the guilt that he hath done, and no more to doe any thing for which him ought to playne. And ſome doctours ſayth, Penitence is the waymenting of man that ſorroweth for his ſinne, and paineth him ſelfe,for he hath miſdone. Penitence with certaine circumſtaunces,is very repentaunce of a man that holt himſelfe in ſorrow, and other paine for his guiltes: and for he ſhall be very penitent, he ſhall firſt bewaile ſinnes that hee hath done, and ſtedfaſtly purpoſe in his heart to haue ſhrift of mouth, and to doe ſatiſfaction, and neuer to doe thing, for which him ought more bewayle or complaine, and continue in good workes: or els his repentaunce may not auayle. For as Saint Iſodor ſayth, Hee is a yaper and a lyer, and no verie repentaunt,that eftſoone doth thing,for which him ought repent. Weeping, and not for to ſtint to doe ſinne, may not auaile: But natheleſſe, men ſhall hope, that at euery time that man falleth, bee it neuer ſo oft, that hee may ariſe through pennaunce, if he haue grace: but certaine, it is great doubt,for as ſaith ſaint Gregorie: Unnethes ariſeth out of ſinne, that is char-

charged with the charge of euill vsage. And therefore repentaunt folke, that stint for to sinne, and leue sinne or sinne leaue them, holy Church holdeth them liker of their saluation. And he that sinneth, and verely repenteth him in his last end: holy Church yet hopeth his saluation, by the great mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, for his repentaunce: but take the liker way.

And now sith I haue declared you, what thing is Penitence: now ye shall vnderstond, that there beene three actions of Penitence. The first is, that a manne be baptised after that he hath sinned. Saint Augustine sayeth, But he be penitent for his old sinnefull life, hee may not beginne the new cleane life: For certes, if he be baptised without penitence of his old guilt, he retaineth the marke of baptisme, but not the grace, ne the remission of his sins, till hee haue very repentaunce. Another default is this, that men doe deadly sinne after that they haue receiued baptisme. The third default is this, that men fall in veniall sinnes after her baptisme, fro day to day. Thereof sayeth Saint Augustine, That penitence of good and humble folk, is the penitence of euery day.

The speces of penitence ben three: That one of hem is solemne, another is commune, and the third is priuie. That pennaunce that is solemne, is in two manners: As to be put out of holy church in lent, for slaughter of children, and such maner thing. Another is when a man hath sinned openly, of which sinne, the fame is openly spoken in the country: and then holy church by iudgement distrayneth him for to do open pennaunce.

Common pennaunce is, that priests enioyn men in certaine case: as for to go peraventure naked in pilgrimage, or bare foot. Priuie pennaunce is that, that men doe all day for priuie sins, of which we shriue vs priuily, and receiue priuie pennaunce.

Now shalt thou vnderstond what is behoueful and necessary to very perfit penitence: and this stont on three things. Contrition of hart, confession of mouth, and satisfaction. For which sayth saint John Chrisostome: Penitence distraineth a man to accept benignely euery paine, that him is enioined, with contrition of hert, and shrift of mouth, with satisfaction: and in werking of all manner humility. And this is fruitfull penitence ayenst three things, in which wer wrath our Lord Jesus Christ: this is to say, By delight in thinking, by retchelesse in speaking, and by wicked sinfull werking. And ayenst these wicked guilts is penitence, that may be likened vnto a tree:

The root of this tree is contrition, that hideth him in the heart of him that is very repentaunt, right as the root of the tree hideth him in the earth. Of this roote of contrition springeth a stalke, that bereth braunches and leaues of confession, and fruit of satisfaction. For which Christ sayth in his gospell: Do forth digne fruite of penitence, for by this fruite men may knowe the tree, and not by the root that is hid in the heart of manne, ne by the braunches, ne the leaues of confession. And therefore our Lord Jesu Christ saith thus: By the fruit of hem shall ye knowe hem. Of this root also springeth a seede of grace, the which seed is mother of all sikernelle, and this seed is eager & hote. The grace of this seed springeth of God, through remembraunce on the day of doome, and on the paines of hell. Of this matter saith Salomon, That in the drede of God man forletteth his sinne. The heat of this seed is the loue of God, and the desiring of the ioy perdurable: This heat draweth the heart of man to God, and doth him hate his sinne: For soothly, there is nothing that sauoureth so wel to a child, as the milke of his nurce, ne nothing is to him more abhominable than that milke, when it is meddled with other meate. Right so the sinfull man that loueth his sinne, him seemeth, that it is to him most sweete of any thing: but fro that time hee loueth sadly our Lord Jesu Christ, and desireth the life perdurable, there is to him nothing more abhominable: for soothly The law of God is ỹ loue of God. For which Dauid the prophet sayth: I haue loued thy law, and hated wickednelle: He that loueth God, keepeth his lawe and his word.

This tree saw the Prophet Daniel in spirit, on the vision of Nabuchodonosor, when he counsayled him to doe penitence. Pennaunce is the tree of life, to hem that it receyue: and he that holdeth him in very penitence, is blessed, after the sentence of Salomon. In this penitence or contrition, man shall vnderstond foure things, that is to say: What is contrition, and which beene the causes that moeue a man to contrition, and how hee should be contrite, and what contrition auayleth to the soule. Then is it thus, that contrition is the very sorrow that a man receiueth in his heart for his sinnes, with sad purpose to shriue him, and to doe pennaunce, and neuer more to doe sinne: And this sorrow shal be in this manner, as sayeth Saint Bernard, It shall be heauie and greeuous, and full sharpe and poinant in heart.

First, for a man hath agilted his Lord and his Creatour, and more sharpe and poinaunt,

for he hath agilted his father celestiall: And yet more sharpe and pynaunt, for hee hath wrathed and agilted him that boughte him, that with his precious bloud hath deliuered vs fro the bondes of sinne, and fro the cruelte of the deuill, and from the paines of hell.

The causes that ought moue a man to contriction bene sixe. First a man shall remembre him of his sinnes, But loke that that remembraunce ne bee to him no delite, by no waye, but greate shame and sorowe for his sinnes. For Job sayth, sinfull men done werkes worthie of confession. And therefore sayeth Ezechiell: I woll remember me all the yeres of my life, in the bitternesse of my herte. And God saieth in the Apocalipse: Remember ye from whence that ye been fall, for before that time that ye sinned, ye were children of God, and limmes of the reigne of God: But for your sinne ye ben waxen thral and foule, and membres of the fende: hate of Angels, slaunder of holye churche, and foode of the false Serpent, perpetuall matter of the fire of hell: And yet more foule and abhominable, for ye trespasse so oft times, as doeth an hounde that returneth ayen to eate his owne spewing: and yet be ye fouler, for your long continuing in sinne, and your sinfull vsage, for which ye bee roted in your sinne, as a beeste in a donge. Suche manner of thoughtes make a manne to haue shame of his sinne, and no delite. As God saith, by the Prophet Ezechiel: Ye shall remembre you of your wayes, and they shall displese you sothly. Sinnes ben the waies that lede folke to Hell.

The seconde cause that ought make a man to haue disdaine of sinne is this, that as saith saint Peter: who so doth sinne, is thrall of sinne, and sinne putteth a manne in great thraldome. And therefore saieth the prophet Ezechiell: I went sorowfull, in disdaine of my selfe. Certes, well ought a man haue disdaine of sinne, and withdrawe him fro that thraldome and villany. And lo, what saieth Seneke in this matter, he saith thus: Though I wist, that neither God ne manne should neuer know it, yet would I haue disdaine for to doe sinne. And the same Seneke also sayeth: I am borne to greater thinge, than to be thrall to my body, or for to make of my body a thrall. Ne a fouler thrall may no man ne woman make of his bodie, than for to yeue his body to sinne, all were it the foulest churle, or the foulest woman that liueth, and least of value, yet is he then more foule, and more in seruitude. Euer fro the higher degree that man falleth, the more is he thrall, and more to God and to the world vile and abhominable. O good God, well ought man haue great disdaine of sinne, sith that through sinne, there hee was free, he is made bond. And therefore saieth saint Augustine: If thou hast disdaine of thy seruaunt, if hee offend or sinne, haue thou then disdaine, that thou thy selfe shouldest do sinne. Take regard of thine owne value, that thou ne bee too foule to thy selfe. Alas, well ought they then haue disdaine to bee seruaunts and thralles to sinne, and sore to be ashamed of themselfe, that God of his endlesse goodnesse hath sette in high estate, or yeue hem witte, strength of bodye, heale, beautie, or prosperitie, and bought hem fro the death with his hert blood, that they so vnkindly ayenst his gentlenesse, quite him so villainously, to slaughter of her owne soules. Oh good God, ye women that been of great beautie, remembreth you on the prouerbe of Salomon. He saieth he likeneth a faire woman, that is a foole of her bodie, to a ring of gold that were worne on the groine of a sow: For right as a sowe wroteth in euery ordure, so wroteth she her beautie in stinking ordure of sinne.

The third cause that ought meue a man to contrition, is dread of the day of doome, and of the horrible paines of hell. For as saint Jerome sayeth: At euery time that me remembreth of the day of doome, I quake: For when I eat and drinke, or what so that I do, euer seemeth me that the trompe sowneth in mine eare: Riseth ye vp that been ded, and commeth to the iudgement. O good God, muche ought a manne to drede such a iudgment, there as we shall be all, as Saint Poule sayeth, before the seate of oure Lorde Jesu Christ, whereas he shal make a generall congregation, where as no man may bee absent, for certes there auaileth none essoyne ne excusation, and not onely, that our defaults shall be iudged, but also that all our werkes shall openly be knowne. And as sayeth saint Bernard, There ne shall no pleading auaile, ne no sleight: we shall yeue reckoning of euerie idle word. There shall we haue a iudge that may not bee deceiued ne corrupt, and why? For certes, all our thoughts been discouered, as to him: ne for prayer ne for mede, he shall not be corrupt. And therefore saith Salomon: The wrath of God ne woll not spare no wight, for prayer ne for yeft. And therefore at the day of doome there is no hope to escape. Wherfore, as saith saint Anselme: Full great anguish shall the sinnefull folke haue at that time: There shall the fiers and wroth

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iudge sitte aboue, and vnder him the horrible pitte of hell open, to destroy him that must be knowe his sinnes, which sinnes openly beene shewed before God and before euery creature: And on the left side, no Diuels than anie heart may thinke, for to hale and drawe the sinfull soules to the paine of hell: and within the hearts of folke shall he the biting conscience, and without forth shall bee the world all brenning: whether shall then the wretched sinful man flie to hide him? Certes he may not hide him, he must come forth and shewe him. For certes, as saith S. Jerom, the earth shall cast him out of it, and the see also, and the ayre that shall be ful of thonder clappes and lightnings. Now sothly, who so well remembreth him of these thinges, I gesse that his sinne shall not turne him in delite, but to great sorrowe, for drede of the paine of hell. And therefore saith Job to God: sufferr lord, that I may a while bewaile and wepe, er I goe without returning to the darke londe, couered with the derkenesse of death, to the londe of misese and of derkenesse, whereas is the shadowe of death, where as there is none order or ordinaunce, but fearefull drede that euer shall last. Lo, here may you see, that Job prayed respite a while, to bewepe and waile his trespasse: For sothely one day of respite is better than all the treasure of this world. And for as much as a man may acquite himselfe before god by penitence in this world, & not by treasure, therefore should he pray to God to yeue him respite a while, to bewepe and waile his trespasse: for certes, all the sorowe that a man might make fro the beginning of the world, nis but a little thing, at regarde of the sorrowe of hell. The cause why that Job calleth hell the londe of derkenesse, vnderstondeth that he calleth it londe or earth, for it is stable and neuer shall faile, and derke: For he that is in hell hath defaute of light materiall, for certes the derke light that shall come out of the fire that euer shall brenne, shall turne him all to pain that is in hell, for it sheweth him to the horrible Diuels that him turmenteth, couered with the derkenesse of death, that is to say, That hee that is in hell, shall haue defaut of the sight of God: for certes the sight of god is the life perdurable. The derknes of death, been the sins that the wretched man hath don, which that disturbe him to see the face of God, right as the derke cloud betwixt vs and the sunne. Londe of misese, because that there been three maner of defautes ayenst three thinges that folke of this world haue in this present life, that is to say: honours, delices, and richesse. Ayenst honour haue they in hell shame and confusion: For wel ye wote, that men call honour the reuerence that man doth to man, but in hell is none honour ne reuerence. For certes no more reuerence shalbe do there to a king, than to a knaue. For which God sayth by the Prophet Jeremie: Those folke that me dispise, shalbe in dispite. Honour is also called great lordeship: there shall no wight serue other: but of harme and turment. Honoure is also called great dignite and highnesse, but in hell shall they be all fortroden of diuels. As God saith: the horrible Diuels shall goe and come vpon the heddes of damned folke: and this is, for as much as the higher that they were in this present life, the more shall they be abated and defoiled in hell. Ayenste the richesse of this world shall they haue misese of pouerte, that shall be in foure thinges. In defaute of treasure. Of which Dauid sayth: The rich folke that enbrace and knit all her hert to treasour of this worlde, shall sleepe in the sleeping of death, and nothing ne shull they find in her hondes of all her tresour. And moreouer, the misease of hell shall bee in defaute of meat and drinke. For God sayeth thus by Moyses: They shall bee wasted with honger, and the byrdes of hell shall deuoure hem with bitter death, and the gall of the Dragon shall be her drinke, and the venim of the Dragon her morsels. Also her misease shall be in defaute of clothing, for they shall be naked in bodie, as of clothing, saue the fire in which they brenne, and other filthes: and naked shall they bee of soule, of all manner vertues, which that is the clothing of the soule. Where been than the gay robes, the soft sheres, and the smal sherts? Lo, what sayeth God of hem by the Prophet Esaie, That vnder hem shall bee strewed moughtes, and her couertures shall bee of wormes of hell. Also her misease shalbe in defaut of frends, for he is not poore þ hath good frends: but ther is no frend, for neither God ne no creature shall bee frend to hem, and eche of hem shall hate other with deadly hate: The sonnes and the doughters shall rebell ayenst father and mother, and kinred ayenst kinred, chide, and dispise eache other, both day and night, as God saieth by the Prophet Micheas: And the louing children that whilom loued so fleshly eche other, would eche of hem eat other if they might. For how should they loue together in the paines of of hel, when they hated eche other in prosperity of this life? for trust well, her fleshly loue was deedly hate. As saith the prophet Dauid: Who so that loueth wickednesse, he hateth his soule, & who so hateth his owne soule, certes he may loue none other wight in no maner: And therefore in hel

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is no solace ne no frendship, but euer the more kinredes that ben in hell, the more cursinges, the more chidinges, and the more deadly hate there is among hem. Also they shall haue defaut of all manner delices, for certes delices ben after the appetites of the fiue wittes: As sight, hearing, smelling, sauouring, and touching. But in Hell her sight shall bee full of derkenesse and of smoke, and therefore full of teares, and her hearing full of wailing and grinting of teeth: As sayth Jesu Christ. Her nosthrilles shall bee full of stinking. And, as saith Esay the Prophet: Her sauouring shall be full of bitter gall, and as touching of all her bodies, icouered with fire, that neuer shall quenche, and with wormes that neuer shall die. As God sayth by the mouth of Esay: and for as much as they shall not wene that they may die for paine, and by death flye fro paine, that they may vnderstonde in the wordes of Job, that saieth: There is the shadowe of death. Certes a shadowe hath likenesse of the thinge of which it is shadowed, but shadowe is not the same thinge of which it is shadowed: right so fareth the paine of hell, it is like death, for the horrible anguish. And why? For it paineth hem euer as though they shold die anon, but certes they shall not die. For as sayth saint Greg. To wretched caitiffes shall be death without death, and end without end, and defaute without fayling, for her death shall alway liue, and her ende shall euer more begin, and her defaute shall not faile.

And therefore sayth saint John the Euangelist, They shall follow death, and they shall not finde him, and they shall desire to die, and death shall flie from hem. And also Job saith, that in hell is no order or rule. And all bee it so, that God hath create all thing in right order, and nothing without order, but all thinges been ordred and numbred, yet natheless they that been dampned been nothing in order, ne hold none order, for the earth ne shall bere hem no fruite. For, as the Prophet Dauid saieth: God shall destroy the fruite of the earth, as for hem, ne water, ne shall yeue hem no moisture, ne the eyre no refreshinge, ne fire no light. For as sayth saint Basilie: The brenning of the fire of this world shall God yeue in hell to hem that been dampned, but the light and the clerenesse shall be yeue in Heauen to his children: right as good men yeue flesh to her children, and bones to her houndes. And for they shall haue none hope to escape, sayeth sainct Job at last, That there shal terrour and gresly drede dwell without ende. Horrour is alway drede that is to come, and this drede shal alway dwell in the heartes of hem that bee dampned. And therefore haue they lost all her hope for seuen causes. First, for God that is her iudge shall be without mercie to hem, and they may not please him, ne none of his saints, ne they maie not yeue nothinge for her raunsome, ne they shall haue no voice to speake to him, ne they may not flie fro paine, ne they haue no goodnesse in hem that they maie shew to deliuer hem fro paine. And therefore saieth Salomon: The wicked mane dyeth, and when he is dead, hee shall haue no hope to escape fro paine. Who so then would well vnderstonde the paines, and bethinke him well that hee hath deserued those paines for his sinnes, certes hee shoulde haue more talent to sighe and weepe, than for to singe and playe. For as saieth Salomon, Who so that had the science to know the paines that ben ordained for sinne, he would make sorowe. That science, as saith Saint Austin, maketh a man to weiment in his heart.

The Fourth pointe that oughte make a man haue contrition, is the sorowfull remembraunce of the good that hee hath lefte to doe here in earthe, and also the good that hee hath loste. Sothly the good werkes that hee hath lefte, either they bee the good werkes that hee wrought er hee fell in deadly sinne, or else the good werkes that he wrought while hee laie in sinne. Sothly the good werkes that he did before that he fell in sinne, been all mortified, astoned, and dull by oft sinning. The werkes that he did while they lay in sinne be ded, as to the life perdurable in heuen: then the good werkes that been mortified by oft sinning, which he did being in charite, may not quicke ayen without very penitence. And of it sayeth God by the mouth of Ezechiel: If the righteous man retourne ayen fro his right wisnesse and do wickednes, shall he liue? nay, for all the good werkes that hee hath do, ne shall neuer be in remembrance, for he shall die in his sinne. And vpon that chapter sayeth saint Gregorie thus, that wee shall vnderstonde this principally: If that we don deadly sinne, it is for nought then to rehearse or drawe into memorie the good werkes that wee haue wrought before: for certes in the werking of deadly sinne, there is no trust to no good werke that we haue doen before, that is to say, as for to haue thereby the life perdurable in Heauen. But natheless, the good werks quicken and come againe, and helpe and auaile to haue the life perdurable in Heauen, when we haue contricion: but sothly the good werkes that men don while they be in deedly sinne, for as muche as they were doen in deedly

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ly sinne, they may neuer quicke: For certes, thing that neuer had life, may neuer quicke: And natheleſſe, albeit that they auaile not to haue the life perdurable, yet auaile they to abredge of the pain of hell, or els to get temporall richeſſes, or els that God woll the rather enlumine or light the heart of the sinfull man to haue repentaunce, and eke they auaile for to vſe a manne to doe good werkes, that the feende haue the leſſe power of his soule. And thus the curteis Lorde Jeſu Chriſte, ne woll that no good worke bee loſte, for in somewhat it shall auaile. But for as much as the good werkes that manne doen while they been in good life, been all amortiſed by sinne following: and also sithe that all the good werkes that men doone while they bee in dedly sinne, been vtterly dead, as for to haue the life perdurable, well may that manne that no good werke ne dooeth, sing that newe frelhe song (Iay tout pardu mon temps, et mon labure.) For certes sinne bereaueth a man both goodneſſe of nature, and also the goodneſſe of grace. For soothly the grace of the holy ghoſt, fareth like fire that maie not be idle, for fire faileth anon as it forzeletteth his werking: and right so grace fayleth anon, as it forzeletteth his werking. Then leſeth the sinfull man the goodneſſe of glorie, that onely is beheight to good men that labour and werke. Well may he be sorie then, that oweth all his life to God, as long as hee hath liued, and also as long as he shall liue, that no goodneſſe ne hath to paie with his debt to God, to whom hee oweth all his life: for trust well he shall yeue accomptes as sayth Saint Bernard, of all the goodddes that haue been yeue him in this preſent life, and how he hath hem diſpended, in so muche that there shall not periſhe an heere of his hedde, ne a moment of an houre ne shall not periſhe of his time, that hee ne shall yeue of it a reckoning.

The fifthe thinge that ought to mooue a man to contricion, is remembraunce of the paſſion that our Lorde Jeſu Chriſt ſuffered for our sinnes. For as saieth sainct Bernarde, while that I liue, I shal haue remembraunce of the trauailes, that our Lorde Jeſu Chriſt ſuffered in preaching, his wearineſſe in trauailing, his temptations when he faſted, his long wakings when he prayed, his teares when that hee wept for pite of good people: the woe, the shame, and the filthe that manne sayd to him: of the foule spitting that manne spitte in his face, of the buffettes that men paue him: of the foule mowes and of the repzoues that men said to him: of the nayles with which hee was nailed to the croſſe, and of all the remnaunt of his paſſion, that he ſuffred for my sinnes, and not thing for his gilte. And ye shall vnderſtand, that in mans sinne is euerie manner order or ordinance, tourned vp so doune. For it is soth, that God, reaſon, ſenſualite, and the bodie of man, been ordained, that eche of these fower thinges, shoulde haue Lordſhip ouer that other: as thus, God should haue Lordſhip ouer reaſon, and reaſon ouer ſenſualite, and ſenſualite ouer the bodie of man. But sothly when manne sinneth, all this order or ordinance, is turned vp so doune, And therefore then, for as moche as reaſon of man, ne woll not be ſubiecte ne obeyſaunt to God, that is his Lord by right, therefore leſeth it the Lordſhippe that it should haue ouer ſenſualite, and also ouer the bodie of manne. And why? For ſenſualite rebelleth than ayenſt reaſon: and by that waie leeſeth reaſon the lordſhip ouer ſenſualite, and ouer the bodie: For right as reaſon is rebell to God, right so is both ſenſualite rebell to reaſon, and to the body alſo. And certes this diſordinaunce and this rebellion, our Lord Jeſu Chriſt bought vpon his precious body full deere: and herkeneth in what wiſe. For as muche then as reaſon is rebell to God, therefore is man worthy to haue ſorowe, and to be dedde. This ſuffred our Lorde Jeſu Chriſt for manne, after that he had be betraied of his diſciple, and diſtrained and bounde, ſo that his blood braſt out at euerie naile of his hondes, as saith S. Auguſtin. And furthermore, for as muche as reaſon of manne, woll not daunt ſenſualite, when it maie, therefore is manne worthie to haue shame: and this ſuffered our Lord Jeſu Chriſt for man, when they ſpitte in his viſage. And furthermore, for as muche then as the caitiffe bodie of man, is rebell both to reaſon & to ſenſualite, therefore it is worthie death: and this ſuffered our Lord Jeſu Chriſt vpon the Croſſe, whereas there was no part of his bodie free, without greate paine and bitter paſſion: and all this ſuffred our Lord Jeſu Chriſt that neuer forfated. And therefore reaſonably maie bee saied of Jeſu in this maner: To muche am I pained, for thinges that I neuer deſerued: and to much defouled for shame that manne is worthy to haue. And therefore maie the ſinfull man well saie, as saieth S. Bernarde: Accurſed bee the bitterneſſe of my ſinne, for whiche there muſt bee ſuffered ſo muche bitterneſſe. For certes, after the diuers diſordance of our wickedneſſe, was the paſſion of Jeſu Chriſte ordained in diuers things, as thus: Certes ſinfull mannes ſoule is betraied of the Diuell, by couetiſe of temporall proſperite,

prosperite, and scorned by disceite, when that he cheseth fleshly delices, and yet it is turmented by impatience of aduersitie, and despet by seruage and subiection of sinne, and at the last it is slaine finally. For this disordinaunce of sinfull man, was Iesus Christ first betrayd, and after that was hee bounde, that came for to vnbinde vs of sinne and of paine. Then was he descorned, that onely should haue bee honoured in all things. Then was his visage that ought be desired to bee seene of all mankind (in which visage Angels desire to looke) villanously despet. Then was he scourged that nothing had trespassed, and finally, then was he crucified and slain. Then was accomplished the woordes of Esaie: He was wounded for our misdeedes, and defouled for our felonies. Now sith that Iesu Christ tooke on him the pain of all our wickednesses, moche ought sinfull manne wepe and bewaile, that for his sinnes, Goddes sonne of heauen should all this paine endure.

The sixt thing that should moue a man to contrition, is the hope of thre things, that is to saie: forgeuenesse of sinne, and the gift of grace for to doe well, and the glorie of Heauen with whiche God shall rewarde manne for his good deedes: And for as muche as Iesu Christ, geueth vs these giftes of his largenesse, and of his Soueraigne bountie, therefore is hee called (Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudeorum) Iesus is to saie, sauiour or saluation, on whome men shal hope to haue forgeuenesse of sinnes, which that is properly saluation of sinnes. And therefore sayed the Angell to Ioseph, Thou shalt call his name Iesus, that shall saue his people of her sinnes. And hereof saith Saint Peter: There is none other name vnder Heauen, that is geue to any man, by which a man maie bee saued, but onely Iesus. Nazarenus is as muche for to saie, as flourishing, in which a man shall hope that hee that geueth him remission of sinnes, shall geue him also grace well for to doe. I was at the doore of thine herte, sayeth Iesus, and called for to enter: He that openeth to me, shall haue forgeuenesse of his sinne. I woll enter into him by my grace, and suppe with him by the good werkes that hee shall doe, which werkes been the food of the soule, and hee shall suppe with me, by the great ioye that I shall geue him. Thus shall man hope for his werkes of penaunce, that GOD shall geue him his reigne, as hee behight him in the Gospell. Now shall a man vnderstande, in which manner shall be his contrition: I saie, that it shall bee vniuersall and totall, this is to saie: a man shall be verie repentaunt, for all his sinnes that hee hath dooen in delite of his thought, for it is right perillous.

For there been two manner of consentinges, that one of hem is called consenting of affection, when a man is moued to doe sinne, and then deliteth him longe, for to thinke on that sinne, and his reason appercciueth it wel, that it is sinne ayenst the Lawe of God, and yet his reason refraineth not his foule delite or talent, though he see well apertly, that it is ayenst the reuerence of God, although his reson consent not to doe that sinne indeede: yet saie some Doctours, that suche delite that dwelleth longe is full perillous, albeit neuer so little. And also a man should sorrow, namely for all that euer hee hath desired ayenst the Lawe of God, with perfitte consenting of his reason, for thereof is no doubte, that it is deadly sinne in consenting: for certes there is no deadly sinne, but that it is first in mannes thought, and after that in his delite, and so forth into consenting, and into deede. Wherfore I saye that many men, ne repent hem neuer of suche thoughtes and delices, ne neuer shriue hem of it, but onely of the deede of great sinnes outward: wherefore, I saie that suche wicked delites beene subtill begilers of hem that shall be dampned.

Moreouer, man ought to sorowe for his wicked wordes, as well as for his wicked deeds: for certes the repentaunce of a singuler sinne, and not repentant of all his other sins: or else repent him of all his other sinnes, and not of a singuler sinne, maie not auaile: For certes GOD almightie is all good, and therefore, either he forgeueth all, or else right nought. And therefore sayth saint Augustin: I wote certainly, that God is enemie to euerye sinner: and how then hee that obserueth one sinne, shall hee haue forgeuenesse of those other sinnes? Naie. And moreouer, contrition shoulde bee wonder sorowfull and anguishous: and therefore geueth him God plainly his mercie: and therefore when my soule was anguished, and sorowful within me, then had I remembrance of God, that my praier might come to him. Furthermore, contrition muste be continuall, and that manne haue stedfast purpose to shriue him, and to amend him of his life. For sothly while contrition lasteth, man maie euer hope to haue forgeuenes. And of this commeth hate of sinne, that destroyeth both sinne in himselfe, and also in other folke at his power. For which sayth Dauid: They that loue God, hate wickednesse: For to loue GOD, is for to loue that he loueth, and hate that he hateth. The last thing that men shall vnder-

vnderstand is this, Wherefore auaileth contition? I say, that contricion sometime deliuereth man fro sinne: Of which Dauid saith, I sate (saied Dauid) I purposed fermely to shriue me, and thou Lord releasedest my sin. And right so as contricion auaileth not without sad purpose of shrift, if man haue opportunite, right so little worth is shrift or satisfaction without contrition. And moreouer contrition destroyeth the prison of hell, and maketh weake and feeble all the strengthes of the Deuils, and restoreth the yeftes of the holy ghost, and of all good vertues, and it cleanseth the soule of sinne, and deliuereth it fro the paine of hell, and fro the companie of the Deuill, and fro the seruage of sinne, and restoreth it to all good spirituals, and to the company and communion of holye Church. Ferthermore, it maketh him that whilome was sonne of yre, to be the sonne of Grace: And all these things been prooued by holie writte. And therefore he that would set his entent to these things, he were full wise: for truely he ne should haue then in all his life courage to sinne, but yeue his heart and bodie to serue Christ, and therefore of doe him homage. For truely our Lord hath spared vs so meekely in our follies, that if he ne had pitie of mans soule, a sorrie song might we all sing.

Explicit prima pars penitentie: & incipit pars secunda.

THe second part of penitence is Confession, that is signe of contrition. Now shull ye vnderstonde what is confession, and it ought needs be doen or no: and which thinges be conuenable to verie confession.

First shalt thou vnderstande, that confession is verie shewing of sinnes to the Priest: this is to saie verie, for hee must confesse him of all the conditions that belong to his sinne, as ferforthe as hee can: all must bee sayd, and nothing excused ne hid, And not auaunt thee of thy good werkes. Also it is necessarie to vnderstande whence that sinnes spring, and how they enter, and which they beene.

Of the spring of sinnes, saith Saint Poule in this wise: That right as by one man sinne entred first into this worlde, and through sin death, right so the death entreth into all men that sinne: and this manne was Adam, by whom sinne entred into this world, when hee brake the commandement of God. And therfore hee that first was so mightie, that hee ne shuld haue died, became so that he must needs die, whether he would or no, and all his progenie in this world, that in the sayed man sinned. Looke that in the estate of innocencie, when Adam and Eue were naked in Paradise, and shamed not thereof, how the serpent, wilyest of all other beasts that GOD made, sayd to the woman: Why commaunded God you, that ye should not eate of euerie tree in Paradise? The woman answered: Of the fruite sayd she of trees of Paradise we feed vs, but of the fruite of the middle tree of Paradise God forbode vs to eate and touche, least wee should die. The Serpent sayd to the woman: Nay, naie, ye shall not die of death, for sooth God wotte, that what day that ye eate thereof your eyen shall open, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and harme. The woman then saw that the tree was good to feeding, and faire to the eyen, and delectable to sight, she tooke of the fruite of the tree and did eate, and paue to her husbond, and he eat, and anon the eyen of hem both opened: and when that they knewe that they were naked, they sowed of Figge leaues in manner of breches, to hide her members. There maie ye see That deadly sinne hath first suggestion of the fende, as sheweth here by the Adder: and afterward the delight of the flesh, as sheweth by Eue, and after that, consenting of reason, as sheweth heere by Adam. For trust well, though so it were, that the fende tempted Eue, that is to saie, the flesh, and the flesshe had delight in the beautie of the fruite defended: yet certes till that reason, that is to say, Adam consented to the eating of the fruite, yet stoode hee in the state of innocencie. Of the sayd Adam tooke wee the sayd originall sinne, for of him fleshly discended bee wee all, and engendred of vile and corrupt matter: And when the soule is put in our bodies, right anon is contract originall sinne, and that that was erst, but onely paine of concupiscence, is afterward both paine and sinne: and therefore wee been all borne sonnes of wrath, and of dampnation perdurable, if it nere Baptisme that wee receiue, which benimmeth vs the coulpe: but forsooth the pine dwelleth with vs as to temptation, which pine hight concupiscence. This concupiscence when it is wrongfully disposed or ordained in man, it maketh him couet by couetise of flesh, fleshly sin by sight of his eyen, as to yerthly thinges, and also couetise of highnesse by pride of heart.

Now as to speake of the first couetise, that is concupiscence, after the lawe of our members, that were lawfully made, and by rightfull iudgement of God, I saie, For as much as manne is not obeisant to God, that is his Lord,

Lorde, therefore is the flesh to him disobeisaunt through concupiscence, whiche is called nourishing of sinne, and occasion of sinne. Therefore, all the while that a manne hath within him the pine of concupiscence, it is impossible, but he bee tempted sometime, and mooued in his flesh to sin. And this thing may not faile, as long as he liueth. It may well waxe feeble by vertue of Baptisme, and by the grace of God through penitence, but fully ne shall it neuer quenche, that hee ne shall sometime bee mooued in himselfe, but if he were all refrained by sickneesse, or by malice of sorcerie, or cold drinkes. For lo, what sayth S. Poule: the flesh coueteth ayenst the spirite, and the spirite ayenst the flesh: they been so contrarie and so striuen, that a manne maie not alway doe as he would. The same S. Poule, after his great penaunce, in water and in lond: in water by night and by day, in great perill, and in great paine: in londe, famine and thurst, colo and clothlesse, and ones stoned almost to death: Yet (sayd he) alas, I caitiffe manne, who shall deliuer mee fro the prison of my caitiffe bodie? And saint Jerom, when hee long time had dwelled in desert, whereas hee had no companie but of wilde beastes, where as hee had no meate, but herbes, and water to drinke, ne no bed, but the naked earth, wherefore his flesh was blacke, as an Ethyopian for heat, and nie destroyed for cold: Yet (sayd he) that the brenning of lecherie boyled in all his bodie. Wherefore I wot well that they bee deceiued that saie, they be not tempted in her bodies. Witnes saint James that saith, That euerie wight is tempted in his owne conscience, that is to say: That ech of vs hath matter and occasion, to be tempted of the norishing of sinne, that is in his bodie. And therefore sayth saint John the Euangelist: If wee saie that wee been without sinne, wee deceiue our selfe, and truth is not in vs. Now shall ye vnderstonde, how sinne wexeth and increaseth in man. The first thing is the same nourishing of sinne, of which I spake before, the fleshly concupiscence: and after that, commeth suggestion of the diuell, this is to saie, the diuels belous, with which he bloweth in man, the fire of concupiscence: and after that, a man bethinketh him whether hee woll doe or no that thing to which he is tempted. And then if a man withstond and weiue the first inticing of his flesh, and of the fiend, then it is no sinne: and if so be he doe not, then feeleth he anon a flame of delight, and then it is good to beware and keepe him well, or els he woll fall anone to consenting of sinne, and then woll he doe it, if hee may haue time and place. And of this matter sayth Boyses by the Deuill, in this manner: The fiend sayeth, I woll chace and pursue man by wicked suggestion, and I woll take him by mouing and stirring of sinne, and I woll depart my prise of my prete by deliberation, and my lust shall be accomplished in delight, I woll draw my swerd in consenting. For certes, right as a swerde departeth a thing in two peeces, right so consenting departeth God fro manne, and then woll I slea him with my honde in deede of sinne: thus sayth the fiend. For certes, then is a man all dead in soule, and thus is sinne accomplished with temptation, by delite and consenting: and then is the sinne actuell. Forsooth sinne is in two maners, either it is veniall, or deadly sinne. Sothly, when man loueth any creature, more than Jesu Christ our Creatour, then it is deadly sinne: and veniall sinne it is, if man loue Jesu Christ lesse than him ought. Forsooth the deed of this veniall sinne is full perilous, for it minisheth the loue that man should haue to God, more and more. And therefore if a man charge himselfe with many such veniall sinnes, certes, but if so bee that hee sometime discharge him of hem by shrift, they may full lightly munish in him all the loue that he hath to Jesu Christ: and in this wise skipperth veniall sinne into deadly sinne. For certes, the more that a man chargeth his soule with veniall sinnes, the more hee is enclined to fall into deadly sinne. And therefore let vs not be negligent, to charge vs of veniall sinnes. For the Prouerbe sayth, That many small make a great. Hearken this ensample: A great waue of the sea commeth sometime with so great a violence, that it drowneth the shippe. And the same harme dooth sometime the small drops of water, that entereth through a little creuels into the timber, and into the bottome of the ship, if men be so negligent, that they discharge hem not by times. And therefore although there bee a difference betwixt these two causes of drowning, algates the shippe is drouned. Right so fareth it sometime of deadly sinne, and of annoious veniall sinnes, when they multiplie in man so greatly, that those worldly thinges that hee loueth, through which hee sinneth venially, is as great in his heart as the loue of God, or more: and therefore the loue of euery thing is not beset in G O D, ne doen principally for Gods sake, although that a man loue it lesse than God, yet is it veniall sinne, and deadly sinne, when the loue of any thing weigheth in the heart of man, as much as the loue of God, or more. Deadly sinne, as sayth saint Augustine, is, When a man tourneth his heart fro

God,

God, whiche that is very soueraigne bounty, that may not chaunge, and yeueth his heart to thing that may chaunge and flit: and certes, that is euerie thinge saue God of heauen. For sooth is that, if a mã yeue his loue, which that he oweth to God with all his heart, vnto a creature, certes, as much of loue as he yeueth to the same creature, so muche hee bireaueth fro God, and therefore doth he sinne: for he that is debitour to God, ne yeldeth not to God all his debt, that is to say, all the loue of his heart. Nowe sith man vnderstondeth generallye, which is veniall sinne, then it is conenable to tell specially of sinne, whiche that many a man peraduenture, deemeth hem no sinnes, and shriueth him not of the same thinges, and yet natheless they be sins soothly, as these Clerkes write, this is to say: At euery tyme that manne eateth and drinketh, more than sufficeth to the sustenance of his body, in certaine he doeth sinne: and also when he speaketh more than it needeth, it is sinne.

Also when he harkeneth not benignely the complainte of the poore: Also when hee is in heale of bodie, and woll not fast when other folk fast, without cause reasonable: Also when he sleepeth more than needeth, or when he cometh perchance to late to the Church, or to other werkes of charitie: Also when hee vseth his wife without soueraigne desire of engendrure, to the honour of God, or for the entent to yeeld to his wife debte of his bodie. Also when he woll not visite the sicke, or the prisoner, if he may. Also if he loue wife or child, or other worldly thing, more than reason requireth. Also if he flatter or blandise more than him ought for any necessitie. Also if he minish or withdrawe the almose of the poore. Also if he apparaile his meat more deliciously than need is, or eat too hastily by lickorousnes. Also, if he talke vanities at Church, or at Gods seruice, or that he be a talker of idle wordes of folly or villanie, for he shall yeeld accompts of it at the day of doome. Also, when hee behighteth or assureth to doe thinges that hee mate not perfourme. Also, when that hee by lightnesse of folly, missayeth or scorneth his neighbour. Also, when he hath any wicked suspection of thing, that hee ne wote of sothfastnesse. These things and mo without number be sinnes, as sayth S. Augustine. Nowe shall men vnderstonde, that all be it so that none earthly manne maye eschewe all veniall sinnes, yet may hee refraine him, by the brenning loue that he hath to our lord Jesu Christ, and by prayers and confession, and other good workes, so that it shall be but little grief. For as sayth S. Augustine: If a man loue God in such manner, that all that euer he doth is the loue of God, or for the loue of God verily, for he brenneth in the loue of GOD: looke how much that one droppe of water, which doeth fall into a great fournace full of fire, annoieth or greueth the brenning of the fire: in like maner annoieth or greueth a venial sinne, vnto that manne whiche is stedfast and perfite in the loue of our saviour Jesu Christ. Furthermore, men may also refraine and put awaie venial sinne, by commoning and receiuing worthely, the body of our saviour Jesu Christ. Also, by taking of holy water, by almesdeed, by generall confession of Confiteor at Masse, and at Complin, and by blessing of Bishops and Priests, and by other good workes.

De septem peccatis mortalibus, & de eorum dependentiis circumstantiis, & speciebus.

NOw it is expedient to tell whiche been the seauen deadly sinnes, that is to saie, chiefetaines of sinnes. All they ren in o lees, but in diuers manners.

Now been they called seauen sinnes, for as much as they bee chiefe, and springe of all other sinnes. Of the roote of these seauen sins, then is Pride the generall root of all harmes. For of this roote springeth certaine braunches: as Ire, Enuie, Accidie or Slouth, Auarice or Couetise, (to common vnderstonding) Gluttonie, and Lecherie: and each of these chiefe sinnes, haue her braunches and twigs, as it shall bee declared in her Chapiters following. And though so bee, that no manne can vtterly tell the number of twigges, and of the harmes that come of Pride. Yet woll I shew a part of hem, as ye shall vnderstond. There is inobedience, auaunting, ipocrisie, dispite, errogance, impudence, swelling of hert, insolence, elation, impatience, strife, contumacie, presumption, irreuerence, pertinacie, vaineglorie, and many other twigges that I cannot declare. Inobedience, is he that disobeyeth for dispite, the commaundements of God, to his soueraignes, and to his ghostly father. Auaunter, is he that boasteth of the harme or of the bounty that he hath don. Ipocrite, is he that hideth to shew him such as he is, and sheweth him to seme such as he is not. Dispitous, is he that hath disdain of his neibour, that is to saie, of his euin Christen, or hath dispite to do that him ought to doe. Errogance, is hee that thinketh that hee hath those bounties in him, that hee hath not, or weneth that hee shoulde haue hem by his deserts,

serts, or else that he deemeth, he is that he is not. Impudent, is he that for his pride, hath no shame of his pride ne sinne. Swelling of heart, is when man reioyceth him of harme that hee hath doen. Insolence, is he that despiseth in his iudgement all other folke, as in regarde of his value, of his cunning, of his speaking, and of his bering. Elation, is when hee ne may neither suffer to haue maister ne fellowe. Impatience, is he that woll not be taught, ne rebuked of his vice, and by strife denyeth truth wittingly, and defendeth his folly. Contumacie, is he that through his indignation, is ayenst euerie auctoritie or power of hem that been his Soueraines. Presumption, is when a manne vndertaketh an empryse that him ought not to doe, or els that he maye not doe, and this is called surquidie. Irreuerence, is when manne doth not honour there as him ought to doe, and looke to be reuerenced. Pertinacie, is when men defende her folly, and trust too much on her owne wit. Vaineglorie, is for to haue pompe, and delight in his temporall highnesse, and glorye him in worldly estates. Iangling, is when men speak to muche before folke, and clappeth as a mill, and take no keepe what they say.

And yet there is a priuie spice of pride, that waiteth first to bee salewed, or he woll salew, all be he lesse worthye than that other is. And also he waiteth or desireth to sit, or else to goe aboue him in the waye, or kisse paxe, to be encenced, or goe to offring before his neighbour, and suche semblable thinges, ayenst his duetie peraduenture, but that hee hath his heart and his entent, in suche a proude desire, to be magnified and honoured before the people.

Now ben there two maner of prides. One of hem is within the heart of a man, and that other is without. Of whiche forsayd things soothly, and mo than I haue sayd, appertaine to pride, that is in the heart of man, and other spices of pride beene without: but natheless, that one of these spices of pride, is signe of that other, right as the gaye leuesil at the Tauerne, is signe of the wine that is in the Seller. And this is in many thinges: as in speeche and countenaunce, and outragious arraye of clothing: for certes, if there had ben no sinne in clothing, Christ would not so sone haue noted and spoken of the clothing of the rich menne, in the Gospell. And as S. Greg. ☞ sayeth, That precious cloathing is culpable for the dearth of it, and for his softnesse, and for his straungenesse and disguising: and for the superfluitie, or for the inordinate scantnes of it. Alas, may not a man see as in our daies, the sinnefull costlewe arraie of clothyng, and namely in too much superfluitie, or else in too disordinate scantnesse.

As to the firste sinne in superfluity of cloathinge, suche that maketh it so deare, to the harme of the people, not onely the coste of embroudering, the disguised endenting, or barring, ounding paling, winding, or bending, and semblable wast of cloth in vanitie: but there is also the costlewe Furring in her gounes, so muche pounsing of chesell to make holes, so muche dagging of Shetes, with the superfluitie in length of the forsaide gounes, traylyng in the dong and in the myre, on horse and also on foote, as well of manne as of woman: that all that trayling is verely (as in effect wasted, consumed, tredbare, and rotten with doung, rather than it is yeue to the poore, to great dammage of the forsayd poore folke, and that in sundrie wise: this is to say, that the more the cloth is wasted, the more must it cost to the poore people for the scarcenesse. And moreouer, if so be that they would yeue suche pounsed and dagged clothyng to the poore people, it is not conuenient to were for her estate, ne sufficient to her necessitie, to keepe hem fro the distemperaunce of the firmament. Vpon that other side, to speake of the horrible disordinate scantnesse of clothing, as beene these cutted sloppes or hanselines, that through her shortenesse couer not the shamefull members of man, to wicked entent. Alas, some of hem shew the bosse of her shape, and the horrible swole members that semeth like the maladie of Hernia, in the wrapping of her hosen, and also the buttocks of hem fare as it were the hinder parte of a shee Ape in the full of the moone. And moreouer the wretched swoln members that they shew throughe disguising, in departing of her hosen, in white and redde, seemeth that halfe her shamefull priuy members were flaine. And if so bee that they departe her hosen in other colours, as is white and blewe, or white and blacke, or blacke & redde, and so forth: Then seemeth it as by variaunce of colour that the halfe part of her priuie members ben corrupt by the fire of saint Anthonie, or by canker, or other suche mischaunce. Of the hinder parte of the buttockes it is full horrible for to see, for certes in that partie of her bodie there as they purge her stinking ordure, that foule partie shewe they to the people proudely in dispite of honestie, whiche honestie that Jesu Christe and his freends obserued to shewe in her life. Now as to the outragious arraie of women, God wot, that though the bisages of some of hem seeme full chaste and debonaire, yet nottie in her araye or attire, licorousnes and pride:

I say not that honestie in clothing of man or woman is vncouenable, but certes the superfluitie of disordinate quantitie of clothing is reprouable. Also the sinne of ornament or of apparaile, is in thinges that appertaine to riding, as in compane, delicate horses that ben holden for delight, that been so faire, fatte, and costlewe, and also in many a nice knaue, that is sustained because of hem, in curious harneis, as in saddles, cropers, peitrels, and bridles couered with precious clothing, and rich barres of plates of gould and of siluer. For which God sayeth by Zacharie the Prophet, I woll confounde the riders of suche horses. These folke take little regard of the riding of Goddes sonne of heauen, and of his harneis, when he rode vpon the Asse, and had none other harneis but the poore clothes of his disciples, ne we read not that euer hee rode on other beest. I speake this for the sinne of superfluitie, and not for reasonable honeste, when reason it requireth. And moreouer, certes pride is greatly notified in holdinge of great meine, when they been of little profite or of right no profite, and namely when that meine is felonous and damnageous to the people by hardinesse of high lordeshippe, or by way of offices. For certes, such Lordes sell then her lordeshippe to the Deuill of Hell, when they sustaine the wickednesse of her meine. Or else, when these folke of low degree, as those that keepe hostleries, sustaine thefte of her hostlelers, and that is in many manner of deceits: those maner of folke been the flyes that follow the honie, or else the hounds that follow the caraine. Suche forsayde folke strangle spiritually her lordeships: For suche, thus saith ☞ Dauid the Prophet: Wicked death might come on those lordeshippes, and GOD yeue that they might descend into hell, all downe, all downe: For in her houses been iniquities and shrewdnesse, and not GOD of heauen. And certes, till they done amendment, right as God yaue his blessing to Pharao by the seruice of Jacob, and to Laban by the seruice of Joseph: Right so God will yeue his curse to such lordeshippes as sustaine the wickednesse of her seruaunts, but they come to amendment. Pride of the table appeareth also full oft: for certes, riche menne bee called to feasts, and poore folke been put away and rebuked. And also in excesse of diuers meates and drinkes, and namely such manner bake meates and disbe meates brenninge of wilde fire, peinted and castelled with paper and semblable wast, so that it is abusion to think. And also in too great preciousnesse of vessell, and curiositie of minstralcie, by which a man is sterred more to delites of lecherye, if so bee that hee sette his heart the lesse vppon oure Lord Jesu Christ, certainely it is a sinne. And certainely the delices myght bee so great in this case, that a manne might lightly fall by hem into deadly sinne. The tipeces that sourde of pride, soothly when they sourde of malice imagined, auysed, and forecaste, or els of vsage, ben deadly sinne, it is no doubt. And when they sourde by freelte vnauised sodenly, and sodaynely withdraw ayen, all be they greuous sinnes, I gesse that they be not deadly. Nowe might menne aske, whereof that pride sourdeth and springeth. I say that somtime it springeth of the goods of nature, sometime of the goodes of fortune, and sometime of the goodes of grace. Certes the goods of nature stondeth onely in goodes of bodye, or goodes of the soule. Certes, goodes of body ben hele of body, strength, deliuernesse, beauty, gentrie, franchise. Goodes of nature of the soule, ben good with sharpe vnderstonding, subtill engine, vertue naturall, good memory. Goodes of fortune, be riches, hie degrees of lordships, praylinges of the people. Goodes of grace, ben science, power to suffice spirituell trauaile, benigne, vertuous contemplation, vnderstonding of temptation, and semblable thinges: of which foresayd goods, certes it is a full great folly, a manne to haue pride in any of hem all. Now, as for to speake of goodes of nature, God wote that sometime we haue hem in nature as much to our damage as to our profite. As to speake of hele of body, truely it passeth full lightly, and also it is full ofte occasion of sickenesse of the soule: for God wote, The flesh is a great enemye to ☞ the soule: and therfore the more that the body is whole, the more we be in perill to fall. Also for to haue pride in his strength of body, it is an hie folly: for certes the flesh coueteth ayenst the spirite: and the more strong that the flesh is, the sorrier may the soule be. And ouer all, this strength of body and worldly hardinesse, causeth full ofte many man to perill and mischaunce. And also to haue pride of gentrye, is right great folly: For oft time the gentry of ☞ the body taketh away the gentry of the soule: and also we been all of o father and mother: and all we ben of o nature, rotten and corrupt, both rich and poore. For sooth o manner gentry is for to praise, that apparelleth mannes courage: wit, vertue, and morality, maketh him Christs child. For trust well, That ouer ☞ what man that sinne hath maystry, he is a very churle to sinne.

Now been there generall signes of gentlenesse: as eschewing of vice and ribaudrye,

and seruage of sinne: in word, in werke, and continuaunce of vsing a vertue, courtesie, and cleanenesse, and to bee liberall: that is to say, large by measure: for that that passeth measure, is folly and sin: Another is to remember him of bounty, that he of other folke hath receiued: Another is to be benigne to his good subiects. Wherefore saith Senecke: There is nothing more conenable to a manne of high estate, than debonairtie and pity. And therfore these flies that men cal bees, when they make her king, they chese one that hath no pricke, wherewith he may sting.

Another is, manne to haue a noble heart and a dilligent, to attaine to the high vertuous things. Now certes, a manne to haue pride in the goods of grace, is also an outragious folly: for those gifts of grace that should haue turned him to goodnesse, and to medicine, tourneth him to venome and confusion, as sayeth saint Gregorie. Certes also, who so hath pride in the goodnesse of fortune, hee is a full great foole: For sometime is a manne a great lord by the morne, that is a caitiffe and a wretche or it bee night: and sometime the riches of a man is cause of his death. Sometime the delices of a manne is cause of greenous maladie, through which he dieth. Certes, the commendation of the people is, sometime full false and brotell for to trust. This day they praise, to morrow they blame. God wote, desire to haue commendation of the people, hath caused death to manie a busie manne. Now sith that so is, that yee haue vnderstond what is pride, and which bee the speces of it, and whence it sourdeth and springeth: now yee shall vnderstond which is the remedie ayenst it. Humility or meekenesse is the remedy ayenst pride, that is a vertue, thorow which a manne hath very knowledge of himselfe, and holdeth of himselfe nor price ne daintie, as in regard of his desertes, considering euer his freelte. Now been there three manner of humilities: As humility in heart, another humility is in mouth, and the third is in works. The humility in hert is in foure manners: That one is, when a man holdeth himselfe as nought worth before GOD of heauen. The second is, when hee despiseth none other man. The third is, when hee ne recketh nat though men holde him nought worth. And the fourth is, when hee is not sorry of his humiliation. Also the humility of mouth is in foure thinges. In a temperate speech, in humility of speech, and when he confesseth with his owne mouth, that hee is such as him thinketh that he is in his heart: Another is, when hee praiseth the bounty of another man and nothing therof minisheth. Humilitie also in werke, is in foure maners. The first is, when he putteth other men before him, the second is, to chese the lowest place ouer all, the third is, gladly to assent to good counsaile, the fourth is, to stond gladly to the award of his soueraigns, or of him that is in hier degre: Certaine this is great werke of humilitie.

¶ De Inuidia.

After pride woll I speake of the foule sinne of Enuye, which that is after the worde of the Philosopher, sorrowe of other mens prosperitie. And after the worde of Saint Augustine: It is the sorrowe of other mennes weale, and the ioy of other mennes harme. This foule sinne is platly ayenst the holye Ghost: All bee it so, that euerie sinne is ayenst the holy Ghoste: Yet natheless, for as much as bountie appertaineth properly to the holy ghost: and Enuy cometh properly of malice, therefore it is properly ayenst the bountie of the holye Ghost. Now hath malice two speces, that is to say, hardines of hart in wickednes, or else the flesh of a manne is so blind, that he considreth not that hee is in sinne, or recketh not that he is in sinne, which is the hardinesse of the Diuell. That other spice of Enuie is, when that a man denieth trouth, when he knoweth that it is trouth, and also when hee repenteth the grace that god hath yeue to his neighbor: and all this is by Enuie. Certes, then is Enuie the worst sin that is, for soothly all other sins be sometime onely ayenst a speciall vertue: but certes, enuy is ayenst al vertues and al goodnesse. For it is sorry ayenst all the bounties of her neighbour, and in this manner it is diuers from all other sinnes. Alas: For there ne is any sinne that it ne hath some delight in it selfe, saue only Enuie, that euer hath in it selfe anguish and sorrow. The spices of Enuy ben these: there is first sorrowe of other mennes goodnesse and of her prosperitie, and prosperitie is kindly matter of ioy: Then is enuy a sinne ayenst kinde. The seconde spice of Enuy, is ioy of other mennes harme, and that is properly like to the Diuell, that euer reioyseth him of mannes harme. Of these two spices commeth backbiting, and this sinne of backebitinge or detractinge hathe certaine spices, as thus: Some manne praiseth his neighbor by a wicked entent, for he maketh alway a wicked knot at the laste ende: alway he maketh a but at the last ende, that is digne of more blame, than is worth all the praising.

The

The second spece is, that if a man be good, or doth or sayth a thing to good intent, the backbiter woll turne all that goodnesse vp so doun: to his shrewde entent. The thirde is to amenuise the bountie of his Neyghbour. The fourthe spece of backebiting is this, that if menne speake goodnesse of a manne, then wol the backebiter say: Perfay suche a manne is yet better than hee, in dispraising of him that menne prayse. The fifth spece is this, for to consent gladly and herke gladly to the harme that men speake of other folke: This sinne is full great, and aye encreaseth after the wicked entent of the backbiter. After backbiting commeth grutching or murmuration, and sometime it springeth of impatience ayenst God, and sometime ayenst manne. Ayenst God it is when a man grutcheth ayenst the pain of hel, or ayenst pouertie, or losse of cattell, or ayenst raine or tempest, or els grutcheth that shrews haue prosperitie, or else for that good menne haue aduersitie: and all these thinges should menne suffer patiently, for they come by the rightfull iudgement and ordinaunce of God. Somtime commeth grutching of auarice, as Judas grutched ayenst Maudelein, when she annointed the head of our Lorde Jesu Christ with her precious oyntment. This manner murmuring is such as when man grutcheth of goodnesse that himselfe doth, or that other folke doen of her owne cattell. Sometime cõmeth murmure of pride, as when Simon the Pharisee grutched ayenst Maudelein when shee approched to Jesu Christ and wept at his feet for her sinnes. And sometime it sourdeth of Enuie, when men discouer a mans harme that was priuy, or beareth him on hond thing that is false. Murmure also is ofte among seruaunts that grutch when her soueraignes bidde hem do lefull thinges, and for as much as they dare not openly withsaye the commaundement of her soueraignes, yet wol they say harme and grutche and murmure priuely for very spight: which words they call the diuels Pater noster, though so bee that the diuell had neuer Pater noster, but that lewde folke yeueth it such a name. Sometime it commeth of pre or priute hate, that norisheth rancour in the heart, as afterward I shall declare. Then commeth also bitternesse of heart, thorow which bitternesse, euery good deed of his neighbor semeth to him bitter and vnsauery. Then cometh discord that vnbindeth all maner of frendship. Then commeth scorning of his neighbour, all doe he neuer so well. Then commeth accusing, as when a man seeketh occasion to annoy his neighbor, which is like the craft of the diuell, that waiteth both daye and night to accuse vs all. Then cometh malignity, through which a manne annoieth his neighbour priuily if hee may, and if hee maye not, algate his wicked will shall not let, as for to brenne his house priuily, or enpoison or slea his beastes, and semblable thinges. Nowe woll I speake of the remedie ayenst this foule sinne of enuie. First is the loue of God principally, and louing of his neighbour as himselfe: for soothly that one ne may not be without that other. And trust wel that in the name of thy neighbour thou shalt vnderstande the name of thy brother, for certes all wee haue one father fleshly, and one mother, that is to say Adam and Eue: and also one father spirituell, that is God of heauen. Thy neighbor art thou bounde for to loue, and will him all goodnesse, and therefore sayth God: Loue thy neighbour as thy selfe, that is to say, to saluation both of life and soule. And moreouer thou shalt loue him in worde and in benigne admonishing and chastising, and comfort him in his noyaunces, and praye for him withall thy heart. And in deede thou shalt loue him in suche wise that thou shalt doe to him in charitie, as thou woldest that it were don to thine owne person: and therefore thou ne shalt doe him no damage in wicked worde, ne harme in his body ne in his cattell, ne in his soule by entising of wicked ensample. Thou shalt not desire his wife, ne none of his thinges. Understonde also that in the name of neighbour is comprehended his enemy: Certes man shal loue his enemy by the commandement of god, and soothly thy friend thou shalt loue in God. I say thine enemye, shalt thou loue for Gods sake, by his commaundement: for if it were reason that man shoulde hate his enemye, forsoth God nolde not receiue vs to his loue that beene his enemyes. Ayenst three manner of wronges that his enemye doth to him, hee shall do three things as thus: ayenst hate and rancour of heart, hee shall loue him in heart: Ayenst chiding & wicked wordes, he shall pray for his enemy: Ayenst wicked deeds, he shal do him bounty. For Christ sayth: Loue your enemies, and pray for hem that speke you harme, and for them that chase and pursue you: and do bounty to hem that hate you. Lo, thus cõmaundeth vs our Lord Jesu Christ to doe to our enemies: Forsooth nature driueth vs to loue our freends, and perfay our enemies haue more neede of loue than our freends, and they that more need haue, certes to hem shall men do goodnesse. And certes in that deed haue we remembrauce of the loue of Jesus Christe that died for his enemies: And in as much as that loue is more greuous to perfourme, so

muche is the more great the merite, and therfore the louing of our enemie hath confounded the diuels venim: For right as the deuill is confounded by humilitie, right so is hee wounded to the death by the loue of our enemie: certes then is loue the medicine that casteth out the venim of enuie fro mans heart. The speces of this place shall be more largely declared in her chapters following.

¶ De Ira.

After Enuy woll I discriue the sinne of Ire: for soothly who so hath Enuy vpon his Neighbour, anon hee woll commonly finde him a matter of wrathe in word or in deed, ayenst him to whom he hath Enuie: And as well commeth Ire of pride as of Enuie, for soothly he that is proude or enuious is lightly wroth.

This sin of Ire, after the discriuing of S. Austin is wicked will to be auenged by worde or by deede. Ire after the Philosopher, is the feruent bloode of man iquicked in his heart, through which hee would harme to him that he hateth: for certes the hart of manne by eschauffing and mooning of his bloode, waxeth so troubled, that it is out of all manner iudgment of reason. But ye shall vnderstond that Ire is in twoo manners, that one of hem is good, and that other is wicked. The good ire is by ialousie of goodnes through which man is wroth with wickednesse, and ayenst wickednesse. And therefore saith a wise man, that yre is bet than playe. This ire is with debonairte, and it is wrathe without bitternesse: not wroth ayenst the man, but wrothe with the misdeede of the manne. As saith the Prophet Dauid: Irascimini, & nolite peccare. Now vnderstond that wicked Ire is in two manners, that is to say, sodaine yre or hasty yre without auisement and consenting of reason: The meaning and the sence of this is, that the reason of a manne ne consent not to that sodaine yre, and then it is venial. Another yre is full wicked, that cometh of felony of heart, auised and cast before with wicked will to do vengeaunce, and thereto his reason consenteth: and soothly this is deadly sinne. This yre is so displeasant to God, that it troubleth his house, & chaseth the holy ghost out of mans soule, and wasteth and destroyeth that likenesse of God, that is to say, the vertue that is in mans soule, and putteth in him the likenesse of the deuill, and taketh the man fro God that is his rightfull Lord. This is a full great pleasance to the deuil, for it is the deuils fornace that is eschauffed with the fire of hell: For certes right so as fire is more mightie to destroie earthly thinges, than any other Element, right so yre is mightie to destroie all spirituall thinges. Looke how that fire of smal coles that been almost dead vnder asben, woll reuiue or quicke ayen when they ben touched with brimstone, right so yre woll euermore quicke ayen, when it is touched by the pride that is couered in mans heart. For certes fire ne may not come out of nothing, but if it were first in the same thing naturally: as fire is drawne out of flintes with steele. And right so as pride is many times matter of yre, right so is rancour norice and keeper of Ire. There is a manner tree, as sayth saint Isodore, that when a manne maketh a fire of the saide tree, and couer the coales of it with asben, soothly the fire of it will last a yeere or more: And right so fareth it of rancour, when it is ones conceiued in the heart of some men, certes it woll last peraduenture from one Easter day vntill another Easter day, or more. But certes the same man is full ferre from the mercie of God all that while.

In this forsaid deuils fournace there forge three shrewes: Pride, that aye bloweth and encreaseth the fire, by chiding and wicked wordes: The stondeth Enuy, and holdeth hot yron in the fire vpon the heart of man, with a payre of longe tonges of longe rancour: And then stondeth the sinne of Contumelie or strife and cheste, and battereth and forgeth by vilainous repreuinges. Certes this cursed sin annoyeth both to the manne himselfe, and also his Neighbour. For soothly almost all the harme or dammage that any man doth to his Neighbor commeth of wrath: for certes, outragious wrathe dothe all that euer the foule fende willeth or commaundeth him: for he ne spareth neither our Lord Jesu Christ, neither his sweet mother. And in his outragious anger and yre, alas, alas, full many and diuers at that time, feleth in his heart full wickedly, both of Christ, and also of all his hallowes: Is not this a cursed vice? yes certes. Alas it taketh fro man his witte and his reason, and all his debonaire life spirituell, that should keepe his soule. Certes it withdraweth also Goddes due lordshipe (and that is mans soule) and the loue of his Neighbours. It striueth also all daye ayenst trouth, it reaueth him the quiet of his heart, and subuerteth his soule.

Of Ire cometh these stinking engendrures, First, Hate, that is olde wrath: Discord, thorow which a manne forsaketh his olde friend that hee hath loued full long: and then commeth War, and euery manner of wrong that a man dooth to his neighbour in body or in cat-

tattell. Of this cursed sinne of yre commeth also manslaughter. And vnderstond well that homicide (that is, manslaughter) is in diuers wise.

Some manner of homicide is spirituell, and some is bodily. Spirituell manslaughter is in vi. thinges. First by hate, as sayth Saint John: He that hateth his brother, is an homicide. Homicide is also by backbiting, of which backbiting sayth Salomon, that they haue two swerds, with which they slay her neighbours: For soothly as wicked is to take fro him his good name as his life. Homicide is also in yeuing of wicked counsaile by fraude, as for to yeue counsayle to areise wrongfull customes, and talages. Of which sayth Salomon: A Lion roring, and a Beare hungrie, be like to the cruell Lordes in withholding or abridging of the shepe or the hire of the wages of Seruauntes, or else in vsurie, or in withdrawing of the Almes of poore folke. For which the wise manne sayeth: Feedeth him that almoost dyeth for honger, for soothly but if you feede him you slay him. And all these ben deadly sinnes. Bodily manslaughter is when thou sleest him with thy tongue: Another manner is, when thou commaundest to slea a man, or else yeuest counsaile to slea a man. Manslaughter indeede is in foure manners. That one is by law, right as a Justice dampneth him that is culpable to the death: But let the Justice beware that he doe it rightfully, and that he doe it not for delight to spill blood, but for keping of rightwisenesse. Another homicide is done for necessitie, as when a man slayeth another in his defence, and that hee ne may none otherwise escape, without slaughter of his aduersarie, he doth sinne, and he shall beare penaunce as for deadly sinne. Also if a manne by case or aduenture shoote an arrowe or cast a stone, with which he slaieth a man, he is an homicide. And if a woman by negligence ouerlyeth her child in her sleepinge, it is homicide and deadly sin. Also when a man disturbleth conception of a childe, and maketh a woman either barren by drinking of venemous herbes, throughe which she may not conceiue, or slaieth a child by drinkes, or else putteth certaine materiall thinges in her secret places to slaie the childe, or else doth vnkindly sinne, by which a manne or a woman shedneth her nature in manner or in a place there as a childe maye not bee conceiued. Or else if so bee that a woman hath conceiued, and hurteth her selfe, and by that mishappe the childe is slaine, yet it is homicide. What say we of those women that murderen her children for because of eschewinge of worldly shame? Certes, it is an horrible homicide. Homicide is also, if a manne approche to a woman by desire of lecherye, thorow which the childe is perished: or els smiteth a woman wittingly, through which hee leseth her child: All these been homicides, and horrible deadly sinnes. Yet come there of ire mo sinnes, as well in worde, as in thought and deede. As he that arreteth vpon God, or blameth God of the thing of which he is himselfe guilty, or despiseth God and all his hallows, as done the cursed hasardours in diuers countries: This cursed sinne done they, when they fele in her hert full wickedly of God and of his halowes. Also when they treat vnreuerently the sacrament of the aulter, that sinne is so great, that vnneth it may be released, but that the mercy of God passeth all his werkes, it is so great, and hee so benigne. Then commeth of Ire an atterly anger, when a man is sharpely amonested in his thrift to leaue his sinne: Then woll he be angrie, and aunswere hokerly and angerly, or defend or excuse his sinne by vnstedfastnesse of his flesshe, or else hee did it for to hold compaine with his fellowes, or els he sayth the fiend enticed him, or els hee dooth it for his youth, or els his complexion is so courageous that he may not forbeare, or els it is his destinie hee sayeth vnto a certaine age, or els he sayth it commeth him of gentlenesse of his auncestors, and semblable thinges. All these manner of folke so wrappe hem in her sinnes, that they ne woll not deliuer hemselfe: For soothly, No wight that excuseth himselfe wilfully of his sinne, may not bee deliuered of his sinne, till that he meekely beknoweth his sinne. After this then commeth swearing, that is expresse agenste the commaundement of God: and that befalleth often of Anger and of Ire. God sayeth: Thou shalt not take the name of thy Lord God in vaine or in idle. Also our Lorde Jesu Christ sayeth by the worde of Saint Mathewe: Ne shal ye not sweare in all manner, nether by heauen, for it is Gods trone: ne by yearth, for it is the bence of his feet: ne by Hierusalem, for it is the city of a great King: ne by thine head, for thou mayest not make an hayre neyther white ne blacke: but say by your worde, yea, yea, nay, nay: and what that is more, it is of euill. Thus sayeth Christ. For Christes sake sweare not so sinnefully in dismembring of Christ, By soule, heart, bones, and body: for certes it seemeth, that ye thinke that the cursed Jewes dismembred not ynough the precious person of Christ, but ye dismember him more. And if so bee that the law compell you to sweare, then ruleth you after the law of god

in your swearing, as sayeth Jeremie. iiii. cap. Thou shalt keep three conditions, Thou shalt swear in trouth, in doome, and in rightwisenesse: this is to say, thou shalt swear sooth. For every lesing is ayenst Christ, for Christ is very trouth. And thinke well this, That every great swearer, not compelled lawfully to swear, the plague shal not depart fro his hous, while he vseth such vnlefull swearing. Thou shalt swear also in dome, when thou art constrained by thy domes man to witnes trouth: Also thou shalt not swear for enuie, nepther for fauour, neither for mede or reward, but only for rightwisenesse, and for declaring of it to the honour and worshipe of God, and to the ayding and helpe of thine euin Christen. And therefore every man that taketh Gods name in idle, or falsely sweareth with his mouth, or els taketh on him the name of Christ, to bee called a Christen man, & liueth ayenst Christs liuing and his teaching: all they take Gods name in idle. Looke also what sayth saint Peter: Actuum iiii. capitu. Non est aliud nomen sub cœlo, &c. There is none other name (sayeth saint Peter) vnder heauen yeue to menne, in which they may bee saued, that is to say, but the name of Jesu Christ. Take heed eke how precious is the name of Jesu Christ, as sayeth S. Poule, ad Philipenses. ii. In nomine Iesu, &c. That in the name of Jesu every knee of heauenly creatures, earthly, and of hell, should bow: for it is so high and so worshipfull, that the cursed fiend in hell should tremble to heare it named. Then seemeth it, that menne that sweare so horribly by his blessed name, that they despise it more boldely than the cursed Jewes, or els the diuell, that trembleth when he heareth his name.

Now certes, sith that swearing (but if it be lawfully done) is so highly defended: much more is forswearing falsely, and yet needlesse.

What say we also of hem that delight hem in swearing, and hold it a gentery or a manly deed to sweare great othes? And what of hem that of very vsage ne cease not to sweare great othes, all bee the cause not worth a strawe? Certes, this is horrible sinne. Swearing suddainly is also a great sinne. But let vs go now to that horrible sinne, swearing of adiuration and coniuration, as done these false Enchauntours or Nigromancers in Basins full of water, or in a bright sword, in a circle, in a fire, or in the shoulder bone of a sheepe? I cannot say, but that they doe cursedly and damnably ayenst Christ, and all the faith of holy church.

What say we of hem that beleeue on Deuinales, as by flight or by noise of birdes or of beasts, or by sorte, by Scomancie, by dreames, by chirking of dores, or craking of houses, by gnawing of rats, and such manner wretchednesse? Certes, all these things been defended by God and holy church, for which they beene accursed, till they come to amendement, that on such filth set her beleeue. Charmes for wounds, or maladie of menne, or of beastes, if they take any effect, it may bee peraduenture that God suffereth it, for folke should yeue the more faith and reuerence to his name.

Now woll I speake of lesings, which generally is false signifiaunce of word in entent, to deceiue his euin Christen. Some lesing is, of which there commeth none aduauntage to no wight: and some lesing turneth to the profite and ease of a man, and to the damnage of another man. Another lesing is, for to saue his life or his catell, which commeth of delight for to lie, in which delight, they woll forge a long tale, and paint it with all circumstaunces, where all the tale of the ground is false. Some lesing commeth, for hee woll sustain his words: Some lesing commeth of retchlesnesse without auisement, and semblable things.

Let vs now touch the vice of Flatterie, which ne commeth not gladly, but for dread, or for couetise. Flatterie is generally wrongfull praising. Flatterers been the deuils nourices, that nourish his children with milke of losengerie: forsooth Salomon sayth, That Flatterie is worse than detraction: for sometime detraction maketh an hautein manne be the more humble, for hee dreadeth detraction, but certes flattery maketh a man to enhaunce his heart and his countenaunce. Flatterers be the deuils enchauntours, for they make a man to wene himselfe be like that he is not like. Those bee like to Judas, that betray a man, to sell him to his enemy. Flatterers been the deuils Chaplens, that euer sing Placebo. I reckon flattery in the vices of ire: for oft time if a man be wroth with another, thē woll he flatter some wight, to sustaine him in his quarrell.

Speak we now of such cursing as commeth of irous hart. Malison generally may be said, every manner power of harme: such cursing bereaueth man fro the reigne of God, as sayth S. Poule. And oft time such cursing wrongfully, returneth ayen to him that curseth, as a bird that turneth again to his own neast. And ouer all thing, men ought eschew to curse her children, & yeue to the deuill her engendrure, as ferre forth as in hem is: certes, it is great perill and great sinne.

Let vs then speak of Chiding and Reproch, which

which beene full great woundes in maunes heart, for they vnlow the seames of friendship in mans heart: For certes, Unneth may a man plainely be accorded with him, that him openly hath reuiled and repreued, & disclaundred: This is a full ghostly sinne, as Christ sayth in the Gospell. And take heed now, that he that repreueth his neighbour, either he repreueth him by some harme of paine, that hee hath vpon his bodie, as Mesell, crooked, harlot, or by some sinne that he dooth. Now if yee repreue him by harme of paine, then turneth the repreue to Jesu Christ: for paine is send by the rightwise sonde of God, and by his sufferaunce, be it meselrie, maime, or maladie: and if hee repreue him vncharitably of sinne, as thou holour, thou dronkelewe harlot, and so foorth: then pertaineth that to the reioycing of the deuill, which euer hath ioy that men doen sinne. And certes, chiding may not come but of villanous heart, for after the haboundance of the heart speaketh the mouth full oft. And ye shall vnderstond, that looke by any way, when any man shall chastise or correct another, that he beware from chiding or repreuing: for truly but he beware, hee may full lightly quicken the fire of anger and of wrath, which hee should quench: and peraduenture, slacth him, which he might chastise with benignity. For as sayth Salomon: The amiable tong is the tree of life, that is to say, of life spirituell. And soothly, a dissolute tong slacth the spirits of hem that repreueth, and also of him which is repreued. Lo, what sayeth saint Augustine: There is nothing so like the deuils child, as he which oft chideth. A seruaunt of God behoueth not to chide. And though that chiding be a villainous thing betwixt all maner folke, yet it is certes most vncouenable betweene a man and his wife, for there is neuer rest. And therefore saieth Salomon: An house that is vncouered and dropping, and a chiding wife, ben alike.

A man, which is in a dropping hous in many places, though he eschew the dropping in o place, it droppeth on him in another place: So fareth it by a chiding wife, if she chide him not in one place, she wol chide him in another: And therefore, Better and greatly more pleasant is a morsell or little gobbet of bread with ioy, than an house filled full of delices, with chiding & gnerring, sayeth Salomon. Saint Poule sayth: O ye women, beth ye subiect to your husbands, as you behoueth and ought in God. And ye men louеth your wiues. Ad Colonicenses. iii.

Afterward speak we of Scorning, which is a wicked sinne, and namely, when he scorneth a man for his good werkes: For certes, such scorners fare like the foule tode, that may not endure to smell the sweete sauour of the vine, when it flourisheth. These scorners been parting fellowes with the deuill, for they haue ioy when the deuill winneth, and sorrow if he leseth. They ben aduersaries of Jesu Christ, for they hate that he loueth, that is to say, saluation of soule.

Speake we now of wicked counsaile, the which is a Traitour, for hee deceiueth him that trusteth in him: Ut Achitophell ad Salomonem. But natheless, yet is his wicked counsaile first ayenst himselfe: for as sayth the Wise man: Euery false liuing hath this property in himselfe, that he that wol annoy another man, he annoyeth first himselfe. And men shall vnderstond, that man shall not take his counsaile of false folk, ne of angry folk, or greuous folke, ne of folke that loue specially too much worldly folke, namely, in counsailing of soules.

Now commeth the sinne of hem that sow and make discord among folke, which is a sin that Christ hateth vtterly, and no wonder is: for he died for to make concord. And more shame doe they to Christ, than did they that him crucified: For God loueth better, that friendship be amongs folke, than hee did his owne body, which that hee gaue for vnitie. Therefore ben they likened to the deuill, that euer be about to make discord. Now cometh the sinne of Double tongue, such as speake faire before folke, and wickedly behind: or else they make semblaunt, as though they spake of good entention, or els in game and play, and yet they speake of wicked entent.

Now commeth bewraying of counsayle, through which a man is defamed: certes vneth may he restore the damnage. Now commeth menace, that is an open folly: for he that oft menaceth, he threateth more than he may performe full oft time. Now commeth idle wordes, that is, without profite of him that speaketh the words, and also of him that harkeneth the wordes: Or els idle wordes been those that been needelesse, or without entent of naturall profit. And albeit that idle words be sometime veniall sinne, yet should menne doubt hem, for we shall yeue reckoning of hem before God. Now commeth iangling, that may not be without sinne: and as sayeth Salomon, It is a signe of apert folly. And therefore a Philosopher saied, when menne asked him how that he should please the people, hee answered: Doe many good werkes, and speake few vanities. After this commeth the sinne of yaperies, that been the deuils Apes, for they

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make folke to laugh at her paperie, as folke do at the gaudes of an ape: which papes defendeth saint Poule. Looke how that vertuous words and holy, comfort hem that trauaile in the seruice of Christ, right so comforteth the villainous words and knacks of papers, hem that trauaile in the seruice of the deuill. These ben the sinnes of the tongue, that come of ire, and of other sinnes.

¶ The remedie ayenst Ire.

THe remedy ayenst Ire, is a vertue that men call mansuetude, that is Debonairtie: and also another vertue, that men clepe patience or sufferaunce.

Debonairtie withdraweth and refraineth the stirrings and moouings of mans courage in heart, in such manner, that they ne skip not out by Anger ne Ire. Sufferaunce, suffereth sweetly all the annoyaunces and wrongs that men done to man outward.

☞ S. Jerome sayeth this of debonairte, That it dooth no harme to no wight, ne sayeth: ne for no harme that men doe ne say, hee ne chafeth ayenst reason. This vertue sometime commeth of nature: for as sayth the Philosopher:

☞ A man is a quicke thing by nature, debonaire, and treatable to goodnesse: but when debonairty is enformed of grace, then it is the more worth.

Patience is another remedy ayenst ire, and is a vertue that suffereth sweetly euery mans goodnesse, and is not wroth for no harme that is done to him. The Philosopher sayth, That patience is the vertue that suffreth debonairly, al the outrages of aduersity, and euery wicked word. This vertue maketh a man like to God, and maketh him Goddes owne childe: as sayeth Christ. This vertue discomfiteth thine enemies. And therefore sayeth the Wise

☞ man: If thou would vanquish thine enemie, learne to suffer. And thou shalt vnderstond, that a man suffereth foure manner of greeuaunces in outward things, ayenst the which foure, hee must haue foure manner of patiences.

The first greeuaunce is of wicked words, which suffered Jesus Christ, without grutching, full patiently, when the Jewes despised him full oft. Suffer thou therefore patiently, for the Wiseman saith: If thou striue with

☞ a foole, though the foole be wroth, or though hee laugh, alway thou shalt haue no reste.

That other greeuaunce outward, is to haue dommage of thy catell: There ayenst suffered Christ full patiently, when hee was despoyled of al that he had in this life, and that was but his clothes. The third greeuaunce, is a man to haue harme in his body: that suffred Christ full patiently in all his passion. The fourth greeuaunce, is in outrageous labour in werks: wherefore I say, that folke that make her seruaunts to trauaile too greeuously, or out of time, as in holy dayes, soothly they doe great sinne. Here ayenst suffred Christ full patiently, and taught vs patience, when hee bare vpon his blessed shoulders the crosse, vpon which he should suffer despitous death. Here may men learne to be patient, for certes, not onely Christen be patient for loue of Jesu Christ, and for reward of the blessed life that is perdurable, but certes the old Painems, that neuer were Christened, commended and vsed the vertue of patience.

A Philosopher vpon a time, that would ☞ haue beate his disciple for his great trespace, for which he was moued, and brought a rod to beate the childe, and when this child sawe the rodde, he sayd to his mayster: what thinke ye to doe? I will beat thee sayed the mayster for thy correction: Forsooth, sayed the childe, yee ought first correct your selfe, that haue lost all your patience, for the offence of a child. Forsooth sayed the mayster all weeping, thou sayest sooth: haue thou the rodde my deare child, and correct me for mine impatience. Of patience commeth obedience, through which a manne is obedient to Christ, and to all hem to which he ought be obedient in Christ. And vnderstand well, that obedience is perfite, when that a man dooth gladly and hastely, with good heart entirely, all that hee should doe. Obedience generally, is to performe the doctrine of God, and of his soueraignes, to which him ought to be obeysaunt in all rightwisenesse.

¶ De Accidia.

AFter the sinnes of Enuy and Ire, now will I speake of the sinne of Accidie: for Enuy blindeth the heart of a man, and Ire troubleth a man, and Accidie maketh him heauy, thoughtfull, and penfke. Enuy and Ire maken bitternesse in heart, which bitternesse is mother of Accidie, and taketh fro him the loue of al goodnes, then is accidie the anguish of trouble of heart. And saint Augustine sayth: It is annoy of goodnesse and annoy of harme. Certes this is a damnable sinne, for it dooth wrong to Jesu Christ, in as much as it benummeth the seruice that men ought to do to Christ, as sayeth Salomon: but Accidie doth

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no such diligence. He doth all thing with annoy, and with wrawnesse, slackenesse, and excusation, with idlenesse and vnlust. For which ☞ the booke sayth: Accursed be he that doeth the seruice of God negligently. Then is accidie enemie to euery estate of man. For certes the estate of man is in three manners: Either it is in the estate of innocencie, as was the estate of Adam, before that he fell into sinne, in which estate he was hold to work, as in praising and lauding God. Another estate is the estate of sinfull men: in which estate men ben holden to labour in praying to God, for amendement of her sinnes, and that he would graunt hem to rise out of her sinnes.

Another estate is the estate of grace, in which estate he is holden to works of penitence: and certes, to all these things is accidie contrary, for he loueth no businesse at all. Now certes, this foule sinne accidie, is also a full great enemie to the liuelode of the body: For it ne hath ☞ no purueiaunce ayenst temporell necessity, for it forsloweth, forslogeth, & destroieth all goods temporell by retchelesnesse.

The fourth thing is that Accidie is like hem that been in the paine of hell, because of her sloth and heauines: for they that be damned, ben so bound, that they may neyther well doe ne think. Of accidie commeth first, that a man is annoied and encombred to do any goodnes, and maketh that God hath abhomination of such accidie, as sayth S. John.

Now commeth Sloth, that will not suffer no hardnesse ne pennance: for soothly, sloth is so tender and so delicate, as sayeth Salomon, that he will suffer no hardnesse ne pennaunce, and therefore he marreth all that he doth. Ayenst this rotten sinne of accidie and sloth, should men exercise hemselfe, and vse hem to doe good works: and manly and vertuously catch courage to do, thinking that our Lord Jesu Christ quiteth euery good deed, be ☞ it neuer so lite. Vsage of labour is a great thing. For it maketh, as sayth S. Bernard, the labourer to haue strong armes and hard senewes: and sloth maketh heavy, feeble, and tender. Then commeth dreade to beginne to ☞ worke any good workes. For certes, he that enclineth to sinne, him thinketh it is so great an emprise, for to vndertake the workes of goodnesse, and casteth in his heart, that the circumstaunces of goodnesse been so grecuous and weighty for to suffer, that he dare not vndertake to doe workes of goodnesse, as sayth saint Gregorie.

Now commeth wanhope, that is, despair of the mercy of God, that commeth sometime of too much outragious sorow, and sometime of too much dread, imagining that he hath doe so much sinne, that it will not auayle him, tho he would repent him, and forsake sinne: through which despaire or dread, he abandonneth all his heart to euery manner sinne, as sayth Saint Augustine. Which dampnable sinne, if it continue vnto his end, it is called sinning in the holy ghost. This horrible sinne is so perillous, that he that is despaired, there nis no fellonie, ne no sinne, that hee doubteth for to do, as sheweth well by Judas. Certes, aboue all sinnes then is this sinne most displeasaunt to Christe, and most aduersarie. Soothly, he that despaireth him, is like to the coward champion recreaunt, that flieth without need. Alas, alas, needlesse is he recreaunt, and needlesse despaired. Certes, The mercy of ☞ God is euer ready to the penitent person, and is aboue all his werkes. Alas, cannot a man bethinke him on the Gospell of S. Luke. xv. Whereas Christ sayeth, That as well shall ☞ there bee ioy in heauen vpon a sinfull manne that doeth penitence, as vpon xcix. rightfull men that need no penitence. Looke further in the same Gospell, the ioy and the feast of the good man that had lost his sonne, when his sonne was retourned with repentaunce to his father. Can they not remember hem also, that (as sayth Saint Luke, Chapi. xx.) How that the theefe that was hanged beside Jesu Christ, sayd: Lord remember me, when thou comest in thy reigne. Forsooth said Christ, I say to thee, To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. Certes, there is none so horrible sinne in manne, that ne may in his life bee destroyed by penitence, through vertue of the passion and of the death of Christ. Alas, what need men then to bee despaired, sith that his mercy is so ready and large? Aske and haue. Then cōmeth Sompnolence, that is, sluggie slumbring, which maketh a man heauie, and dull in body and in soule, and this sinne commeth of sloth: And certes, the time that by way of reason man should not sleepe, is by the morrow, but if there were cause reasonable. For soothly, the morrow tide is most conuenable, a man to say his prayers, and for to thank God, and to honour God, and to peue almose to the poore that commeth first in the name of Jesu Christ.

Lo, what sayeth Salomon? Who so will ☞ by the morow awake to seeke me, he shall find me. Then commeth negligence or retchelesnes that recketh of nothing. And though that ignoraunce be mother of all harms, certes, negligence is the norice. Negligence ne doth no force, when he shall do a thing, whether he doe it well or euill.

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The remedie of these two sinnes is, as ☞ sayth the Wise man: That he that dreadeth GOD, spareth not to doe that he ought to doe: and hee that loueth GOD, hee woll doe diligence to please GOD by his werks, and abandon himselfe, with all his might, well for to doe. Then commeth idlenesse, that ☞ is the yate of all harmes. An idle manne is like to a place that hath no wals, the deuill may enter on euery side, or shoot at him that is discouerte, by temptation on euery side. This idlenesse is the thorrube of all wicked and villainous thoughtes, and of all ordure. Certes, the heauen is yeue to hem that will labour, and not to idle folke. Also Dauid ☞ sayeth, That they ne bee not in the labour of menne, ne they shall not bee whipped with menne, that is to say, in Purgatorie. Certes, then seemeth it they shall be tormented with the deuils in hell, but if they do penaunce.

Then commeth the sinne that menne call Tarditas, as when a man is so latered, or tarrying or hee woll tourne to God: and certes, that is a great folly. He is like him that falleth in the ditch, and woll not arise. And this vice commeth of false hope, that he thinketh he shall liue long, but that hope fayleth full oft.

Then commeth Lachesse, that is, he that when he beginneth any good worke, anone he woll leaue and stint it, as done they that haue any person to gouerne, and ne take of him no more heed, anon as they find any contrary or any annoy. These been the new sheepheards, that let their sheepe wittingly goe ren to the Wolfe, that is in the breres, or do not force of her owne gouernaunce. Of this commeth pouerte and destruction, both of spirituell and temporell things. Then commeth a manner coldnesse, that freeseth the hart of man. Then commeth vndeuotion, through which a man is so blont, and as sayeth S. Bernard, hath such langour in his soule, that he may neyther read ne sing in holy church, ne heare ne thinke of no deuotion, ne trauaile with his hondes in no good worke, that it nis to him vnsauory and all apalled. Then waxeth he slow and slombry, and soone woll be wroth, and soone is enclined to hate and enuy. Then commeth the sinne of worldly sorrow, such as is called Tristicia, that slacth a man, as sayeth Saint Poule. For certes, such sorrow worketh the death of the soule and body also, for thereof commeth, that a man is annoyed of his owne life. Wherefore such sorrow shorteth full oft the life of man, ere that his time is come, by way of kind.

Remedium contra peccatum Accidiæ.

AGenst this horrible sinne of Accidie, and the braunches of the same, there is a vertue that is called Fortitudo or strength, that is, an affection, through which a man despiseth annoyous things: this vertue is so mightie and so rigorous, that it dare withstond mightily, and wisely keepe himselfe fro perils that been wicked, and wrastle ayenst the assaults of the deuill, for it enhanceth and enforceth the soule, right as Accidie abateth and maketh it feeble: for this fortitude may endure by long sufferaunce, the trauails that ben conenable.

This vertue hath many speces, the first is called Magnanimitie, that is to say, great courage. For certes, there behoueth great courage ayenst Accidie, least that it ne swallowe the soule by the sinne of sorrow, or destroy it by wanhope. Certes, this vertue maketh folk vndertake hard and greeuous things by her owne will, wisely and reasonably. And for as much as the deuill fighteth ayenst a manne, more by subtilty and sleight, than by strength, therefore shall a man withstand him by wit, reason, and discretion. Then are there the vertues of fayth, and hope in GOD and in his saints, to followe and accomplish the good workes, in the which he purposeth fermely to continue. Then commeth suretie of sikernesse, and that is when a man ne doubteth no trauaile in time comming, of the good workes that he hath begun. Then commeth Magnificence, that is to say, when a man dooth and performeth great workes of goodnesse, that he hath begun, and that is the end why that men should doe good workes. For in the accomplishing of good workes, lyeth the great guerdon. Then is there Constaunce, that is stablenesse of courage, and this should be in heart by stedfast faith, and in mouth, in bearing, in chere, and in deed. Also there been mo speciall remedies ayenst accidie, in diuers workes: as in consideration of the paines of hell, the ioyes of heauen, and in trust of the grace of the holy ghost, that will yeue him might to performe his good entent.

¶ De Auaricia.

AFter Accidie woll I speak of Auarice, and of Couetise. Of which sinne S. Poule sayth: The root of ☞ all harmes is Couetise. Ad Timoth. vi. For soothly, when the heart

heart of man is confounded in it self and troubled, and that the soule hath lost the comfort of God, then seketh he an idle solace of worldly things.

Auarice, after the description of S. Augustine, is a lecherousnesse in heart to haue earthly things. Some other folke say, that Auarice is for to purchace many yearthly things, and nothing to yeue to hem that haue need. And vnderstand, that auarice standeth not onely in land ne cattell, but sometime in science and glorie, and in euery manner of outragious things, is Auarice. And Couetise is this:

Couetise, is for to coueit such thinges that thou hast not. And Auarice is, to withholde and keepe such things as thou hast, without right. Soothly, this auarice is a sinne that is full dampnable, for all holy writ curseth it, & speaketh ayenst that vice, for it doth wrong to Jesu Christ: for it taketh fro him, the loue that men to him owe, and tourneth it backeward ayenst all reason, and maketh that the auaricious man hath more hope in his cattell than in Jesu Christe, and dooth more obseruaunce in keping of his treasour, than he doth in the seruice of Jesu Christ. And therefore sayeth Saint Poule, Ad Ephesios quinto: That an auaricious man is the thraldome of Idolatrie.

What difference is there betwixt an Idolaster, and an auaricious man? But that an Idolaster, peraduenture ne hath not but a Maumet or two, and the auaricious manne hath many: For certes, euery Flozein in his cofer, is his Maumet. And certes, the sinne of Maumetrie, is the first that God defended, as in the x. commaundement it beareth witnesse, in Exodi. Capi. xx. Thou shalt haue no false goddes before me, ne thou shalt make to thee no grauen thing. Thus is an auaricious man that loueth his treasure before God, an Idolaster. And through this cursed sinne of auarice and couetise, commeth these hard Lordships, through which they ben strained by tallages, customes, and carriages, more than her dutie or reason is: or els take they of her bondmenne amerciamentes, which might more reasonably be called extortions, than merciamentes. Of which amerciamentes, or raunsoming of bondmen, some Lords stewardes say, that it is rightfull, for as muche as a churle hath no temporell thing, that it ne is his lords, as they say. But certes, these lordshippes doe wrong, that bereaue their bondemen thinges that they neuer yaue hem. Augustinus de Ciuetate dei. Libro. iv. Sooth is, that the condition of thraldome, and the first cause of thraldome was for sinne.

Thus may ye see, that the offence deserued thraldome, but not nature. Wherefore these Lords ne should not much glorifie hem in her Lordships, sith that they by naturall condition, beene not Lords ouer thrals, but for that thraldome came first by the deserte of sinne. And moreouer, there as the Law sayth, That temporell goods of bondfolke been the goods of her Lorde: yea, that is for to vnderstond, the goods of the Emperour, to defend hem in her right, but not to robbe hem ne reue hem. Therefore sayeth Seneca: Thy prudence should liue benignely with the thrals. Those that thou calleſt thy thrals, been Gods people: and for humble people beene Christes frendes, they been contuberniall with the Lords.

Thinke also, that of such seed as churles spring, of such seed spring Lords: As well may that churle be saued, as the Lord. The same death that taketh the churl, such death taketh the Lord. Wherefore I rede, doe right so with the churle, as thou wouldst that thy Lord did with thee, if thou were in his plight. Euery sinfull man is a churle to sinne: I rede thee Lord certes, that thou werk in such wise with thy churles, that they rather loue thee, than dread thee. I wote well, that there is degree aboue degree, as reason is, and skill is, that men do her deuor, there as it is due. But certes, extortions, and despight of your vnderlings, is damnable.

And furthermore vnderstand well, that these Conquerors or Tyrants make full oft thrals of hem, that been borne of as royall blood as been they that hem conquere. This name of Thraldome was neuer erst knowe, till that Noe saied, that his sonne Cham should bee thrall to his brethren for his sinne. What say we then of hem that pill and doe extortions to holy Church: Certes, the sword that menne yeue first to a knight when he is new dubbed, signifieth, that he should defend holy Church, and not robbe and pill it: and who so doeth, is traitour to Christ. And as saith S. Augustine, They been the deuils Wolues, that strangle the sheepe of Jesu Christ, and done worse than Wolues: for soothly, when the Wolfe hath full his wombe, he stinteth to strangle sheepe: But soothly, the pillours and destroyers of holy Church goods, ne doe not so, for they ne stint neuer to pill. Now as I haue saied, sith so is, that sinne was first cause of thraldome, then is it thus, that at the time that all this world was in sinne, then was all this world in thraldome, and in subiection: but certes, sith the time of grace came, GOD ordained,

that ſome folke ſhould be more high in eſtate and in degree, and ſome folke more lowe, and that ech ſhould be ſerued in his eſtate.

And therefore in ſome countries there they bee thrals, when they haue tourned hem to their fayth, they make her thrals free out of the thraldome: and therefore, certes the Lord oweth to his man, that the man oweth to the Lord. The Pope calleth himſelfe ſeruaunt of the ſeruaunts of God, but for, as the eſtate of holy Church, ne might not haue been, ne the common profite might not haue be kept, ne peace ne reſt in earth, but if God had ordained, that ſome man haue higher degre, and ſome men lower: therefore was ſoueraignty ordained to keepe, maintaine, and defend her vnderlinges and her ſubiects in reaſon, as ferre forth as it lyeth in her power, and not to deſtroy ne confound hem. Wherefore I ſay, that thoſe lordes that been like wolues, that deuoure the poſſeſſions or the cattell of poore folkes wrongfully, without mercy or meaſure, they ſhall receyue by the ſame meaſure that they haue meaſured to poore folk, the meaſure of Jeſu Chriſt, but it be amended. Now commeth deceit betwixt marchaunt and marchaunt. And thou ſhalt vnderſtond, that marchaundiſe is in two manners, that one is bodily, and that other is ghoſtly: that one is honeſt and leſull, and that other is diſhoneſt and vnleſull. The bodily marchaundiſe that is leſull and honeſt, is this: that there as God hath ordained, that a reigne or a countrey is ſuffiſaunt to himſelfe, then it is honeſt and leſull, that of haboundaunce of this countrey, menne helpe another countrey that is needy: And therefore there muſt be marchaunts to bring fro one countrey to that other, her marchaundiſe. That other marchaundiſe that menne haunten with fraude, and trecherie, and deceit, with leaſinges and falſe othes, is right curſed and dampnable. Eſpirituell Marchaundiſe is properly Simonie, that is, ententiue deſire to buy any thing eſpirituell, that is, a thing which appertayneth to the ſanctuarie of GOD, and to cure of the ſoule. This deſire, if ſo be that a manne do his diligence to perfourme it, all be it that his deſire ne take none effect, yet it is to him a deadly ſinne: and if he be ordered, he is irregular. Certes Simonie is called of Simon magus, that would haue bought for tempozell cattell, the yeft that GOD had yeue by the Holyghoſt to Saint Peter, and to the Apoſtles: And therefore vnderſtond, that he that ſelleth and hee that buyeth thinges eſpirituell, ben called Simoniackes, be it by cattell, be it by procuring, or by fleſhly prayer of his frends, fleſhly frends, or eſpirituell frends, fleſhly in two manners, as by kinred or other frends: Soothly, if they pray for him that is not worthy and able, it is Simonie, if he take the benefice: and if he be worthy and able, there is none. That other manner is, when man or woman prayeth for folke to auaunce hem only, for wicked fleſhly affection which they haue vnto the perſons, and that is foule Simonie. But certes, in ſeruice, for which menne yeuen things eſpirituell vnto her ſeruaunts, it muſt be vnderſtond, that the ſeruice muſt be honeſt, or elſ not, and alſo, that it be without bargayning, and that the perſon be able. For (as ſayth Saint Damaſen:) All the ſinnes of the world, at regard of this ſinne, are as thing of nought, for it is the greateſt ſinne that may be after the ſinne of Lucifer and of Antichriſt: For by this ſinne GOD forleſeth the Church and the Soule, which hee bought with his precious blood, by hem that yeue Churches to hem that been not worthy, for they are put in theeues hondes, that ſteale the ſoules of Jeſu Chriſt, and deſtroy his patrimonie. By ſuche vnworthy Prieſts and Curates, haue leaud menne leſſe reuerence of the Sacraments of holy Church: and ſuch yeuers of churches put the childre of Chriſt out, and put in the church the Diuels owne ſonnes: they ſell the ſoules that Lambs ſhould keep, to the Wolfe, which ſtrangleth hem: and therefore ſhall they neuer haue part of the paſture of Lambes, that is, the bliſſe of Heauen. Now commeth hazardry, with his apertenaunces, at tables and raſles, of which commeth deceit, falſe othes, chidings, and al rauenous blaſphemings, and renyings of GOD, and hate of his neyghbours, waſt of goods, miſpending of time, and ſometime manſlaughter. Certes, hazardours ne mow not bee without greate ſinne. Of Auarice commeth alſo leaſinges, theft, falſe witneſſe, and falſe othes: and ye ſhall vnderſtond, that theſe bee great ſinnes, and expreſſe ayenſt the commaundements of God, as I haue ſayd. Falſe witneſſe is in worde, and alſo in deede: In worde, as for to bereaue thy neighbours good name by thy falſe witneſſe, or bereaue him his cattell or his heritage, by thy falſe witneſſing, when thou for ire, or for meede, or for enuie, bereſt falſe witneſſe, or accuſeſt him, or excuſeſt thy ſelfe falſely. Ware ye queſtmongers and notaries: certes, for falſe witneſſing, was Suſan in full great ſorrowe and paine, and many another mo. The ſinne of theft is alſo expreſſe ayenſt Gods heſt, and in two manners (corporell, and ſpirituell) the tempozell theft is: As, for to take thy neighbours cattell ayenſt his will, be it by force or

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by sleight, be it by mette or by measure: by stealing also of false enditements vpon him, and in borrowing of thy neighbours cattell, in entent neuer to pay it ayen, and semblable things. Espirituell theft is sacrilege, that is to say, hurting of holy things sacred to Christ in two manners, by reason of the holy place, as churches or churchyards: For which euery villainous sinne that men done in such places, may be called sacrilege, or euery violence in the semblable places. Also they that withdrawe falsely the rightes that long to holy church and pleasing. And generally sacriledge is to reue holy thing fro holy place, or vnholy thing, out of holy place, or holy thing out of vnholy place.

¶ Releuacio contra peccatum Auariciæ.

NOw shall ye vnderstond, that releeuing of Auarice, is mistericorde and pitty largely taken. And men might aske, why that mistericorde and pitty are releeuing of Auarice: Certes, the auaricious man sheweth no pitty ne mistericorde to the needfull man.

For he delighteth him in the keping of his treasure, and not in the rescuing ne releeuing of his euin Christen. And therefore speake I first of mistericorde. Then is mistericorde (as sayeth the Philosopher) a vertue, by which the courage of manne is stirred, by the misease of him that is diseased. Upon which mistericorde followeth pity, in performing and fulfilling of charitable workes of mercie, helping and comforting him that is miseased. And certes, these things moue and stirre a man to mistericorde of Jesu Christ, that he yaue himselfe for our offence, and suffered death for mistericorde, and forgaue vs our originall sinnes, and thereby released vs fro the paines of hell, and minished the pains of purgatory by penitence, and geueth grace well to doe, and at last, the blisse of heauen. The speces of mistericorde ben for to lene, and also for to geue, for to forgeue and release, and for to haue pitty in heart, and compassion of the mischefe of his euin Christen, and also to chastise there as need is. Another manner of remedy ayenst Auarice, is reasonable largesse: but soothly, here behoueth the consideration of that grace of Jesu Christ, and of the temporell goodes, and also of the goods perdurable that Jesu Christ yaue to vs, and to haue remembrance of the death which he shall receiue, he knoweth not when, where, ne who: and also that he shal forgo all that he hath, saue onely that which he hath expended in good werkes.

But for as much as some folke ben vnmeasurable, men ought for to auoyd and eschewe foolish largesse, the whiche some people call waste.

Certes, he that is foole large, geueth not his cattell, but he leseth his cattell. Soothly, what thing that he geueth for vaine-glory, as to minstrels, and to folke that beare his renome in the world, he hath sinne thereof, and none almesse: certes, he leseth foule his good, that hee ne seeketh with the yeft of his good nothing but sinne. He is like to an horse that seeketh rather to drink drouy or troubled water, than for to drink water of the cleare well. To hem appertainen the said curling, that Christ shall geue at the day of doome to hem that shall be damned.

¶ Sequitur de Gula.

AFter Auarice commeth Glotenie, which is expresse ayenst the commaundement of God. Glotenie, is vnmeasurable appetite to eate or to drinke, or els to doe ynough to the vnmeasurable appetite and disordained couetise to eat or to drink. This sinne corrupteth all this world, as is well shewed in the sinne of Adam and of Eue. Looke also what sayeth saint Poule of glotenie. Many (sayth he) gone, of which I haue often said to you, and now I say it weeping, that been the enemies of the crosse of Christ, of which the end is death, and of which her wombe is her God and her glory, in confusion of hem that so deuour earthly thinges. He that is vsed to this sinne of Glotenie, he ne may no sinne withstond, hee must bee in seruage of all vices, for it is the Deuils hoord, there he hideth and resteth him. This sinne hath many speces: The first is dronkennesse, That is the horrible sepulture of mannes reason: and therefore when a manne is dronke, he hath lost his reason: And this is deadly sinne. But soothly, when that a manne is not wont to strong drinke, and peraduenture ne knoweth not the strength of the drinke, or hath feeblesse in his head, or hath trauayled, through which he drinketh the more, all be he suddainely caught with drinke, it is no deadly sinne, but veniall. The second spece of glotenie is, that the spirit of a manne wexeth all troubled, for dronkennesse bireaueth him the discretion of his wit.

The third manet spece of Glotonie, is when a manne deuoureth his meate, and hath not

rightfull manner of eating. The fourth is, when through the great abundaunce of his meat, the humours in his body beene distempered. The fifth is, forgetfulnesse by too much drinking, for which sometime a man forgetteth ere the morning, what he did on the euening before.

In other manner been distinct the speces of glotenie, after S. Gregorie. The first is, for to eat before time to eat. The second is, when a man giueth him to delicate meat or drinke. The third is, when men take too much ouer measure. The fourth is, curiositie, with great entent to make and apparell his meat. The fift is, for to eat too greedily.

These ben the fiue fingers of the deuils hond, by which he draweth folke to sinne.

¶ The remedie ayenst Glotenie.

Ayenst Glotenie, the remedie is abstinence, as sayeth Galiene: but that I holde not meritorious, if he doe it for the heale of his body. Saint Augustine will that abstinence be doen for vertue, and with patience. Abstinence (sayeth he) is little worth, but if a man haue good will therto, and but if he be enforced by patience and charitie, and that men doe it for Gods sake, and in hope to haue blisse in heauen.

The fellowes of abstinence bee attemperaunce, that holdeth the meane in all things. Also Shame, that escheweth all dishonestie. Sufficiaunce, that seeketh no rich meates ne drinkes, ne doeth not force of outragious apparreling of meat. Measure also, that restraineth by reason the vnmeasurable appetite of eating. Soberneſſe also, that restrayneth the outrage of drinke. Sparing also, that restrayneth the delicate ease, to sit long at meat, wherefore some folke standen of her owne will when they eate, because they will eat at lesse leasure.

¶ De Luxuria.

After Glotenie commeth Letcherie, for these two sins been so nigh cousins, that oft time they will not depart. God wote this sin is full displeasant to God, he forsaid himselfe: Do no letcherie. And therefore he putteth great paines ayenst this sin.

For in the old law, if a woman thrall were take in this sin, she should be beat with staues to death. And if she were a gentlewoman, she should be slaine with stones. And if she were a bishops doughter, she shuld be brent by Gods commaundement.

Moreouer, by the sin of Letchery God drowned all the world, and after that he brent fiue cities with thunder and lightning, and sanke hem into hell.

Now let vs speak then of the said stinking sin of Letcherie, that men call auoutrie of wedded folke, that is to say, if that one of hem ben wedded, or els both. Saint John sayth, That auouterers shal be in hell in a stanke brenning of fire and of brimstone, for the stenche of the ordure: certes, the breaking of this sacrament is an horrible thing: it was made of God himselfe in Paradise, and confirmed by Jesus Christ, as witnesseth Saint Mathew in the Gospell: A man shall leue father and mother, and take him to his wife, and they shal be two in one flesh.

This Sacrament betokeneth the knitting together of Christ and holye Church. And not onely that God forbade auoutrie indeede, but also he commaunded, That thou shouldest not couet thy neighbours wife. In this heste (sayeth Saint Augustine) is forbode all manner couetise to doe Letcherie. Lo, what sayth Saint Mathew in the Gospell, That who so seeth a woman, to couetise of his lust, he hath doen Letcherie with her in his heart. Here may ye see, that not onely the deed of this sinne is forboden, but also the desire to that sinne. This cursed sinne annoyeth greeuously hem that it haunt: and first to her soule, for he obligeth it to sinne, and to pain of death, which is perdurable, then of the body annoyeth it greeuously also, for it drieth him and wasteth, and shenteth him, and of his blood he maketh sacrifice to the fiend of hell: It wasteth his cattell and his substaunce. And certes, if it be a foule thing a manne to waste his cattell on women: yet it is a fouler thing, when that for such ordure, women dispend vpon men her cattell and her substaunce. This sinne, as sayeth the Prophet, taketh from manne and woman her good fame and her honour, and it is full delectable and pleasant to the deuill: for thereby winneth he the more part of this wretched world. And right as a Marchaunt delighteth him most in that chaffare which he hath most aduauntage and profite of, right so delighteth the fiend in this ordure.

This is that other hond of the deuill, with fiue fingers, to catch the people to his villanie. The first is the foolish looking of the foolish woman and of the foolish man, that slaeth

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right as the Basilicocke or Cocatrice sleeth folke by venim of his sight: for the couetise of the eyen followeth the couetise of the heart. The second finger is the villainous touching in wicked manner. And therefore sayth Salomon: That who so toucheth and handleth a woman, hee fareth as the man that handeleth the Scorpion, which stingeth and sodenly sleeth through his enueniming, or as who so that toucheth warme pitch blemisheth his fingers. The thirde is foule words, whiche fareth like fire, which right anone brenneth the heart. The fourth finger is the kissing: And truely hee were a great foole that would kisse the mouthe of a brenninge ouen or of a fournace. And more fooles ben they that kisse in villainy, for that mouth is the mouth of hell, and namely these old dotardes holours, which well kisse and flicker, and busie hemselfe though they may nought do. Certes they been like to houndes: For an hound when he commeth nye to the roser, or by other benches, thoughe so bee that they maye not pisse, yet woll he heaue by his legge and make a countenaunce to pisse. And for that manie man weeneth that hee maye not sinne for no licorousnesse that hee doeth with his wife, truely that opinion is false: GOD wote a man maye slee himselfe with his owne knife, and make himselfe drunke with his owne tunne. Certes be it wife, be it childe, or any worldly thing that he loueth before God, it is his maumette, and he is an idolaster. A man should loue his wife by discretion, patiently and attemperately, and then is shee as though it were his suster. The fifth finger of the Diuels hond, is the stinking deed of lecherie. Truely thy fiue fingers of gluttonie the Diuell putteth into the wombe of a man: And with his fiue fingers of lecherie hee grypeth him by the reines, for to throwe him into the fournace of Hell, there as they shall haue the fire and the wormes that euer shall laste, and weping and wayling, and sharpe hunger and thurst, grimnesse of Diuels, whiche shall all to tread hem withouten ende. Of lechery as I sayd, sourdeth and springeth diuers speces: as fornication, that is betweene man and woman which bee not married, and is deadly sinne, and ayenst nature. All that is enemie and distruction to nature, is ayenst nature. Perfay the reason of a man telleth him well also that it is deadly sinne, for as much as God forbad lecherie. And Saint Paule peeuth hem the reigne that nis dewe to no wight but to hem that done deadely sinne. Another sinne of lecherie is, to bereaue a maids maidenhead, for he that so doth, certes he casteth a mayden out of the highest degre that is in this present life and bereaueth her that precious fruicte that the boke calleth the hundreth fruits, Ine can saye it none otherwise in English, but in Latine it hight (Centesimus fructus:) Certes he that so doth, is the cause of many damages and villanies, mo than any man can recken: right as he is cause of many dammages somtime that beastes doe in the field, that breake the hedge or the closure, through which he destroyeth that may not be restored: For certes no more may maidenhead be restored, than an arme that is smitte fro the bodie, maie returne ayen and waxe: She may haue mercy, this wote I well, if that she haue will to doe penitence, but neuer shall it bee that shee was corrupte. And all bee it so that I haue spoke somwhat of auoutrie, also it is good to shewe the perilles that longe to auoutrie, for to eschewe that foule sinne. Auoutrie in latine, is for to saye, approaching of another mannes bedde, through whiche those that sometime were one flesshe, abandone her bodies to other persons. Of this sinne as sayeth the wise man, follow many harmes: First breaking of faythe, and certes in fayth is the keye of christendome: and when that fayth is broke and loste, soothly christendome stont beine and without fruit. This sinne also is theft, for theft generally is to reaue a wight his things ayenst his will. Certes, this is the foulest theft that maye be, when that a woman stealeth her body from her husbond, and peueth it to her holour to destoyle her: and stealeth her soule fro Christ, and peueth it to the Deuill: This is a fouler thefte than for to breake a Church and steale away the chalice, for these auouterers breake the temple of God spiritually, and steale the vessell of grace, that is the bodie and the soule: For which Christe shall destroy hem, as sayeth saint Poule. Sothly of this theft doubted greatly Joseph, when that his Lordes wife prayed him of villainy, when hee sayde: Lo my Lady, how my Lord hath take to me vnder my warde, all that he hath in this world, ne nothing of his things is out of my power, but onely ye that bee his wife: and howe should I then doe this wickednesse and sinne, so horrible ayenst God, and ayenst my Lord, God it forbede. Alas, all too little is suche trouth nowe founde. The third harme is the filth, through which they breake the commaundement of God, and destoyle the auter of matrimonie, that is Christ. For certes, in so much as the Sacrament of marriage is so noble and so digne, so much is it greater sin for to breake it: For God made mariage in Paradise in the estate of innocen-

cie, to multiplie mankinde in the seruice of God, and therefore is the breaking therof the more greuous, of which breaking come false heires oft time, that wrongfully occupie folks heritages: and therefore woll Christ put hem out of the reigne of heauen, that is heritage to good folke. Of this breaking commeth also oft time, that folke vnware wed or sinne with her owne kinrede: and namely these harlots, that haunt brodels of these foule women, that may be likened to a commune gong, whereas men purge her ordure. What say we also of putours, that liue by the horrible sinne of putrie, and constraine women to peue to hem a certaine rent of her bodely puterie, yea, sometime of his owne wife or his childe, as done these bauds: Certes, these been cursed sinnes. Understond also, that aduoutrie is set gladly in the ten commaundements betweene theft and manslaughter, for it is the greatest theft that may be, for it is theft of body and of soule, and it is like an homicide, for it kerueth atwo and breaketh atwo hem that first were made of one flesh. And therefore by the old lawe of GOD they should be slaine, but natheless, by the law of Jesu Christ, that is, law of pity, when he saied to the woman that was found in auoutrie, and should haue bee slayne with stones, after the will of the Jewes, as was her lawe: Go, said Jesu Christ, and haue no more will to do sinne. Soothly, the vengeance of auoutrie is awarded to the paines of Hell, but if so be that it be disturbed by penitence. Yet been there mo speces of this cursed sinne, as when that one of hem is religious, or els both, or of folke that ben entred into order, as sub-Deacon, Deacon, or Priest, or Hospitalers: and euer the higher that he is in order, the greater is the sinne. The things that greatly agredge her sinne, is the breaking of her auow of chastity, when they receiued the order. And moreouer, sooth is that holy order is cheefe of all the treasorie of GOD and his especiall signe and marke of chastity, to shew that they beene ioyned to chastitie, which is the moste precious life that is: and these ordered folke ben specially titled to God, and of the speciall meine of GOD: for which when they done deadly sinne, they been the traitors of GOD and of his people, for they liue of the people. Priestes been Angels, as by the dignitie of her mysterie: but forsooth Saint Poule saith, That Sathanas transtourmeth him in an Angell of light. Soothly, the Priest that haunteth deadly sinne, hee may be likened to the Angell of darkenesse, transformed into the Angell of light. He seemeth Angell of light, but for sooth he is Angell of darkenesse. Such Priestes be the sonnes of Heli, as sheweth in the booke of kings, that they were the sonnes of Belial, that is, the Diuell. Belial is to say, without iudge, and so fare they, hem thinketh they be free, and haue no iudge, no more than hath a free Bull, that taketh which Cow that him liketh in the towne. So fare they by women, for right as one free Bull is ynough for all a towne, right so is a wicked Priest corruption ynough for all a parish, or for all a countrey: These Priestes, as sayth the booke, ne cannot minister the mysterie of Priesthood to the people, ne they knowe not GOD, they ne held hem not apayed, as saith the booke, of sodden flesh that was to hem offered, but they took by force the flesh that was raw. Certes, so these shrewes ne held hem not apayed of rosted and sodde flesh, with which the people fedde hem in great reuerence, but they woll haue raw flesh of folkes wiues and her doughters: and certes, these women that consent to her harlottrie, done great wrong to Christ and to holy Church, all Hallowes, and all Soules, for they bireaue all these hem that should worship Christe and holye Church, and pray for Christian Soules: and therefore haue such Priests, and her lemmans also that consent to her lecherie, the cursing of all the court Christian, till they come to amendement. The third spece of auoutrie, is sometime betwixt a manne and his wife, and that is, when they take no regard in her assembling, but onely to her fleshly delight, as saith Saint Jerome, and ne reckon of nothing but that they ben assembled because they been married, all is good ynough, as they thinke: but in such folke hath the Diuell power, as said the Angell Raphael to Tobie, for in her assembling, they put Jesu Christ out of her heart, and peue hemselfe to all ordure. The fourth spece, is the assemble of hem that been of one affinitie, or els of hem with which her fathers or her kinred haue dealed in the sinne of lecherie: This sinne maketh hem like to houndes, that take no keepe to kinrede. And certes, parentele is in two manners: eyther ghostly or fleshly: ghostly, as for to deale with his godsib, for right so as he that engendreth a child, is his fleshly father, right so is his Godfather his father espirituell: for whych a woman may in no lesse sinne assemble with her Godsib, than with her owne fleshly brother. The fifth spece, is that abhominable sinne, of which abhominable sinne, no man vnneth ought speake ne write, natheless, it is openly rehearsed in holy writ. This cursed sinne doen menne and women in diuerse entent and in diuers manner: But though that

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holy writ speake of horrible sinne, certes, holy writ may not be defouled, no more than the sunne that shineth on the dunghill. Another sinne appertaineth to lecherie, that commeth sleeping, and this sinne commeth often to hem that been maidens, and also to hem that be corrupt, and this sinne menne call Pollution, that commeth of three manners: Sometime of languishing of body, for the humours been too ranke and habundant in the body of man, sometime of infirmitie, for feblenes of the vertue retentike, as phisicke maketh mention: Sometime for surfet of meate and drinke, and sometime of villainous thoughtes that beene enclosed in mannes minde when hee goeth to sleepe, which maye not be without sinne, for whiche menne must keepe hem wisely, or else maye men sinne full greeuously.

¶ Remedium contra peccatum luxurie.

NOwe cometh the remedy ayenst lechery, and that is generally chastite and continence, that restrayne all disordinate meuings that come of fleshely tallents. And euer the greater merite shal he haue that most restrayneth the wicked chaufinges of the ordour of this sinne, and this is in two maners: That is to say, chastice in mariage, and chastice in widdowhood. Nowe shalt thou understonde that matrimony is lefull assembling of man and woman that receiuen by vertue of this Sacrament the bonde throughe whiche they maye not be departed in her life, that is to saye, while that they liue bothe. This, as saith the booke, is a full great sacrament, God made it (as I haue said) in paradise, and would himselfe be borne in mariage: and for to halowe marriage he was at a wedding, whereas he tourned water into wine, whiche was the first miracle that he wrought in earth before his disciples. True effecte of marriage clenseth fornication, and replenisheth holy Church of good linage, for that is the ende of mariage, and chaungeth dadly sinne into veniall sin betweene hem that ben wedded, and maketh the hearts as one of hem that beene wedded, as well as the bodies.

Very mariage was established by God, ere that sinne began, when naturall lawe was in his right point in Paradice. And it was ordained, that o man should haue but o woman, and o woman but o man, as sayth saint Augustine, by many reasons.

First, for mariage is figured betwixt Christ and holy Church.

Another is, for a man is head of a woman, alway by ordinaunce it should be so. For if a woman had moe men than one, then should shee haue moe heads than one, and that were a right horrible sinne before God, and also a woman might not please so many folke at ones: and also there should neuer bee rest ne quiet among hem, for each of hem would aske her owne right. And furthermore, no manne should knowe his owne engendure, ne who should haue his heritage, and the woman should be the lesse beloued.

Now cometh how that a man should bere him with his wife, & namely in two things, that is to say, in sufferaunce and reuerence, as shewed Christe when hee firste made woman. For he ne made her of the head of Adam, for she should not claime to great lordshippe, For there as the woman hath the maistry, she maketh too much variaunce: there neede no mo ensamples of this, the experience all day, ought inough suffice.

Also certes, God ne made not woman of the foote of Adam, for shee should not be held too lowe, for she cannot patiently suffer: but God made woman of the ribbe of Adam, for woman should be fellow vnto man.

Man should beare him to his wife in faith, in trouth, and in loue, (as sayth saint Poule) that a man shold loue loue his wife, as Christ loueth holy Church, that loueth it so wel that hee dyed for it: so should a man for his wife, if it were neede.

Nowe how that a woman should bee subiect to her husband: that telleth saint Peter, first in obedience. And also as sayeth the Decree: A woman that is a wife, as long as she is a wife, she hath none authority to sweare ne beare witnesse, without leaue of her husbande, that is her Lorde, alway he should be so by reason. She should also serue him in all honestie, and be attemperate of her array.

I woll well that they should set her entent to please her husbonds, but not by queintise of her arraye. Saint Jerom saieth: Wiues that bee apparelled in silke and precious purple, ne mow not cloth hem in Jesu Christ. S. Gregorie sayeth also: that no wight seeketh precious aray, but only for vainglory, to be honoured the more of the people. It is a great follye, a woman to haue great aray outward, and in her selfe be foule inward. A wife should also bee measurable in looking, in bearing, and in laughing, and discreet in all her words and her deeds, and aboue al worldly things, shee shoulde loue her husbande with all her

hart, and to him be true of her body: so should an husbond be to his wife: For sith that all the body is the husbonds, so should her heart be, or elis there is betwixt hem two, as in that, no perfit mariage. Then shal men vnderstond, that for three things a man and his wife fleshly may assemble. The first is, for the entent of engendrure of children, to the seruice of God, for certes, that is the cause finall of matrimonie. Another cause is, to yeeld each of hem to other, the debts of her bodies: for neyther of hem hath power ouer her owne bodies. The third is, for to eschew lecherie and villanie. The fourth is for sooth deadly sinne. As to the first, is meritorie: the second also, for as sayeth the Decree, That she hath merite of chastitie, that yeeldeth to her husbond the debt of her body, ye though it be ayenst her liking, and the lust of her heart. The third manner is veniall sinne, and truly, scarsely may any of these bee without veniall sinne, for the corruption and for the delight. The fourth maner is for to vnderstond, if they assemble onely for amourous loue, and for none of the foresaid causes, but for to accomplish their brenning delight, they recke not how oft, soothly it is deadly sinne: and that with sorrow, some folke woll paine hem more to do, than to her appetite sufficeth.

The second manner of chastity, is for to be a cleane widow, and eschue the embracings of a man, and desire the embracing of Jesu Christ. These ben those that haue been wiues, & haue forgot her husbonds, & also women that haue done lecherie, and been receiued by penitence. And certes, if that a wife could kepe her all chast, by licence of her husband, so that she yeue neuer none occasion that he offend, it were to her a great merite. This manner of women, that obserueth chastitie, in clothing & in countenaunce, abstinent in eating and drinking, in speaking, and in deede, she is the vessell or the boxe of the blessed Magdelain, that fulfilleth holy Church of good odour. The third maner of chastitie, is virginitie, and it behooueth that she be holy in heart, and cleane of body, then is she spouse of Jesu Christ, and she is the life of Angels: she is the praising of this world, and she is as these martirs in egallitie: she hath in her, that tongue may not tell, ne heart thinke. Virginity bare our Lord Jesu Christ, and virgin was himselfe.

Another remedie against lecherie, is specially to withdraw such things, as yeue occasion to that villany: as ease, eating, & drinking: for certes, when the pot boyleth strongly, the best remedie is to withdraw the fire. Sleping long in great quiet, is also a great nourice to Lecherie.

Another remedie ayenst lecherie, is, That a manne or a woman eschewe the companie of hem, by which he doubteth to be tempted: For all be it so, that the deed is withstond, yet is there great tẽptation. Soothly, a white wall, although it ne bren not fully, by sticking of the candle, yet is the wall black of the flame. Full oft time I rede, that no man trust in his owne perfection, but he be stronger than Sampson, or holier than Daniel, or wiser than Salomon.

Now after that I haue declared you as I can, the seuen deadly sinnes, and some of her braunches, with her remedies. Soothly, if I could, I would tell you the ten commaundements, but so high doctrine I put to diuines. Natheless, I hope to God they ben touched in this treatise each of hem.

¶ Sequitur secunda pars penitentiæ.

NOw for as much as the second part of penitence stont in confession of mouth, as I began in the first chap. I say S. Augustine saith: Sin is euery word and euery deed, & all that men conteet ayenst the law of Jesu Christ, and this is for to sinne in heart, in mouth, and in deede, by the fiue wits, which beene sight, hearing, smelling, tasting or sauour, and feeling. Now is it good to vnderstand, that that agregeth much euery sinne. Thou shalt consider what thou art that doest the sinne, whether thou be male or female, young or old, gentle or thrall, free or seruaunt, whole or sicke, wedded or single, ordred or vnordred, wise or foole, clerke or secular, if she be of thy kinred bodily or ghostly or no, if any of thy kinred haue sinned with her or no, and many mo things.

Another circumstaunce is this, Whether it bee doen in fornication, or in aduoutrie, or no, in manner of homicide or no, horrible great sinnes or small, and howe long thou hast continued in sinne. The thirde circumstaunce, is the place there thou hast done sinne, whether in other mennes houses, or in thine owne, in field, in church, or in churchyard, in church dedicate, or no. For if the Church be hallowed, and man or woman spill his kinde within that place, by way of sinne or wicked temptation, the Church is enterdicted, and the Priest that did such a villanie, the tearme of all his life he should no more sing Masse: and if he did, he should do deadly sinne, at euery time that hee so sung Masse. The fourth circumstaunce is, by whiche mediatours or

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by which messengers, or for enticement, or for consentment, to beare companie with fellowshippe. For many a wretch for to beare companie, will goe to the Diuell of hell. Wherefore, they that egge or consent to the sinne, ben partners of the sinne, and of the temptation of the sinner. The fifth circumstaunce is, how many times that he hath sinned, if it be in his minde, and how oft hee hath fallen. For hee that oft falleth in sinne, he displeseth the mercy of God, and encreaseth his sin, and is vnkind to Christe, and hee waxeth the more feeble to withstand sinne, and sinneth the more lightly, and the latter riseth, & is more slow to shriue him, and namely to him that is his confessour. For which that folke when they fall ayen to her old follyes, either they leaue their old confessour, or else they depart her shrift in diuers partes: But soothly suche departed shrift, deserueth no mercie of God for her sins. The sixe circumstaunce is, why that a man sinneth as by temptation: and of himselfe procure that temptation, or by the exciting of other folke, or if he sinne with a woman by force or by her assent, or if the woman maugre her head, haue be aforced or none. This shall he tell, whether it were for couetise of poverty, or if it wer by her procurement or no, and such other thyngs. The seauenth circumstance is, in what manner he hath doe his sinne, or how that shee hath suffered that folke haue doe to her. And the same shall the man tell plainely, with all the circumstaunces, and whether hee hath sinned with common bordell women or none, or doen his sinne in holy times or non, in fasting time or none, or before his shrift, or after his latter shrifte, and hath peraduenture broke therby his penaunce enioyned, by whose helpe or whose counsaile, by sorcerie or craft, all must be told, and all these thinges after as they bee great or smale and grudge the conscience of man or woman. And eke the priest that is thy iudge, may the better be aduised of his iudgement in yeuing of penaunce, and that is after thy contrition. For vnderstond well that after time that a man hath defoyled his baptime by sinne, if hee woll come to saluation there is none other waye but by penaunce, shrifte, and satisfaction, and namely by they two, if there be a confessour to whome he may shriue him, and the thirde if hee haue life to performe it. Then shall a man loke and consider, that if hee woll make a true and a profitable confession, there must bee foure conditions. First it must be in sorowfulnesse of hert, as sayeth the King Ezechiell to God, I woll remember me all the yeares of my life in bitternesse of my heart. This condition of of bitternesse hath fiue signes: The first is, that confession must bee shamefast, not for to couer ne hide her sinne, for hee hath offended his Lord God and defoyled his soule. And hereof sayth S. Augustin: The hart trauaileth for shame of his sinne, and for hee hath great shamfastnesse he is worthy to haue gret mercie of god: whiche was the confession of the Publican, that would not heaue vp his eyen to heauen for he had offended God of heauen: for which shamefastnesse he had anon the mercy of God. And thereof saith saint Augustine: That such shamefull folk be next forgeuenesse and mercy.

Another signe, is humilitie in confession: of which he sayth saint Peter, Humbleth you vnder the might of GOD: the hond of God is strong in confession for thereby God forgeueth thee thy sinnes, for hee alone hath the power. And this humilitie shall be in hart, and in outwarde signes: For right as he hath humility to God in his hart, right so should he humble his bodie outward to the priest, that sitteth in Gods stead. For which in no manner, sith that Christ is soueraigne, and the priest mean and mediatour betwixe Christ and the sinner, and the sinner is lost by way of reason, then should not the sinner sitte as hye as his confessour, but kneele before him or at his feete, but if sickenesse cause it: For he shall not take heede who sitteth there, but in whose place he sitteth. A manne that hath trespassed to a Lord, and commeth to aske mercie and make his accorde, and sitteth him downe by him, men woulde houlde him outragious and not worthie so soone for to haue remission of his trespasse.

The thirde signe is, howe thy shrift should bee full of teares if thou maye, and if thou maye not weepe with thy bodyly eyen, then weepe in thine hearte, which was the confession of saint Peter. For after that he had forsake Jesus Christ, he went out and wept full bitterly.

The fourth signe is, that thou ne lette not for shame to shewe thy confession: Such was the confession of Magdalein, that ne spared for no shame of hem that were at the feast, to go to our lord Jesu Christ and beknow to him her sinnes. The fifth signe is, that a manne or a woman bee obeisaunte to receiue the penaunce that hem is enioyned. For certes Jesu Christ, for the offences of man was obedient to death. The second condition of verie confession is, that it be hastely done. For certes, if a man hadde a deadly wounde, euer the lenger that he tarieth to heale himselfe, the more would it corrupt and haste him to his death, and also the wounde would be the worse for

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to hele. And right so fareth sinne, that longe time is in a manne vnshewed. Certes a man ought hastely shewe his sinnes for manie causes, as for dreade of death, that commeth oft sodainely, and no certaine what time it shall be, ne in what place, and also the drenching of o sinne draweth in another: and also the lenger that hee tarrieth, the farther is he fro Christ. And if he abide to his last daye, scarcely maie he shriue him or remember him of his sinnes, or repent for the grecuous maladie of his death. And for as muche as he ne hath in his like hearkened Iesu Christ when hee hath spoken, he shall crie to Iesus Christ at his last daie, and scarcely woll hee hearken him. And vnderstonde that this condition muste haue foure thinges.

Thy shrift must be prouided before, and aduised, for wicked hast doth not profite, if a man shriue him of his sinnes: be it of Pride, or enuye, and so forth with the speces and circumstaunces of sinne. And that hee haue comprehended in his minde the number and greatnesse of his sinnes, and howe longe hee hath lyen in sinne. And also that he hath be contrite for his sinnes, and in stedfast purpose (by the grace of God) neuer ayen to fall to sinne. And also that hee dreade and counterfaite himselfe that hee flye the occasion of sinne, to whiche he is inclined. Also thou shalt shriue thee of all thy sinnes to o manne, and not parte to o manne, and part to another: That is to vnderstonde, in entent to depart thy confession for shame or dreade, for it is but strangling of thy soule. For certes, Iesus Christ is entierly all good, in him is none imperfection, and therfore either he forgeueth all perfectly, or els neuer a deale. I saye not that if you bee assigned to thy penitencer for certaine sinne, that thou art bounde to shewe him all the remenaunt of thy sinnes, of whiche thou haste bee shriuen of thy curat, but if it like to thee of thy humilitie, this is no part of thy shrift. Ne I saye not, there as I speake of diuision of confession, that if thou haue licence to shriue thee liketh, and by licence of thy Curate, that thou ne mayest well shriue thee to him of all thy sinnes. Lette no sinne be vntolde as ferre as thou hast remembraunce. And when thou shalt be shriuen to thy Curate, tell him all thy sinnes that thou hast doe sith thou were laste shriuen. This is no wicked entent of diuision of shrift.

Also the verye shrift asketh certaine conditions. First that thou shriue thee by thy free will, not constrained for shame of folke, sickenesse, ne such other things: For it is reason, that he that trespasseth by his free will, that by his free will hee confesse his trespasse, and that non other man tel his sinne but himselfe: ne he shall not nay, ne deny his sinne, ne wrath him ayenst the Priest for admonishing him to leaue his sinne. The second condition is, that thy shrift be lawfull, that is to say, that thou shriuest thee. And also the Priest that heareth thy confession bee verely in the fayth of holye Church, and that a man ne be not despeired of the mercie of Iesu Christ, as Cain or Iudas. And also a man muste accuse himselfe of his owne trespasse & not another, but he shall blame and wite himselfe and his owne malice of his sinne, and none other: But nathelesse, if that another man be occasion or entiser of his sinne, or the estate of a person bee suche by which his sinne is agredged, or else that he may not plainly shriue him, but he tell the person with whiche hee hathe sinned, then maie hee tell, so that his entent ne bee not to backebite the person, but onely to declare his confession.

Thou ne shalt not also make no leasinges in thy confession for humilitie, peraduenture, to say that thou hast committed and done such sinnes, as of which that thou ne were neuer giltie. For saint Augustine sayth, if that thou because of thine humilitie, makest leasinges on thy selfe, though thou were not in sin before yet arte thou then in sinne through thy leasing. Thou must also shew thy sinne, by thine owne proper mouth, but thou bee dombe, and not by no Letter: for thou that hast done the sinne, shalt haue the shame therefore. Thou shalt not eke paint thy confession, with fayre subtill wordes, to couer the more thy sinne: for then begilest thou thy selfe, & not the priest: thou must tell it plaine, bee it neuer so foule ne horrible. Thou shalt also shriue thee to a priest that is discreet to counsaile thee: and also thou shalt not shriue thee for vaine glorie, ne for ypocrisie, ne for no cause, but onely for the loue and feare of Iesus Christ, and heale of thy soule. Thou shalt not also ren to the priest sodainely, to tell him lightly thy sinne, as who sayth, to tell a tale or a iape, but auisedly and with good deuotion: and generally shriue thee ofte: if thou ofte fall, ofte arise by confession. And though thou shriue thee ofter than ones of the sinne which thou hast bee shriuen of, it is the more merite: And as sayth saint Augustine, Thou shalt haue the more lightly forgeuenesse and grace of GOD, both of sinne and paine. And certes ones a yere at least, it is lawfull to be houseled, for surely ones a yeare all thinges renouellen.

Nowe haue I told you of verye confession, that is the seconde part of penitence.

Explicit

Explicit secunda pars penitentiæ: Et sequitur tertia pars.

THe third part of penitence, is Satisfaction, and that stont most generally in almose deed and holy paine. Nowe been there three manner of almose: Contrition of heart, where a man offreth himselfe to God: Another is, to haue pitie of defaute of his neighbour: And the third is, in giuing of good counsell, ghostly and bodyly, where as men haue neede, and namely in sustenaunce of mans foode. And take kepe that a man hath ned of these things generally, he hath neede of food, of clothing, and of herbozow, hee hath neede of charitable counsaile, visiting in prison, in sickenesse, and sepulture of his bodie. And if thou maiest not visite the needefull in prison in thy person, visite hem with thy message and yefts. These ben generally the almose and wozkes of charitie, of hem that haue tempozell riches, oz discretion in counsailing. Of these wozkes shalt thou heare at the daye of dome.

These almose shalt thou doe of thine owne proper things, and hastely and priuely if thou mayest: but nathelesse, if thou mayest not doe it priuily, thou shalt not forbeare to dooe almose, though men see it, so that it be not to doe for thanke of the worlde, but onely for thanke of Jesu Christ. For as witnesseth saint Mathewe Capi. v. A Citie may not bee hid that is set on a mountaine, ne men light not a lanterne, to put it vnder a bushell, but set it vpon a candlesticke, to yeue light to menne in the house: Right so shull your light, light before menne, that they may see your good wozkes, and glozifie our Father that is in heauen.

Now as to speake of bodyly paine, it stont in prayers, waking, fasting, vertuous teaching of ozisons. And ye shall vndestond, that ozisons oz prayers, is to say, a pitous will of heart, that setteth it in God, and expresseth by wozd outward to remeue harmes, and haue thinges spirituell and perdurable, and sometime tempozell things. Of which Ozisons, certes in the ozison of the Paternoster, hath Jesus Christ enclosed most thinges. Certes it is priuiledged of three things in his dignity, for whiche it is moze digne than any other prayer, For that Jesu Christ himselfe made it, and it is shozt, for it shold be learned the moze lightly, and to hold it the moze easie in heart, and helpe himselfe the ofter in this Ozison: and for a man should be the lesse weary to say it, and not excuse him to learne it, it is so shozt and easie: and for it comprehendeth in it selfe, all good prayers. The exposition of this holie prayer, that is so excellent and digne, I referre to the Maister of Theologie, saue thus much woll I say, That when thou prayest that God should foryeue thee thine offences as thou foryeuest hem that haue offended thee, bee well ware that thou be not out of charitie. This holy Ozison aminisheth also venial sinne, and therfoze it appertineth specially to penitence.

This prayer must be truely sayed, and in perfect fayth, and that men pray to God ozdinately, discretely, and deuoutly: and alway a manne shall put his will, to bee subiecte to the will of God. This Ozison must also bee sayd with great humblenesse, and ful pure and honestly, and not to the annoyaunce of any man oz woman. It must also bee continued with the wozks of charitie. It auaileth also ayenst the vices of the soule: for as sayth S. Jerom, by fasting been saued the vices of the flesh, and by prayer the vices of the soule.

After this thou shalt vndersonde, that bodyly prayer stont in waking. For Jesu Christ sayeth: wake ye and pray, that ye ne enter into wicked temptation. Ye shull vndersond also, that fasting stont in three things: in forbearing of bodyly meate and drinke, in forbearing of worldly tollitye, and in forbearing of deadly sinne: this is to saye, that a man shall kepe him fro deadly sinne with all his might.

And thou shalt vndersonde also, that God ordayned fasting, and to fasting partayneth foure thinges. Largenesse to poore folke: gladnesse of heart spirituell: not to bee angrie ne annoyed, ne grutch for he fasteth: and also reasonable houre to eate by measure, that is to saye, a man shall not eate in vntime, ne sit the longer at the table, for he fasteth.

Then shalt thou vndersonde, that bodyly paine stont in discipline, oz teaching by wozde oz writing, oz by ensample. Also in wearing of heer oz stamin, oz of harbergeons on her naked flesh for Christes sake, and that such manner pennaunces, ne make not thine heart bitter oz angrie, ne annoyed of thy selfe, for better is to cast away thine heer, than to cast awaye the sweetnesse of Jesus Christ. And therefoze sayeth saint Poule: clothe you, as they that been chosen of God in heart, of misericozde, debonairte, suffraunce, and such manner of clothing, of whiche Jesu Christ is moze pleased than with the heeres oz herbergeons.

Then is discipline also, in knocking of thy breast, in scourging with roddes, in kneeling, in tribulation, in suffring patiently wrongs that been doen to thee, and also in patient suffring of sickenesse, oz losing of worldly goodes,

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or cattell, or wife, child, or other frends.

Then shalt thou understond, which things disturbe penaunce, and that is in foure manners, dreade, shame, hope, and wanhope, that is, desperation. And for to speake first of dreade, for which he weneth that he may sufer no penaunce. There ayenst is remedie, for to thinke that bodyly penaunce, is but short and little at regard of the pain of hell, that is so cruel and so longe, that it lasteth without ende.

Now ayenst the shame that a man hath to shriue him, and namely these Ipocrites, that would be hold so perfect, that they haue no neede to shriue hem: Ayenst that shame would a man thinke, that by way of reason, that he that hath not bee ashamed to do foule things, certes him ought not bee ashamed, for to doe ☞ faire thinges, and that is confessions. A man should also thinke, that God seeth and knoweth al his thoughts, and al his werks: to him maie nothing be hid ne couered. Men should also remenember hem of the shame that is to come at the daye of dome, to hem that be not penitent, and shriuen in this present life: for all the creatures in yearth and in hell shall see apertly, all that they hidde in this worlde.

Now for to speake of the hope of hem, that beene so negligent and slowe to shriue hem: that stondeth in two manners. That one is, that he hopeth for to liue long, and for to purchase much riches for his delight, and then he woll shriue him: And as he sayth, him semeth then timely ynough to come to shrift: ☞ Another is, of surquidrie that hee hath in Christes mercie. Ayenst the first vice, he shall thinke that our life is in no sikernesse, and also that all the riches in this worlde beene in aduenture, and passe as a shadow on the wall. And as sayeth saint Gregorie, That it appartayneth to the great righteousnes of GOD, that neuer shall the paine stinte of hem, that neuer would withdrawe hem from sinne her thankes, but euer continued in sinne: for that perpetuall will to doe sinne, shall they haue perpetuall paine. Wanhope, is in two manners. The first wanhope is, in the mercie of God: That other is, that they think that they ne might not long perseuer in goodnes.

The first wanhope commeth of that, he demeth that hee hath sinned so greatly and so ofte, and so long lyen in sinne, that he shall not be saued. Certes ayenst that cursed wanhope ☜ shoulde hee thinke, that the Passion of Jesu Christ, is more stronge for to vnbinde, than sinne is strong for to binde. Ayenst the second wanhope he shall thinke, That as often as he ☜ falleth, he maie rise againe by penitence: and though hee neuer so longe hath lyen in sinne, the mercie of Christ is alway ready to receiue him to mercie. Ayenst the Wanhope that he deemeth he should not longe perseuer in goodnesse, he shall think, That the feblenesse of the ☜ deuill, maye nothing doe, but if men woll sufer him: and also hee shall haue strength of the helpe of Jesu Christ, and of all holy Church, and protection of Angels, if him list.

Then shall men vnderstonde, what is the fruite of penaunce, and after the woordes of Jesus Christ, It is an endlesse blisse of heauen: There ioye hath neuer ende, no contrarie of woe ne greuaunce: there all harmes ben passed of this present life, there as is the sikernesse fro the paine of hell, there as is the blisfull companie, that reioyce hem euer mo, euerich of others ioye: there as the body of man that sometime was foule and darke, is more clere than the Sunne: there as the body that sometime was sicke, freile, and feble, and mortall, is immortall, and so strong and hole, that there ne may nothing appeire it: there as is neither hunger, thurste, ne colde, but euery soule replenished with the sight of the perfit knowing of God. This blisfull raigne maye men purchase by pouertie espirituell, and the glorie by lowlines, the plentie of ioye by hunger and thurst, and the rest by trauaile, and the life by death and mortification of sinne: to which life he vs bring, that bought vs with his precious blood. Amen.

¶ Here endeth the Parsons tale.

¶ Thus endeth the Booke of Canterburie tales. And hereafter followeth the Romaunt of the Rose.

The Romaunt of the Roſe.

THis Booke was begun in French verſe by *William de Lorris*, and finiſhed 40 yeares after by *Iohn Clopinell*, alias *Iohn Meone*, borne at Mewen vpon the Riuer of Loyer, not farre from Paris, as appeareth by *Molinet* the French Author of the moralitie vpon the Romaunt: and afterward tranſlated for the moſt part into Engliſh meetre by *Geffrey Chaucer*, but not finiſhed. It is entituled, The Romaunt of the Roſe; or, The Art of Loue: wherein is ſhewed the helpes and furtherances, as alſo the lets and impediments that Louers haue in their ſuits. In this booke the Authour hath many glaunces at the hypocriſie of the Clergie: whereby hee got himſelfe ſuch hatred amongſt them, that *Gerſon* Chauncellour of Paris, writeth thus of him: ſayth he, There was one called *Iohannes Meldinenſis*, who wrote a booke called, The Romant of the Roſe: which Booke if I onely had, and that there were no more in the world, if I might haue 500. pound for the ſame, I would rather burne it than take the money. Hee ſayth more, That if he thought the Authour thereof did not repent him for that booke before he dyed, he would vouchſafe to pray for him no more than he would for Iudas that betrayed Chriſt.

MAny men ſain that in ſwe-
uenninges,
There nis but fables and
lesinges:
But men may ſome ſwe-
uen ſeene,
Which hardely that falſe
ne beene,
But afterward ben apparaunt:
This may I drawe to warraunt.
An authour that hight Macrobes,
That halt not dreames falſe ne lees,
But vndoth vs the auiſioun,
That whilom mette king Cipioun.
And who ſo ſayth, or weneth it be
A pape, or elſe nicete
To wene that dreames after fall,
Let who ſo liſte a foole me call.
For this trowe I, and ſay for me,
That dreames ſignifiaunce be
Of good and harme to many wightes,
That dreamen in her ſleepe a nightes
Full many thinges couerly,
That fallen after all openly.
Within my twentie yeere of age,
When that loue taketh his courage
Of young folke, I went ſoone
To bed, as I was wont to doone:
And faſt I ſlept, and in ſleeping,
Me mette ſuch a ſweuening,
That liked me wondrous wele,
But in that ſweuen is neuer a dele
That it nis afterward befall,
Right as this dreame woll tell vs all.

Now this dreame woll I rime a right,
To make your hearts gay and light:
For loue it prayeth, and alſo
Commaundeth me that it be ſo.
And if there any aſke me,
Whether that it be he or ſhe,
How this booke which is here
Shall hate, that I rede you here:
It is the Romaunt of the Roſe,
In which all the art of loue I cloſe.
The matter faire is of to make,
God graunt me in gree that ſhe it take
For whom that it begonnen is,
And that is ſhe, that hath iwis
So mokell prize, and thereto ſhe,
So worthie is beloued to be,
That ſhe well ought of prize and right,
Be cleped Roſe of euerie wight.
That it was May me thought tho
It is fiue yere or more ago,
That it was May, thus dreamed me,
In time of loue and iolite,
That all thing ginneth waxen gay:
For there is neither buſke nor hay
In May, that it nill ſhrouded bene,
And it with new leues wrene:
Theſe woodes eke recoueren grene,
That drie in winter ben to ſene,
And the earth waxeth proud withall,
For ſwote dewes that on it fall,
And the poore eſtate forget,
In which that winter had it ſet:
And then become the ground ſo proude,
That it woll haue a newe ſhroude,

And maketh so queint his robe and faire,
That it had hewes a hundred paire,
Of grasse and floures, Inde and Pers,
And many hewes full diuers:
That is the robe I meane iwis,
Through which the ground to praisen is.
The birdes that han left her song,
While they had suffred cold full strong,
In wethers grille, and derke to sight,
Ben in May, for the sunne bright,
So glad, that they shew in singing,
That in her heart is such liking,
That they mote singen and ben light:
Then doth the Nightingale her might,
To maken noyse, and singen blith:
Then is blisfull many a sith,
The chelaundre, and the popingaye,
Then young folke entenden aye,
For to ben gay and amorous,
The time is then so sauorous.
Hard is his heart that loueth nought
In May, when all this mirth is wrought.
When he may on these braunches here
The small birdes singen clere
Her blisfull sweete song piteous,
And in this season delitous:
When loue affirmeth all thing,
Me thought one night, in my sleeping,
Right in my bed full readyly,
That it was by the morow early,
And vp I rose, and gan me cloth,
Anone I wish mine hondes both,
A siluer needle forth I drow,
Out of an aguiler queint inow,
And gan this needle thread anone,
For out of toune me list to gone,
The sound of birdes for to heare
That on the bushes singen cleare,
That in the sweete season that leke is,
With a thred basting my sleuis,
Alone I went in my playing,
The small foules song hearkening,
That payned hem full many a paire,
To sing on bowes blossomed faire,
Jolike and gay, full of gladnesse,
Toward a Riuer gan me dresse,
That I heard ren fast by,
For fairer playen none saw I:
Then playen me by that Riuere
For from an hill that stood there nere,
Come doune the streame full stifle and bold,
Clere was the water, and as cold,
As any Well is, sooth to saine,
And somdele lasse it was than Saine,
But it was straiter, welaway,
And neuer saw I er that day,
The water that so wele liked me,
And wonder glad was I to se
That lusty place, and that Riuere:
And with that water that ran so clere,
My face I wish, tho saw I wele,
The bottome I paued cuerdele
With grauell, full of stones shene,
The meadowes soft, sote, and grene,
Beet right on the water side,
Full cleere was than the morowe tide,
And full attempre out of drede,
Tho gan I walken thorow the Mede,
Downward aye in my playing,
The Riuers side coasting.
And when I had a while igone,
I saw a garden right anone,
Full long and broad, and cuerdele
Enclosed was, and walled wele,
With high walles enbatailed,
Portrayed without, and well entayled
With many rich portraitures,
And both yet Images and paintures,
Gan I behold besely,
And I woll tell you readyly,
Of thilke Images the semblaunce,
As farre as I haue remembraunce.
Amidde saw I Hate stonde,
That for her wrath and yre and onde,
Seemed to me monereſſe,
An angry wight a chideresse,
And full of gile, and fell courage:
By semblaunt was that ilke Image,
And she was nothing wele araide,
But like a wode woman afraide,
Ikrounced foule was her vilage,
And grinning for dispitous rage,
Her nose snorted vp for tene,
Full hidous was she for to sene,
Full foule and rustic was she this,
Her head iwrithen was iwis
Full grimly with a great towaile,
An image of another entaile,
A lifte halfe was her fast by,
Her name aboue her head saw I,
And she was called Felony.
Another Image, that Villany
Iscleped was, saw I and fonde
Upon the wall on her right honde.
Villany was like somedele
That other Image, and trusteth wele
She seemed a wicked creature,
By countenaunce in portreiture,
She seemed be full spitous,
And eke full proude and outragious.
Well coud he paint I vndertake,
That such an image coud make:
Full foule and churlish seemed she,
And eke villainous for to be,
And little could of nurture,
To worship any creature.

And

And next was painted Couetise,
That eggeth folke in many a gise,
To take and yeue right nought againe,
And great treasours vp to laune.
And that is she, that for vlare
Leneth to many a creature,
The lasse for the more winning,
So couetous is her brenning,
And that is she for pennies sele,
That teacheth for to robbe and stele,
These theeues, and these smale harlotes,
And that is routh, for by her throtes,
Full many one hongeth at the last:
She maketh folke compasse and cast
To taken other folkes thing,
Through robberie, or miscouceting.
And that is she that maketh treachours,
And she maketh false pleadours,
That with her termes and her domes,
Doe maidens, children, and eke gromes,
Her heritage forgo:
Full crooked were her honds two,
For Couetise is euer wood,
To gripen other folkes good.
Couetise, for her winning,
Full leke hath other mens thing.
Another Image set saw I,
Next Couetise fast by,
And she was cleped Auarice.
Full foule in painting was that vice,
Full sad and caitife was she eke,
And also grene as any leke,
So euill hewed was her colour,
Her seemed to haue liued in langour,
She was like thing for hunger dead,
That fad her onely by bread
Kneden with eisell strong and egre,
And thereto she was lene and megre,
And she was clad full poorely,
All in an old torne courtpy,
As she were all with dogges torne,
And both behind and eke before
Clouted was she beggerly.
A mantle hong her faste by,
Upon a bench weake and small,
A burnette cote hong there withall,
Furred with no mincuere,
But with a furre rough of heere,
Of lambe skinnes heauy and blacke,
It was so old I vndertake.
For Auarice to cloath her wele,
Ne hasteth her neuer a dele,
For certainly it were her loth
To wearen of that like cloth,
And if it were forweared, she
Would haue great nicete
Of clothing, er she bought her newe,
All were it bad of woll and hewe.

This Auarice held in her hand,
A purse that hong by a band,
And that she hid and bond so strong,
Men must abide wonder long,
Out of the purse er there come ought,
For that ne commeth in her thought,
It was not certaine her intent,
That fro that purse a peny went.
And by that Image nigh inough,
Was painted Enuie, that neuer lough,
Nor neuer well in her heart feard,
But if she either saw or heard
Some great mischaunce, or great disease,
Nothing may so much her please
As mischiefe and misauenture,
Or when she seeth discomfiture
Upon any worthy man fall,
Then liketh her well withall.
She is full glad in her courage,
If she see any great linage
Be brought to naught in shamefull wise:
And if a man in honour rise,
Or by his wit, or by his prowesse,
Of that she hath great heaunesse.
For trusteth well she goeth nie wood,
When any chaunce happeth good.
Enuy is of such cruelte,
That fayth ne trouth holdeth she,
To friend ne fellow, bad or good.
Ne she hath kinne none of her blood
That she nis full her enemie,
She nolde, I dare saine hardely
Her owne father fared wele,
And sore abieth she euerie dele
Her malice, and her male talent:
For she is in so great turment
And hate such, when folke doth good,
That nye she melteth for pure wood,
Her heart kerueth and so breaketh,
That God the people well awreaketh,
Enuy iwis shall neuer let,
Some blame vpon the folke to set.
I trow that if Enuie iwis,
Knew the best man that is,
On this side or beyond the see,
Yet somewhat lacken him would she:
And if he were so hende and wise,
That she ne might all abate his prise,
Yet would she blame his worthinesse,
Or by her wordes make it lesse.
I saw Enuy in that painting,
Had a wonderfull looking,
For she ne looked but awrie,
Or ouerwhart, all baggingly.
And she had a foule visage,
She might looke in no visage
Of man ne woman, forthright plaine,
But shette her one eye for disdayne,

So for Enuie byrned shee
When she might any man see
That faire, or worthy were, or wise,
Or else stood in folkes prise.
Sorow was painted next Enuie
Upon that wall of masonrie:
But well was seene in her colour
That she had liued in langour:
Her seemed to haue the iaundice,
Not halfe so pale was Auarice,
Ne nothing like of leanesse
For sorowe, thought, and great distresse
That she had suffred daie and night
Made her yellow, and nothing bright:
Full sad, pale, and megre also,
Was neuer wight yet halfe so wo
As that her seemed for to be
Nor so fulfilled with yre as she,
I trow that no wight might her please
Nor doe that thing that might her ease,
Nor she ne would her sorow slake
Nor comfort none vnto her take
So depe was her wo begonne
And eke her heart in anger ronne,
A sorowfull thing well seemed she:
Nor she had nothing slow be
For to scratchen all her face
And for to rent in many place
Her clothes, and for to teare her swire
As she that was fulfilled of yre
And all to torne lay eke her heere
About her shoulders, here and there,
As she that had it all to rent
For anger and for male talent.
And eke I tell you certainly
How that she wept full tenderly:
In world nis wight so hard of heart
That had seene her sorowes smart
That nolde haue had of her pite
So wo begon a thing was she.
She all to dasht her selfe for wo
And smote togider her handes two
To sorrow was she full ententife
That wofull retchlesse caitife
Her rought little of playing
Or of clipping or kissing.
For who so sorowfull is in heart
Him lust not to play ne start,
Nor for to daunce, ne to sing,
Ne may his heart in temper bring
To make ioy on euen or morrow,
For ioy is contrarie vnto sorrow.
Elde was painted after this
That shorter was a foot iwis
Than she was wont in her yonghede
Unneth her selfe she might fede
So feeble and eke so old was she
That faded was all her beaute.
Full salow was waxen her colour,
Her head for hore was white as flour,
I wis great qualme ne were it none,
Ne sinne, although her life were gone.
All woxen was her body vnwelde,
And dry and dwined all for elde,
A foule for welked thing was she
That whilom round and soft had be,
Her heeres shoken fast withall
As from her head they would fall:
Her face frounced and forpined
And both her hondes lorne forwined
So old she was that she ne went
A foot, but it were by potent.
The time that passed night and daye
And restlesse trauayleth aye
And stealeth from vs so priuyly
That to vs seemeth sikerly
That it in one point dwelleth euer
And certes it ne resteth neuer
But goeth so fast, and passeth aye
That there nis man that thinke maye
What time that now present is
Asketh at these Cleres this:
For men thinke it readily
Three times been passed by
The time that may not sojourne
But goth, and may neuer retourne
As water that doun runneth aye
But neuer droppe returne may:
There may nothing as time endure
Ne tarrie, nor yearthly creature.
For all thing is frette and shall
The time eke that chaungeth all
And all doth waxe, and forfret be
And all thing destroyeth he.
The time that eldeth our Auncestours
And eldeth Kinges and Emperours
And that vs all shall ouercommen
Er that death vs shall haue nommen.
The time that hath all in welde
To elden folke, had made her elde
So inly, that to my weting
She might helpe her selfe nothing
But tourned ayen vnto childhede
She had nothing her selfe to lede
Ne wit ne pith in her hold
More than a childe of two yere old.
But natheless I trow that she
Was faire sometime, and fresh to se,
When she was in her rightfull age:
But she was past all that passage
And was a doted thing becommen
A furred cappe on had she nommen
Well had she clad her selfe and warme
For cold might els doen her harme,
These old folke haue alway cold,
Her kind is such, when they been old.

Another thing was doen their wrie,
That seemed like an Ipocrite,
And it was cleped Pope Holy,
That ilke is she, that priuily
Ne spared neuer a wicked deed,
When men of her taken none heed,
And maketh her outward precious,
With pale visage and pitcous,
And seemeth a simple creature,
But there nis no misaduenture,
That she ne thinketh in courage,
Full like to her was thilke Image:
That naked was like her semblaunce,
She was full simple of countenaunce.
And she was clothed and eke shod,
As she were for the loue of God
Yolden to Religion,
Soch seemed her deuotion.
A Psalter held she fast in hond,
And busily she gan to fond:
To make many a faint prayere,
To God, and to his Saints dere,
Ne she was gay, fresh, ne iolife,
But seemed to be full ententife:
To good works, and to faire,
And thereto she had on an haire.
Ne certes she was fatte nothing,
But seemed wearie for fasting,
Of colour pale and dead was she,
From her the gates aie warned be
Of Paradise that blisfull place,
For such folke maken leane her grace:
As Christ sayth in his Euangile,
To get hem prise in toune a while,
And for a little glorie vaine,
They lesen God and eke his raigne.
And alderlast of euerichone,
Was painted Pouert all alone,
That not a peny had in hold,
Although she her clothes sold,
And though she should an honged be,
For naked as a worme was she,
And if the weather stormie were,
For cold she should haue died there.
She ne had on but a straite old sacke,
And many a cloute on it there stacke,
This was her cote, and her mantele,
No more was there neuer a dele,
To cloath her with, I vndertake,
Great leaser had she to quake:
And she was put, that I of talke,
Ferre fro these other, vp in an halke,
There lurked and there coured she,
For poore thing where so it be,
Is shamefast, and dispised aie,
Accursed may well be that daie,
That poore man conceiued is,
For God wote all to seld iwis,
Is any poore man well liked,
Or well arrayed or iceled,
Or well beloued, in such wise,
In honour, that he may arise.
All these things well aduised,
As I haue you er this deuised,
With gold and azure ouer all,
Depainted were vpon the wall.
Square was the wall, and high sondele:
Enclosed, and ibarred wele.
In stead of hedge, was that gardin,
Come neuer shepheard therein,
Into that gardin, well wrought.
Who so that me coud haue brought,
By ladders or else by degree,
It would well haue liked mee,
For such solace, such ioy, and plete,
I trow that neuer man ne sete,
As was in that place delitious:
The gardin was not daungerous,
To herbrow birdes many one,
So rich a yere was neuer none
Of birdes song, and branches grene,
Therein were birdes mo I wene,
Than been in all the Realme of Fraunce:
Full blisfull was the accordaunce,
Of sweet petous song they made,
For all this world it ought glade.
And I my selfe so merry feard,
When I her blisfull songes heard,
That for a hundred pound would I,
If that the passage openly
Had be vnto me free,
That I nolde entren for to see
Thassemble (God kepe it fro care)
Of birdes, which therein ware,
That songen through her merry throtes,
Daunces of loue, and merry notes.

When I thus heard foules sing,
I fell fast in a warmenting,
By which art, or by what engin,
I might come into that gardin:
But way I couth finde none,
Into that gardin for to gone,
Ne nought wist I if that there were,
Either hole or place where,
By which I might haue entre,
Ne there was none to teach me,
For I was all alone iwis,
For woe and anguish of this,
Till at last bethought I mee,
That by no way ne might it bee,
That there nas ladder ne way to pace,
Or hole, into so faire a place.
Tho gan I go a full great paas,
Euiron, euen in compas,
The closing of the square wall,

Till that I found a wicket small
To shette, that I ne might in gone,
And other entre was there none.

Upon this dooze I gan to smite
That was fetis, and so lite:
Foz other waye coud I not seke
Full longe I shote, and knocked eke,
And stode full long all hearkening
If that I heard any wight comming:
Till that the dooze of thilke entre
A maiden curteis opened me:
Her haire was as yellowe of hewe
As any bason scoured newe,
Her flesh tender as is a chicke
With bent bzowes, smooth and slicke,
And by measure large were
The opening of her eyen clere:
Her nose of good pzopoztion,
Her eyen graie, as is a faucon,
With sweete bzeath, and well sauoured,
Her face white and well coloured,
With little mouth, and round to see,
A cloue chinne eke had she,
Her necke was of good fashion
In length and greatnesse by reason
Without bleine, scabbe, oz roine,
Fro Jerusalem vnto Burgoine
There nis a fairer necke iwis
To sele how smooth and soft it is.
Her thzoate also white of hewe,
As Snowe on bzaunce snowed newe.
Of bodie full well wzought was she,
Nen neden not in no countre
A fairer bodie foz to seke:
And of fine Ozfrais had she eke
A chapelet, so semely on,
Ne neuer wered maide vpon
And faire aboue that chapelet
A rose garland had she set.
She had a gay mirrour
And with a rich gold treasour,
Her head was dzessed queintly
Her sleeues sewed fetously.
And foz to keepe her hondes faire,
Of gloues white she had a paire:
And she had on a coate of grene
Of cloth of Gaunt, withouten wene:
Well seemed by her apparaile
She was not wont to great trauaile.
Foz when shee kempt was fetously
And well arraied and richly,
Then had she doen all her iourne,
Foz merrye and well begon was she.
She led a lustie life in Maie
She had no thought, by night ne daie
Of nothing, but if it were onely
To grayeth her well and vncouthly,
When that this dooze had opened me
This May, seemely foz to see,
I thonked her as I best might,
And asked her how that she hight:
And what she was, I asked eke,
And she to me was nought vnmeke
Ne of her answeare daungerous,
But faire answerde, and sayed thus:
Lo sir, my name is Idlenesse,
So clepe men me, moze and lesse:
Full mightie and full riche am I,
And that of one thinge namely,
Foz I entend to nothing
But to my iope, and my playing,
And foz to kembe and tresse me:
Acquainted am I and priue
With Mirthe, Lozd of this gardin
That fro the londe of Alexandzin
Made trees hither be set,
That in this gardin been iset:
And when the trees were woxen an hight,
This wall that stant here in thy sight,
Did Mirth enclosen all about,
And these Images all without
He did hem both entaile and paint,
That neither been ioylike ne quaint,
But they been full of sozowe and wo
As thou hast seene a while ago.

And oft time him to solace
Sir Mirth commeth into this place,
And eke with him commeth his meine,
That liuen in lust and iolite:
And now is Mirth therein, to here
The birdes how they singen clere
The Mauis and the Nightingale,
And other iolly birdes smale:
And thus he walketh to solace
Him and his folke, foz sweeter place
To playen in, he may not finde,
Although he sought one in till Inde.
The aither fairest folke to see
That in this wozld may found bee
Hath Mirth with him in his rout
That followen him alwaies about.
When Idlenesse had told all this,
And I had hearkened well ywis,
Then saied I to dame Idlenesse,
Now also wisely God me blesse,
Sith Mirth, that is so faire and fre
Is in this perd with his meine,
Fro thilke assemble, if I may,
Shall no man werne me to day,
That I this night ne mote it see,
Foz well wene I there with him bee
A faire and iolly companie
Fulfilled of all courtesie:
And foz th without wozdes mo

In at the wicked went I tho,
That Idlenesse had opened mee,
Into that garden faire to see.

And when I was in ywis,
Mine heart was full glad of this.
For well wend I full likerly
Haue been in Paradice earthly,
So faire it was, that trusteth well,
It seemed a place espirituell.
For certes at my deuise,
There is no place in Paradise,
So good in for to dwell or be,
As in that garden thought me.
For there was many a bird singing,
Throughout the perde all thringing,
In many places were Nightingales,
Apes, Finches, and Wodwales,
That in her sweet song delighten
In thilke places as they habiten.
There might men see many flockes
Of Turtles and Laucrockes,
Chalaundres fele saw I there,
That very nigh forsongen were.
And Thrustles, Terins, and Mauise,
That songen for to win hem prise,
And eke to surmount in her song
That other birds hem emong
By note made faire seruise:
These birdes, that I you deuise,
They song her song, as faire and well,
As Angels done espirituell.
And trusteth me, when I hem heard,
Full lustie and well I feard:
For neuer yet such melodie
Was heard of man that might die.
Such sweet song was hem emong,
That me thought it no birds song,
But it was wonder like to bee
Song of Meremaidens of the see,
That for her singing is so clere:
Though we Meremaidens clepe him here
In English, as is our blaunce,
Men clepe hem Sereins in Fraunce.

Ententiue weren for to sing
These birds, that not vnkonning
Were of her craft, and a prentise,
But of song subtill and wise:
And certes, when I heard her song,
And saw the greene place emong,
In heart I went so wonder gay,
That I was neuer erst, ere that day
So iolise, nor so well bigo,
Ne merry in heart, as I was tho:
And then wist I, and saw full well
That Idlenesse me serued well,
That me put in such iolite,
Her friend well ought I for to be,
Sith she the doore of that gardin
Had opened, and me let in.

From henceforth, how that I wrought
I shall you tell, as me thought:
First whereof Mirth serued there,
And eke what folke there with him were,
Without fable I woll discriue,
And that garden eke as bliue:
I woll you tellen after this
The faire fashion all ywis,
That well wrought was for the nones,
I may not tell you all atones,
But as I may and can, I shall
By order tellen you it all.
Full faire seruice, and eke full swete
These birds maden as they sete:
Laies of loue, full well souning
They songen in her iargoning,
Some high, and some eke low song
Upon the braunches greene isprong:
The sweetnesse of her melodie
Made all mine heart in reuelrie.
And when that I heard I trowe
These birds singing on a rowe,
Then might I not withhold mee
That I ne went in for to see
Sir Mirth, for my desiring
Was him to seene ouer all thing,
His countenaunce and his manere:
That sight was to me full dere.

Tho went I forth on my right hond
Downe by a little path I fond
Of Mints full, and Fennell greene
As fast by without wene,
Sir Mirth I found, and right anone
Unto sir Mirth gan I gone,
There as he was him to sollace,
And with him in that lustie place,
So faire folke and so fresh had he,
That when I saw, I wondred me
Fro whence such folke might come,
So faire they weren all and some:
For they weren like, as to my sight,
To Angels, that ben fethered bright.
These folke, of which I tell you so,
Upon a karole wenten tho:
A Ladie karoled hem, that hight
Gladnesse, blisfull, and light,
Well could she sing and lustely
None halfe so well and seemely:
And coth make in song such refraining,
It sate her wonder well to sing.
Her voice full clere was and full swete
She was not rude ne vnmete,
But couth ynough for such doing

As longeth vnto karolling:
For she was wont in euery place
To singen first, folke to sollace,
For singing most she gaue her to,
No craft had she so leefe to do.

THo mightest thou karols seene,
And folke daunce and merry beene,
And made many a faire tourning
Upon the greene gras so springing.
There mightest thou see these Flutours,
Minstrals, and eke iogloures,
That well to sing did her paine:
Some song songs of Lorraine,
For in Lorraine her notes be
Full sweeter than in this countre.
There was many a Timbestere,
And saliours, that I dare well swere
Couth her craft full perfitly:
The Timbres vp full subtelly
They cast, and hent full oft
Upon a finger faire and soft,
That they failed neuer mo.
Full feris damoseis two,
Right yong, and full of semelyhede
In kirtles, and none other wede,
And faire tressed euery tresse
Had Mirth doen for his noblesse
Amid the carole for to daunce,
But hereof lieth no remembraunce,
How that they daunced queintly:
That one would come all priuely
Ayen that other, and when they were
Togither almost, they threw vfere
Her mouthes so, that through her play
It seemed as they kist alway:
To daunce well couth they the guise.
What should I more to you deuise?
Me bode I neuer thence go,
Whiles that I saw hem daunce so
Upon the caroll wonder fast,
I gan behold, till at last
A Ladie gan me for to espie,
And she was cleped Courtesie,
The worshipfull, the debonaire,
I pray to God euer fall her faire:
Full courtesly she called me,
What doe ye there Beau sire (qd. she)
Come, and if it like you
To daunce, daunceth with vs now:
And I without tarrying
Went into the carolling,
I was abashed neuer adele,
But it to me liked right wele,
That Courtesie me cleped so,
And bade me on the daunce go,
For if I had durst certaine,
I would haue carolled right faine
As man that was to daunce right blithe:
Then gan I looken oft sithe
The shape, the bodies, and the cheres,
The countenaunce and the maneres
Of all the folke that danneed there,
And I shall tell what they were.

Full faire was Mirth, full long and high,
A fairer man I neuer sigh:
As round as apple was his face,
Full roddie and white in euery place:
Fetis he was and well besey,
With meetly mouth, and eyen grey,
His nose by measure wrought full right,
Crispe was his haire, and eke full bright:
His shoulders of large brede,
And smallish in the girdlestede:
He seemed like a purtreiture,
So noble he was of his stature,
So faire, so iolly, and so fetise,
With limbs wrought at point deuise
Deliuer, smert, and of great might:
Ne saw thou neuer man so light.
Of berd vnneth had he nothing,
For it was in the first spring,
Full yong he was, and merry of thought
And in samette, with birds wrought,
And with gold beaten full fetously,
His bodie was clad full richely:
Wrought was his robe in straunge egise,
And all to slittered for queintise
In many a place, low and hie,
And shode he was with great maistrie,
With shoone decoped, and with lace,
By dzurie, and by solace,
His leefe a rosen chapelet
Had made, and on his head it set.
And wete ye who was his leefe,
Dame Gladdesse there was him so leefe,
That singeth so well with glad courage,
That from she was twelue yeare of age,
She of her loue graunt him made
Sir Mirth her by the finger hade
Dauncing, and she him also,
Great loue was atwixt hem two:
Both were they faire and bright of hew,
She seemed like a rose new
Of colours, and her flesh so tender,
That with a Brere smale and tender,
Men might it cleue, I dare well say:
Her forehead frounceles all play,
Bent were her browes two,
Her eyen gray, and glad also,
That laughden aye in her semblaunt,
First or the mouth by couenaunt.
I wot not what of her nose I shall discriue,
So faire hath no woman aliue:
Her haire was yellow, and clere shining,

I wote no lady so liking.
Of Ozkraies fresh was her garland,
I which seene haue a thousand
Saw neuer ywis no garland yet,
So well wrought of silke as it.
And in an ouer gilt samite
Clad she was, by great delite,
Of which her lefe a robe werde
The merrier she in her heart ferde.
And next her went, on her other side,
The God of Loue, that can deuide
Loue, and as him liketh it be
But he can cherles daunten, he,
And many folkes pride fallen,
And he can well these lords thrallen,
And ladies put at low degree
When he may hem too proud see.

This God of Loue of his fashion
Was like no knaue, ne quistron:
His beautie greatly was to prise,
But of his robe to deuise
I dreade encombred for to be,
For not yclad in silke was he,
But all in flours and flourettes,
I painted all with amorettes,
And with losenges and scochons,
With birds, Liberdes, and Lions,
And other beasts wrought full wele:
His garment was euery dele
Ipurtraied and ywrought with flours,
By diuers medling of colours:
Floures there were of many gise
Iset by compasse in a sise,
There lacked no floure to my dome,
Ne not so much as floure of Brome,
Ne violet, ne eke perunke,
Ne floure none, that men can on thinke:
And many a rose lefe full long
Was entermedled there emong:
And also on his head was set
Of roses redde a chaplet.
But Nightingales a full great rout
That flien ouer his head about,
The leaues felden as they flien,
And he was all with birds wrien,
With Popinay, with Nightingale,
With Chalaundre, and with wodewale,
With finch, with larke, and with archangell,
He seemed as he were an angell,
That down were comen fro heauen clere.
Loue had with him a bachelere,
That he made alwayes with him be,
Sweet looking cleped was he:
This batcheler stood beholding
The daunce, and in his hond holding
Turke bowes two, full well deuised had hee,
That one of hem was of a tree
That beareth a fruit of sauour wicke,
Full crooked was that foule sticke,
And knottie here and there also
And blacke as berrie, or any slo.
That other bow was of a plant
Without wemme, I dare warrant,
Full euen and by proporcion,
Trectes and long, of full good fashion,
And it was painted well and thwitten,
And ouer all diapred and written
With ladies and with bacheleres,
Full lightsome and glad of cheres:
These bowes two held Sweet looking,
That seemed like no gadling:
And ten brode arrowes held he there,
Of which fiue in his hond were,
But they were shauen well and dight,
Nocked and feathered aright:
And all they were with gold begon,
And strong pointed euerichon,
And sharpe for to keruen wele,
But yron was there none ne stele:
For all was gold, men might see,
Out take the feathers and the tree.

The swiftest of these arrowes fiue
Out of a bow for to driue
And best feathered for to flie,
And fairest eke, was cleped Beautie:
That other arrow that hurteth lesse,
Was cleped (as I trow) Simplesse:
The third cleped was Fraunchise,
That feathered was in noble wise
With valour and with courtesie:
The fourth was cleped Companie,
That heauie for to shooten is,
But who so shooteth right ywis,
May therewith doen great harme and wo:
The fifte of these, and last also,
Faire Semblaunt men that arrow call,
The least greeuous of hem all,
Yet can it make a full great wound,
But he may hope his sores sound
That hurt is with that arrowe ywis,
His wo the bette bestowed is:
For he may sooner haue gladnesse,
His langour ought be the lesse.

Fiue arrowes were of other gise,
That been full foule to deuise:
For shaft and end sooth for to tell,
Were also blacke as fiend in hell
The first of hem is called Pride,
That other arrow next him beside,
It was cleped Villanie,
That arrow was, as with fellonie
Enuenimed, and with spitous blame:
The third of hem was cleped Shame.

The fourth, Manhope cleped is,
The fift, the New thought ywis.

These arrowes that I speake of here,
Were all fiue on one manere,
And all were they resemblable
To hem was well sitting and able,
The foule crooked bow hidous,
That knottie was, and all roinous,
That bow seemed well to shete
The arrowes fiue, that ben vnmete
And contrary to that other fiue:
But though I tell not as bliue
Of her power, ne of her might,
Hereafter shall I tellen right
The sooth, and eke signifiaunce
As ferre as I haue remembraunce:
All shall be saied I vndertake,
Ere of this booke an end I make.

Now come I to my tale againe:
But alderfirst, I woll you saine
The fashion and the countenaunces
Of all the folke that on the daunce is.
The God of Loue iolife and light,
Led on his hond a Ladie bright
Of high prise, and of great degre,
This Ladie called was Beaute,
And an arrow, of which I told:
Full well thewed was she hold,
Ne she was derke ne browne, but bright,
And cleare as the Moone light:
Againe whom all the Starres semen
But small candles, as we demen:
Her flesh was tender as dewe of floure,
Her cheare was simple as bird in boure,
As white as Lilly or Rose in rise.
Her face gentle and treatise:
Fetis she was, and smale to see,
No wintred browes had shee,
Ne popped here, for it needed nought
To winder her, or to paint her ought:
Her tresses yellow, and long straughten,
Vnto her heeles downe they raughten:
Her nose, her mouth, and eye and cheke
Well wrought, and all the remnaunt eke.
A full great fauour and a swote,
Me thought in mine heart rote:
As helpe me God, when I remember
Of the fashion of euery member,
In world is none so faire a wight:
For young she was, and hewed bright
Sore pleasaunt, and fetis withall,
Gent, and in her middle small.
Beside Beauty yede Richesse,
An high Ladie of great noblesse,
And great of price in euery place:
But who so durst to her trespace
Or till her folke, in worke or dede,
He were full hardie out of drede:
For both she helpe and hinder may,
And that is not of yesterday
That rich folke haue full great might
To helpe, and eke to greue a wight.
The best and greatest of valour
Didden Richesse full great honour,
And busie weren her to serue:
For that they would her loue deserue,
They cleped her Ladie, great and small.
This wide world her dredeth all:
This world is all in her daungere,
Her court hath many a losengere,
And many a traitour enuious,
That ben full busie and curious
For to dispraise, and to blame
That best deseruen loue and name,
Tofore the folke hem to beguilen,
These losengeours hem prise and smilen.
And thus the world with word annointen,
But afterward they prill and pointen
The folke, right to the bare bone,
Behind her backe when they ben gone,
And foule abaten folkes prise.
Full many a worthy man and wise
Han hindred, and idoen to die
These losengeours with her flatterie,
And maketh folke full straunge be,
There as hem ought ben priue:
Well euill mote they thriue and thee,
And euill arriued mote they bee
These losengeours full of enuie,
No good man loueth her companie.

Richesse a robe of purple on had,
Ne trow not that I lie or mad:
For in this world is none it liche,
Ne by a thousand deale so riche,
Ne none so faire, for it full wele,
With Orfreis laied was euerydele,
And purtraid in the ribanings
Of Dukes stories, and of Kings,
And with a bend of gold tassiled,
And knops fine of gold amied:
About her necke of gentle entaile
Was shet the rich Thesaile,
In which there was full great plente
Of stones clere, and faire to se.
Richesse a girdle had vpon,
The bokell of it was of ston:
Of vertue great, and mokell of might:
For who so bare the stone so bright,
Of venim durst him nothing doubt
While he the stone had him about:
That stone was greatly for to loue,
And till a rich mans behoue
Worth all the gold in Rome and Frise:

The Hourdant wrought in noble gise
Was of a stone full precious,
That was so fine and vertuous,
That whole a man it couth make
Of palsie, and of toothake,
And yet the stone had such a grace,
That he was seker in euery place
All thilke day not blind to beene,
That fasting might that stone seene:
The barres were of gold full fine,
Upon a tissue of Sattine
Full heauie, great, and nothing light,
In cueriche was a beraunt wight.
Upon the tresses of Richesse
Was set a circle of noblesse
Of brend gold, that full light shone,
So faire trow I was neuer none:
But he were cunning for the nones,
That could deuise all the stones
That in that circle shewen clere,
It is a wonder thing to here:
For no man could preise or gesse
Of hem the value or richesse,
Rubies there were, Saphirs, Ragounces,
And Emeraudes, more than two vnces.
But all before full subtilly
A fine Carbuncle set saw I,
The stone so cleare was and so bright,
That all so soone as it was night,
Men might seene to go for nede
A mile or two, in length and brede.
Such light sprang out of the stone,
That Richesse wonder bright shone
Both her head, and all her face,
And eke about her all the place.
Dame Richesse on her hond gan lede
A yong man full of semeyhede,
That she best loued of any thing,
His lust was much in housholding:
In clothing was he full fetise,
And loued well to haue hors of prise,
He wend to haue reproued be
Of theft or murder, if that he
Had in his stable an hackenaye,
And therefore he desired aye
To been acquainted with Richesse,
For all his purpose, as I gesse,
Was for to make great dispence,
Withouten warning or defence:
And Richesse might it well sustaine,
And her dispences wele maintaine,
And him alway such plentie send
Of gold and siluer for to spend
Without lacking or daungere,
As it were pourde in a garnere.

And after on the daunce went
Largesse, that set all her entent
For to ben honourable and free,
Of Alexanders kinne was shee:
Her most ioy was ywis,
When that she yaf: and saied, haue this.
Not Auarice the foule caitife
Was halfe to gripe so ententife
As Largesse is, to yeue and spend,
And God alway ynowe her send,
So that the more she yaue away,
The more twis she had alway.
Great loos hath Largesse, and great prise,
For both wise folke and vnwise
Were wholly to her bandon brought,
So well with yefts hath she wrought.
And if she had an enemy,
I trowe that she couth craftely
Make him full soone her friend to be,
So large of yefts, and wise was she,
Therefore she stood in loue and grace
Of rich and poore in euery place.
A full great foole he is ywis,
That both rich and poore, and niggard is.
A Lord may haue no manner vice,
That greeueth more than Auarice.
For niggard neuer with strength of hand
May win him great lordship or land:
For friends all too few hath he
To doen his will performed be:
And who so woll haue friends here,
He may not hold his treasour dere.
For by ensample tell I this,
Right as an Adamant ywis
Can drawen to him subtelly
The yron, that is laied thereby,
So draweth folkes hearts ywis
Siluer and gold that yeuen is.
Largesse had on a robe fresh
Of rich purpure Sarlinish:
Well formed was her face and clere,
And opened had she her colere,
For she right there had in present
Unto a Lady made present
Of a gold brooch, full well wrought,
And certes it missate her nought:
For through her smocke wrought with silke,
The flesh was seene as white as milke:
Largesse, that worthy was and wise,
Held by the hond a knight of prise,
Was sibbe to Arthour of Breteigne,
And that was he that bare the enseigne
Of worship, and the Gouskauuoun:
And yet he is of such renoun,
That men of him say faire things
Before Barons, Earles, and Kings.
This knight was commen all newly
Fro tourneying fast by,
There had he done great chiualrie
Through his vertue and his maistrie,

And

And for the loue of his lemman
He cast doune many a doughty man.
And next him daunced dame Fraunchise,
Arrayed in full noble gise:
She nas not broune ne dunne of hew,
But white as snow ifallen new:
Her nose was wrought at point deuise,
For it was gentle and tretise,
With eyen glad, and browes bent,
Her haire downe to her heeles went,
And she was simple as doue on tree,
Full debonaire of hert was shee.
She durst neither say ne do,
But that, that her longeth to:
And if a man were in distresse,
And for her loue in heauinesse,
Her heart would haue full great pitee
She was so amiable and free:
For were a man for her bestad,
She would ben right sore adrad,
That she did ouergreat outrage,
But she him holpe his harme taswage,
Her thought it all a villany,
And she had on a suckeny,
That not of hempe herdes was,
So faire was none in all Arras,
Lord it was riddeled fetisly,
There nas not a point truly
That it nas in his right assise
Full well yclothed was Fraunchise,
For there nis no cloth sitteth bette
On damosell, than doth rokette
A woman well more fetise is
In rokette, than in cote ywis
The white rokette riddeled faire,
Betokeneth, that full debonaire
And sweet was she that it bere.
By her daunced a Bachelere,
I cannot tellen you what he hight,
But faire he was, and of good height,
All had he ben, I say no more,
The lords sonne of Windsore.
And next that daunced Courtesie,
That preised was of low and hie,
For neither proud ne foole was she:
She for to daunce called me,
I pray God giue her good grace,
For when I came first into the place,
She nas not nice, ne outrageous,
But wise and ware, and vertuous,
Of faire speech, and faire answer,
Was neuer wight missaid of her:
She bare no rancour to no wight,
Clere broune she was, and thereto bright
Of face and body auenaunt,
I wote no lady so pleasaunt,
She were worthy for to bene
An Empresse or crowned Quene.

And by her went a knight daunceing,
That worthy was and well speaking,
And full well coud he done honour:
The knight was faire and stiffe in stour,
And in armure a seemely man,
And well beloued of his lemman.
Faire Idlenesse then saw I,
That alway was me fast by,
Of her haue I without faile
Told you the shape and apparaile:
For (as I said) Lo, that was she
That did to me so great bounte.
She the gate of that gardin
Undid, and let me passen in,
And after daunced as I gesse.
And she fulfilled of lustinesse,
That nas not yet xii yeare of age,
With heart wild, and thought volage.
Nice she was, but she ne ment
None harme ne sleight in her entent,
But onely lust and iolite,
For yong folke, well weten ye,
Haue little thought but on her play.
Her lemman was beside alway,
In such a gise, that he her kist
At all times that him list,
That all the daunce might it see,
They make no force of priuitee:
For who so spake of hem euill or wele,
They were ashamed neuer adele,
But men might seene hem kisse there,
As it two yong doues were,
For yong was thilke Bachelere,
Of beauty wot I non his pere,
And he was right of such an age,
As youth his leke, and such courage.
The lusty folke that daunced there,
And also other that with him were
That weren all of her meince
Full hend folke, wise, and free,
And folke of faire port truly,
There were all comenly.
When I had seene the countenaunces
Of hem that ladden thus these daunces,
Then had I will to goe and see
The garden that so liked mee,
And looken on these faire Laureres,
On Pine trees, Cedres, and Olmeres,
The daunces then ended were,
For many of hem that daunced there,
Were with her loues went away
Under the trees to haue her play.

A Lord they liued lustely,
A great foole were he sikerly,
That nold his thankes such like lede:
For this dare I saine out of drede,
That who so might so well fare,

For better life durst him not care,
For there nis so good paradise,
As to haue a loue at his deuise:
Out of that place went I tho,
And in that garden gan I go,
Playing along full merely.
The God of Loue full hastely
Unto him Sweet Looking clept,
No lenger would he that she kept
His bow of gold, that shone so bright.
He had him bent anon right,
And he full soone set an end,
And at a braide he gan it bend,
And tooke him of his arrowes fiue,
Full sharpe and ready for to driue.
Now God that sitteth in maieste
Fro deadly wounds he keepe me,
If so be that he had me shete,
For if I with his arrow mete,
It had me greeued sore ywis,
But I that nothing wist of this,
Went vp and downe full many a way,
And he me followed fast alway,
But no where would I rest me,
Till I had in all the garden be.

The Garden was by measuring
Right euen and square in compassing,
It as long was as it was large,
Of fruit had euery tree his charge,
But it were any hidous tree
Of which there were two or three.
There were, and that wote I full wele,
Of Pomgranettes a full great dele,
That is a fruit full well to like,
Namely to folke when they ben sike:
And trees there were great foison,
That baren nuts in her season,
Such as men nutmegs call,
That swote of sauour been withall,
And Almandres great plentee,
Figges, and many a Date tree
There weren, if men had nede,
Through the Gardin in length and brede.
There was eke wexing many a spice,
As Clowe, Gilofre, and Licorice,
Gingere, and Grein de Paris,
Canell, and Setewale of pris,
And many a spice delitable,
To eaten when men rise fro table.
And many homely trees there were,
That Peaches, Coines, and Apples bere,
Medlers, Plommes, Peeres, Chesteinis,
Cherise, of which many one faine is,
Nuts, Aleis, and Bolas,
That for to seene it was solas,
With many high Laurer and Pine,
Was renged clene all that gardine,
With Cipres, and with Oliueris,
Of which that nigh no plenty here is.
There were Elmes great and strong,
Maples, Alhe, Oke, Aspes, Planes long,
Fine Ewe, Popler, and Lindes faire,
And other trees full many a paire.
What should I tell you more of it?
There were so many trees yet,
That I should all encombred bee,
Ere I had reckoned euery tree.
These trees were set that I deuise,
One from another in assise
Fiue fadome or sixe, I trow so,
But they were high and great also:
And for to keepe out well the Sunne,
The croppes were so thicke trunne,
And euery braunch in other knitte,
And full of greene leaues sitte,
That Sunne might there none descend,
Least the tender grasses shend.
There might men Does and Roes see,
And of Squirrels full great plentee,
From bough to bough alway leping,
Connis there were also playing,
That comen out of her clapers
Of sundry colours and maners,
And maden many a tourneying
Upon the fresh grasse springing.
In places saw I wels there,
In which there no frogs were,
And faire in shaddow was euery well,
But I ne can the number tell
Of stremis small, that by deuise
Wirth had done come through condise,
Of which the water in renning
Gan make a noise full liking.
About the brinkes of these wels,
And by the streames ouer all els
Sprang vp the grasse, as thicke iset
And soft as any veluet,
On which men might his lemman ley,
As on a featherbed to play,
For the earth was full soft and swete:
Through moisture of the well wete
Sprong vp the sote greene gras,
As faire, as thicke, as mister was.
But much amended it the place,
That therth was of such a grace,
That it of floures hath plente,
That both in summer and winter be.
There sprang the violet all new,
And fresh perwinke rich of hew,
And floures yellow, white, and rede,
Such plenty grew there neuer in mede:
Full gay was all the ground and queint,
And poudred, as men had it peint,
With many a fresh and sundry flour,
That casten vp full good sauour.

I woll not long hold you in fable
Of all this garden dilectable,
I mote my tongue stinten nede,
For I ne may withouten drede
Naught tellen you the beautie all,
Ne halfe the bountie therewithall.
I went on right hond and on left
About the place, it was not left
Till I had all the garden beene
In the ferters that men might seene.
And thus while I went in my playe,
The God of Loue me followed aye,
Right as an Hunter can abide
The beast, till he seeth his tide
To shooten at goodnesse to the deere,
When that him needeth go no neere.
And so befell, I rested mee
Besides a well vnder a tree,
Which tree in Fraunce men call a Pine,
But sith the time of king Pepine
Ne grew there tree in mans sight
So faire, ne so well wore in hight,
In all that yard so high was none.
And springing in a marble stone
Had nature set, the sooth to tell,
Under that Pine tree a well,
And on the border all without
Was written in the stone about
Letters small, that saiden thus,
Here starke the faire Narcissus.
Narcissus was a bachelere,
That loue had caught in his daungere,
And in his nette gan him so straine,
And did him so to weepe and plaine,
That need him must his life forgo:
For a faire lady that hight Echo,
Him loued ouer any creature,
And gan for him such paine endure,
That on a time she him tolde,
That if he her louen nolde,
That her behoued needs die,
There lay none other remedie.
But natheless, for his beaute
So fierce and daungerous was he,
That he nolde graunten her asking,
For weeping, ne for faire praying.
And when she heard him werne her so,
She had in heart so great wo,
And tooke it in so great despite,
That she without more respite
Was dead anon: but ere she deide,
Full pitously to God she preide,
That proud hearted Narcissus,
That was in loue so daungerous,
Might on a day ben hampered so
For loue, and ben so hote for wo,
That neuer he might to ioy attaine:
Then should he fele in very paine
What sorrow true louers maken,
That ben so villainously forsaken.

This prayer was but reasonable,
Therefore God held it ferme and stable:
For Narcissus shortly to tell,
By auenture came to that well
To rest him in the shaddowing
A day, when he came from hunting.
This Narcissus had suffred paines
For renning all day in the plaines,
And was for thurst in great distresse
Of heart, and of his wearinesse,
That had his breath almost benomen,
When he was to that well icomen,
That shadowed was with braunches grene,
He thought of thilke water shene
To drinke and fresh him wele withall,
And downe on knees he gan to fall,
And forth his necke and head outstraught
To drinke of that well a draught:
And in the water anon was sene
His nose, his mouth, his eyen shene,
And he thereof was all abashed,
His owne shaddow had him betrashed,
For well wend he the forme see
Of a child of great beautee,
Well couth loue him wreke tho
Of daunger and of pride also
That Narcissus sometime him bere,
He quite him well his guerdon there,
For he mused so in the well,
That shortly the sooth to tell,
He loued his owne shaddow so,
That at last he starke for wo:
For when he saw that he his will
Might in no manner way fulfill,
And that he was so fast caught,
That he him couth comfort naught,
He lost his wit right in that place,
And deid within a little space,
And thus his warison he tooke
For the lady that he forsooke.
Ladies I praye ensample taketh,
Ye that ayenst your loue mistaketh:
For if of her death be you to wite,
God can full well your wile quite.

When that this letter of which I tell,
Had taught me that it was the well
Of Narcissus in his beaute,
I gan anon withdraw me,
When it fell in my remembraunce,
That him betide such mischaunce:
But at the last then thought I,
That scathelesse, full sikerly,
I might vnto the well go,
Whereof shull I abashen so,

Unto the well then went I mee,
And downe I louted for to see
The clere water in the stone,
And eke the grauell, which that shone
Downe in the bottome, as siluer fine:
For of the well, this is the fine,
In world is none so clere of hew,
The water is euer fresh and new,
That welmeth vp with waues bright
The mountenaunce of two finger hight:
About it is grasse springing,
For moist so thicke and well liking,
That it ne may in winter die,
No more than may the see be drie.

DOwne at the bottome set saw I
Two christall stones craftely
In thilke fresh and faire well:
But o thing soothly dare I tell,
That ye woll hold a great meruaile
When it is told withouten faile:
For when the sunne clere in sight
Cast in that well his beames bright,
And that the heat descended is,
Then taketh the Christall stone iwis,
Against the sunne an hundred hewis,
Blew, yellow, and red, that fresh and new is:
Yet hath the meruailous Christall
Such strength, that the place ouer all,
Both foule and tree, and leaues greene,
And all the yerd in it is seene:
And for to done you to vnderstond,
To make ensample woll I fond:
Right as a mirrour openly
Sheweth all thing that stondeth thereby,
As well the colour as the figure,
Withouten any couerture:
Right so the Christall stone shining,
Withouten any deceiuing,
The entrees of the yerd accuseth
To him that in the water museth:
For euer in which halfe that ye bee,
Ye may well halfe the garden see:
And if he turne, he may right wele
Seene the remenaunt euerydele:
For there is none so little thing
So hid ne closed with shitting,
That it ne is seene, as though it were
Painted in the Christall there.
This is the mirrour perillus,
In which the proud Narcissus
Sey all his faire face bright,
That made him sith to lie vpright:
For who so looke in that mirrour,
There may nothing ben his succour
That he ne shall there see something
That shall him lede into laughing:
Full many a worthy man hath it
Vblent, for folke of greatest wit
Ben soone caught here and waited,
Withouten respite ben they baited:
Here commeth to folke of new rage,
Here chaungeth many wight courage,
Here lithe no rede ne wit thereto,
For Venus sonne, dan Cupido,
Hath sowen there of loue the sede,
That helpe ne lithe there none, ne rede,
So cercleth it the well about:
His ginnes hath he set without
Right for to catch in his panters
These Damosels and Bachelers.
Loue will none other bird catch,
Though he set either nette or latch:
And for the seed that here was sowen,
This well is cleped, as well is knowen,
The well of Loue, of very right,
Of which there hath full many wight
Spoken in bookes diuersly:
But they shull neuer so verily
Description of the well here,
Neke the sooth of this matere,
As ye shull, when I haue vndo
The craft that her belongeth to.

ALway me liked for to dwell,
To seene the Christall in the well,
That shewed me full openly
A thousand things fast by,
But I may say in sorry houre
Stode I to looken or to poure:
For sithen I sore sighed,
That Mirrour hath me now entriked:
But had I first knowen in my wit
The vertue and strengthes of it,
I nolde not haue mused there,
We had bette ben elswhere,
For in the snare I fell anone,
That had bitreshed many one.
In thilke Mirrour saw I tho,
Among a thousand things mo,
A roser charged full of rosis,
That with an hedge about enclosis,
Tho had I such lust and enuie,
That for Paris ne for Paule,
Nolde I haue left to gone and see,
There greatest heape of Roses bee.
When I was with this rage hent,
That caught hath many a man and shent,
Toward the Roser gan I go,
And when I was not ferre therefro,
The sauour of the roses swote
We smote right to the heart rote,
As I had all enbaumed me:
And if I ne had endouted me
To haue ben hated or assailed,
My thankes woll I not haue failed

To pull a rose of all that rout
To beare in mine hond about,
And smellen to it where I went,
But euer I drede me to repent,
And leaft it greued or forthought
The lord that thilke gardin wrought
Of roses there were great wone,
So faire were neuer in Rone:
Of knops close, some saw I there,
And some well better woxen were,
And some there been of other moison,
That drowe nigh to her season,
And sped hem fast for to spred,
I loue well such roses red:
For brode roses, and open also,
Ben passed in a day or two,
But knoppes will fresh bee
Two dayes at least, or els three.
The knoppes greatly liked mee,
For fairer may there no man see:
Who so might haue one of all,
It ought him been full lefe withall:
Might I garlond of hem getten,
For no richesse I would it letten.
Amongs the knoppes I chese one
So faire, that of the remenaunt none
Ne preise I halfe so well as it,
When Iause in my wit,
For it so well was enlumined
With colour red, as well tined
As nature couth it make faire,
And it hath leaues well foure paire,
That kind hath set through his knowing
About the red roses springing,
The stalke was as rilhe right,
And thereon stood the knoppe vpright,
That it ne bowed vpon no side,
The swote smell sprong so wide,
That it died all the place about.
When I had smelled the sauour swote,
No will had I fro thence yet go,
But somedele nere it went I tho
To take it, but mine hond for drede
Ne durst I to the Rose bede,
For thistles sharpe of many manners,
Nettles, thornes, and hooked briers,
For much they disfourbled me,
For sore I drad to harmed be.

THe God of Loue, with bow bent,
That all day set had his talent
To pursue and to spien mee,
Was stonding by a figge tree,
And when he saw how that I
Had chosen so ententifely
The bothum more vnto my pey,
Than any other that I sey:
He tooke an arrow full sharpely whet,
And in his bowe when it was set,
He streight vp to his eare drough
The strong bowe, that was so tough,
And shot at me so wonder smert,
That through mine eye vnto mine hert
The takell smote, and deepe it went:
And therewithall such cold me hent,
That vnder clothes warme and soft,
Sithen that day I haue chiuered oft.
When I was hurt thus in stound,
I fell downe plat vnto the ground,
Mine heart failed and fainted aye,
And long time in swoune I lay:
But when I came out of swouning,
And had wit, and my feeling,
I was all mate, and wend full wele
Of blood, haue lorne a full great dele,
But certes, the arrow that in me stood,
Of me ne drew no drop of blood,
For why, I found my wounds all drey.
Then tooke I with mine hondes twey
The arrow, and full fast it out plight,
And in the pulling sore I sight,
So at the last the shaft of tree
I drough out, with the feathers three,
But yet the hooked head pwis,
The which Beauty called is,
Gan so deepe in mine heart pace,
That I it might not arace,
But in mine heart still it stood,
All bled I not a drop of blood:
I was both anguishous and trouble,
For the perill that I saw double,
I nist what to say or do,
Ne get a leach my wounds to,
For neither through grasse ne rote,
Ne had I helpe of hope ne bote,
But to the bothum euermo
Mine heart drew, for all my wo,
My thought was in none other thing.
For had it been in my keeping,
It would haue brought my life againe,
For certes euenly, I dare well saine,
The sight onely, and the sauour,
Alegged much of my langour.
Then gan I for to draw mee
Toward the bothum faire to see,
And Loue had gette him in his throwe
Another arrow into his bowe,
And for to shoot gan him dresse,
The arrowes name was Simplesse,
And when that Loue gan nigh me nere,
He drowe it vp withouten were,
And shot at me with all his might,
So that this arrow anone right
Throughout eigh as it was found,
Into mine heart hath made a wound,
Then I anone did all my craft

For to drawen out the shaft,
And therewithall I sighed eft,
But in mine heart the head was left,
Which aye encreased my desire.
Unto the bothum drow I nere,
And euermo that me was wo
The more desire had I to go
Unto the Roser, where that grew
The fresh bothum, so bright of hew,
Better me were to haue letten be,
But it behoued need me
To doen right as mine heart bad:
For euer the body must be lad
After the heart, in wele and wo,
Of force together they must go.
But neuer this archer would fine
To shoot at me with all his pine,
And for to make me to him mete.
The third arrow he gan to shete,
When best his time he might espie,
The which was named Courtesie,
Into mine heart he did auale,
A swoune I fell, both dead and pale,
Long time I lay, and stirred nought,
Till I abraied out of my thought.
And fast then I assayed mee
To draw out the shaft of tree,
But euer the head was left behind
For ought I couth pull or wind,
So sore it sticked when I was hit,
That by no craft I might it flit,
But anguishous and full of thought,
I felt such wo, my wound aye wrought,
That summoned me alway to go
Toward the Rose, that pleased me so,
But I ne durst in no manere
Because the archer was so nere.
For euermore gladly as I rede
Brent child of fire hath much drede.
And certes yet for all my pein,
Though that I sigh, yet arrowes rein,
And ground quareles sharpe of stele,
Ne for no paine that I might fele,
Yet might I not my selfe withhold
The faire Roser to behold,
For Loue me yaue such hardiment
For to fulfill his commaundement,
Upon my feet I rose vp than
Feeble, as a forwounded man:
And forth to gone might I set,
And for the Archer nold I let,
Toward the Roser fast I drow
But thornes sharpe, mo than ynow
There were, and also thistles thicke,
And breres brimme for to pricke,
That I ne might get grace
The rough thornes for to pace
To seene the Roses fresh of hew,
I must abide, though it me rew,
The hedge about so thicke was,
That closed the Roses in compas.
But o thing liked me right wele,
I was so nigh, I might fele
Of the bothum the swote odour,
And also see the fresh colour,
And that right greatly liked mee,
That I so nere might it see,
Such ioy anon thereof had I,
That I forgate my malady,
To seene I had such delite,
Of sorrow and anger I was all quite,
And of my wounds that I had thore,
For nothing liken me might more,
Than dwellen by the Roser aye,
And thence neuer to passe awaye:
But when a while I had be thare,
The God of Loue, which all to share
Mine heart with his arrowes kene,
Casteth him to yeue me wounds grene,
He shote at me full hastely
An arrow named Company,
The which tabell is full able
To make these Ladies merciable,
Then I anone gan chaungen hew
For greuaunce of my wound new,
That I againe fell in swouning,
And sighed sore in complaining.
Sore I complained that my sore
On me gan greuen more and more,
I had none hope of Allegiaunce,
So nigh I drow to disperaunce,
I rought of death, ne of life,
Whether that loue would me drife,
If me a martir would he make,
I might his power not forsake:
And while for anger thus I woke,
The God of Loue an arrow toke,
Full sharpe it was and pugnaunt,
And it was called Faire semblaunt,
The which in no wise would consent,
That any louer him repent
To serue his loue with heart and all,
For any perill that may befall.
But though this arrow was kene ground,
As any rasour that is found,
To cut and kerue at the point,
The God of Loue it had annoint
With a precious oyntment,
Somedele to yeue allegement
Upon the wounds that he hade
Through the body in my heart made
To helpe her sores, and to cure,
And that they may the bette endure:
But yet this arrow, without more,
Made in mine heart a large sore,
That in full great paine I abode,

But aye the ointment went abrode
Throughout my wounds large and wide,
It spredе about in euery side:
Through whose vertue and whose might,
Mine heart ioyfull was and light.
I had ben dead and all to shent
But for the precious ointment:
The shaft I drow out of the arrow,
Looking for wo right wonder narrow
But the head, which made me smart,
Left behind in mine heart
With other fower, I dare well say,
That neuer woll be take away,
But the ointment halpe me wele,
And yet such sorrow did I fele,
That all day I chaunged hew
Of my wounds fresh and new,
As men might see in my visage,
The arrowes were so full of rage,
So variaunt of diuersitee,
That men in eueriche might see
Both great annoy and eke sweetnelle,
And ioy meint with bitternelle:
Now were they easie, now were they wood,
In hem I felt both harme and good,
Now sore without alleggement,
Now softing with ointment,
It softened here, and pricked there,
Thus ease and anger together were.

THe God of Loue deliuerly
Come lepande to me hastely,
And saied to me in great yape,
Yeeld thee, for thou may not escape,
May no defence auaile thee here:
Therefore I rede make no daungere.
If thou wolt yeeld thee hastely,
Thou shalt rather haue mercy:
☞ He is a foole in sikernelle,
That with daunger or stoutnesse
Rebelleth there that he should please,
In such folly is little ease.
Be meeke, where thou must needs bowe,
To striue ayen is not thy prowe:
Come at ones, and haue ido,
For I woll that it be so,
Then yeeld thee here debonairly.
And I answered full humbly,
Gladly sir, at your bidding,
I woll me yeeld in all thing:
To your seruice I woll me take,
For God defend that I should make
Ayen your bidding resistence.
I woll not doen so great offence,
For if I did, it were no skill,
Ye may doe with me what ye will,
Saue or spill, and also lo,
Fro you in no wise may I go,
My life, my death, is in your hond,
I may not last out of your bond,
Plaine at your list I yeeld me,
Hoping in heart, that sometime ye
Comfort and ease shull me send:
Or els shortly, this is the end,
Without en health I mote aye dure,
But if ye take me to your cure:
Comfort or health, how should I haue,
Sithe ye me hurt, but ye me saue?
The health of Loue mote be found,
Whereas they tooken first her wound:
And if ye list of me to make
Your prisoner, I woll it take
Of heart and will fully at gree,
Holy and plaine I yeeld mee
Without feining or feintise,
To be gouerned by your empryse:
Of you I heare so much prise,
I woll been whole at your deuise
For to fulfill your liking
And repent for nothing,
Hoping to haue yet in some tide
Mercy, of that I abide:
And with that couenaunt yeeld I mee,
Anon downe kneeling vpon my knee,
Profering for to kisse his fete,
But for nothing he would me lete.

And said, I loue thee both and preise,
Sens that thine answere doth me ese:
For thou answered so curtesly,
For now I wote well vtterly,
That thou art gentle by thy speech:
For though a man ferre would seech,
He should not finden in certaine,
No such answere of no villaine:
For such a word ne might nought
Issue out of a villaines thought.
Thou shalt not lesen of thy speche,
For thy helping woll I eche,
And eke encreasen that I may:
But first I woll that thou obay
Fully for thine auauntage
Anone to doe me here homage:
And sithe kisse thou shalt my mouth,
Which to no villaine was neuer couth
For to approch it, ne for to touch,
For saufe of cherles I ne vouch
That they shall neuer neigh it nere
For curteis, and of faire manere,
Well taught, and full of gentlenesse
He must be, that shall me kisse,
And also of full high fraunchise,
That shall attaine to that empryse.
And first of o thing warne I thee,
That paine and great aduersitee
He mote endure, and eke trauaile

That

That shall me serue, without faile,
But there against thee to comfort,
And with thy seruice to disport,
Thou maiest full glad and ioyfull bee,
So good a maister to haue as mee,
And Lord of so high renoune,
I beare of loue the Gonfenoune,
Of Curtesie the banere,
For I am of selfe the manere,
Gentle, courteous, meeke and free,
That who euer ententiue bee,
Me to honour, dout, and serue:
And also that he him obserue
Fro trespasse and fro villanie,
And him gouerne in courtesie,
With will and entention,
For when he first in my prison
Is caught, then must he vtterly,
Fro thencefoorth full busily,
Cast him gentle for to be,
If he desire helpe of me.
Anon without more delay,
Withouten daunger or affray,
I become his man anone,
And gaue him thankes many a one,
And kneled doune with hondes ioint,
And made it in my port full queint:
The ioy went to my heart rote,
When I had kissed his mouth so swote,
I had such mirth and such liking,
It cured me of languishing.
He asked of me then hostages,
I haue he sayd taken fele homages
Of one and other, where I haue bene,
Distreined oft, withouten wene,
These felons full of falsite,
Haue many sithes beguiled me,
And through her falshed her lust atchieued,
Whereof I repent, and am agreeued,
And I hem get in my daungere,
Her falshed shall they bie full dere.
But for I loue thee, I say thee plaine,
I woll of thee bee more certaine,
For thee sore I woll now binde,
That thou away ne shalt not winde,
For to denien thy couenaunt,
Or done that is not auenaunt,
That thou were false, it were great ruth,
Sith thou seemest so full of truth.
Sir, if thee list to vnderstand,
I marualle thee asking this demaund,
For why or wherefore should ye,
Hostages or borowes aske of me,
Or any other siketnesse,
Sith ye wote in sothfastnesse,
That ye me haue surprised so,
And hole mine heart, taken me fro,
That it woll doe for me nothing,
But if it be at your bidding,
Mine heart is yours, and mine right nought
As it behoueth, in deede and thought,
Ready in all to worke your will,
Whether so tourne to good or ill,
So sore it lusteth you to please,
No man thereof may you disease,
Ye haue thereon set such iustice,
That it is werried in many wise,
And if ye doubt it nolde obaie,
Ye may thereof doe make a kaie,
And hold it with you for hostage.
Now certes this is none outrage,
(Quoth Loue) and fully accord,
For of the bodie he is full Lord
That hath the heart in his treasore,
Outrage it were to aske more.

Then of his aumener he drough,
A little keie fetise inough,
Which was of gold polished clere,
And sayed to me, with this keye here,
Thine heart to me now woll I shet,
For all my ioyfull looke and knet,
I binde vnder this little kay,
That no wight may carie away.
This keye is full of great poste,
With which anone he touched me,
Under the side full softely,
That he mine heart sodainely,
Without any bad speered,
That yet right nought it hath me deered.
When he had doen his will all out,
And I had put him out of doubt,
Sir I sayd, I haue right great will,
Your lust and pleasure to fulfill,
Looke ye my seruice take at gree,
By thilke fayth ye owe to me,
I say nought for recreaundise,
For I nought doubt of your seruice.
But the seruaunt trauaileth in vaine,
That for to seruen doeth his paine
Vnto that Lord, which in no wise,
Conne him no thanke for his seruice.

Loue sayd, dismay thee nought,
Sith thou for succour hast me sought,
In thanke thy seruice woll I take,
And high of degree I woll thee make,
If wickednesse ne hinder thee,
But (as I hope) it shall nought bee,
To worship no wight by auenture
May come, but he paine endure.
Abide and sucker thy distresse,
That hurteth now, it shall be lesse,
I wote my selfe what may thee saue,
What medicine thou wouldest haue.
And if thy truth to me thou keepe,

I shall vnto thine helping eke,
To cure thy woundes and make hem clene,
Where so they be old or grene,
Thou shalt be holpen at wordes few,
For certainly thou shalt well shew,
Where that thou seruest with good will,
For to accomplishen and fulfill
My commaundements day and night,
Which I to louers yeue of right.

Ah sir, for Gods loue (sayd I)
Er ye passe hence ententikely,
Your commaundements to me ye say,
And I shall keepe hem if I may,
For hem to keepen is all my thought:
And if so be I wote hem nought,
Then may I vnwittingly,
Wherefore I pray you entierly,
With all mine heart, me to lere,
That I trespace in no manere.
The God of Loue then charged me
Anon, as ye shall here and see,
Word by word, by right empryse,
So as the Romaunt shall deuise.
The maister leseth his time to lere,
When the Disciple will not here,
It is but vaine on him to swinke,
That on his learning will not thinke,
Who so lust loue, let him entend,
For now the Romance beginneth to amend.
Now is good to heare in fay,
If any be that can it say,
And point it as the reason is
Set for other gate twis,
It shall nat well in all thing,
Be brought to good vnderstanding,
For a Reader that pounteth ill,
A good sentence may oft spill:
The booke is good at the ending,
Made of newe and lustie thing:
For who so will the ending here,
The craft of loue he shall now lere,
If that he will so long abide,
Till I this Romance maie vnhide,
And vndoe the signifiaunce
Of this dreame, into Romaunce,
The soothfastnesse that now is hid,
Without couerture shall be kid,
When I vndoen haue this dreaming,
Wherein no word is of leasing.

Villanie at the beginning,
I will say loue ouer all thing
Thou leaue, if thou wolt be
False, and trespace ayenst me,
I curse and blame generally
All hem that louen villany,
For villanie maketh villeine
And by his deeds a churle is seine.
These villaines arne without pitie,
Friendship, loue, and all bountie,
I will receiue vnto my seruise
Hem that been villaines of empryse.
But vnderstond in thine entent,
That this is not mine entendement,
To clepe no wight in no ages
Onely gentle for his linages:
But who so is vertuous,
And in his port not outrageous,
When such one thou seest thee before,
Though he be not gentle borne,
Thou maiest well seine this is in sooth,
That he is gentle, because he doth
As longeth to a gentleman:
Of hem none other deme I can,
For certainly withouten dreede,
A churle is demed by his deede,
Of hye or lowe, as ye may see,
Or of what kinred that he bee.
Ne say nought for none euill will,
Thing that is to holden still,
It is no worship to missaie,
Thou mayest ensample take of Kaie,
That was sometime for missayeng,
Hated both of old and yeng,
As ferre as Gawein the worthie,
Was prayed for his courtesie,
Kaie was hated, for he was fell,
Of word dispitous and cruell,
Wherefore be wise and acqueintable,
Goodly of word, and reasonable:
Both to lesse and eke to mare,
And when thou commest there men are,
Looke that thou haue in custome ay,
First to salue hem if thou may:
And if it fall, that of hem somme
Salue the first, be not domme,
But quite him courtesly anone
Without abiding, ere they gone.
For nothing eke thy tongue applie,
To speake words of ribaudrie,
To villaine speech, in no degree,
Let neuer thy lippe vnbounden bee:
For I nought hold him in good faith
Curteis, that foule words saith:
And all women serue and preise,
And to thy power her honour reise:
And if that any missayere,
Despise women, that thou maist here,
Blame him, and bid him hold him still,
And set thy might and all thy will
Women and ladies for to please,
And to doe thing that may hem ease,
That they euer speake good of thee,
For so thou maiest best praised bee.
Looke fro pride thou keepe thee wele,

For

For thou maiest both perceiue and feele,
That pride is both folly and sinne,
And he that pride hath him within,
Ne may his heart in no wise,
Weken ne souplen to seruice:
For pride is found in euerie part,
Contrarie vnto Loues art:
And he that loueth truely,
Should himconteine iollily,
Without pride in sundrie wise,
And him disguisen in queintise,
For queint array, without drede,
Is nothing proude, who taketh hede,
For fresh array, as men may see,
Without pride may oft bee.
Maintaine thy selfe after thy rent,
Of robe and eke of garment,
For many sith faire clothing,
A man amendeth in much thing.
And looke alway that they be shape,
(What garment that thou shalt make)
Of him that can best do,
With all that partaineth thereto,
Pointes and sleeues be well sitt and,
Right and streight on the hand,
Of shone and bootes, new and faire,
Looke at the least you haue a paire,
And that they sit so fetously,
That these rude may vtterly
Maruaile, sith that they sit so plaine,
How they come on or off againe.
Weare streight gloues with aumere
Of silke: and alway with good chere
Thou peue, if thou haue richesse,
And if thou haue nought, spend the lesse.
Alway be merry, if thou may,
But waste not thy good alway,
Haue hatte of floures fresh as May,
Chapelet of Roses of Whitsunday:
For such arrie ne costneth but lite,
Thine hondes wash, thy teeth make white,
And let no filth vpon thee bee,
Thy nayles blacke, if thou maiest see,
Voide it awaie deliuerly,
And kembe thine head right iollily:
Farce not thy visage in no wise,
For that of loue is nat themprise,
For loue doth hate, as I finde,
A beautie that commeth not of kinde,
Alway in heart I read thee,
Glad and merry for to be,
And be as ioyfull as thou can,
Loue hath no ioy of sorrowfull man,
That euill is full of curtesie,
That knoweth in his maladie,
For cure of loue the sickenesse
Is meint with sweete and bitternesse,
The sore of loue is maruailous,
For now the louer is ioyous,
Now can he plaine, now can he grone,
Now can he singen, now maken mone,
To day he plaineth for heauinesse,
To morow he plaineth for iolynesse,
The life of loue is full contrarie,
Which stoundemeale can oft varie,
But if thou canst murthes make,
That men in gre woll gladly take,
Doe it goodly I command thee,
For men should wherefoeuer they be,
Doe thing that hem sitting is,
For thereof commeth good loos and pris.
Whereof that thou be vertuous,
Ne be nat straunge ne daungerous:
For if that thou good rider be,
Pricke gladly that men may see,
In armes also if thou conne,
Pursue till thou a name hast wonne:
And if thy voice be faire and clere,
Thou shalt maken no great daungere
When to sing they goodly pray,
It is thy worship for to obay:
Also to you it longeth aye,
To Harpe and Gitterne, daunce and playe,
For if he can well foote and daunce,
It may him greatly doe auaunce,
Emong eke for thy Lady sake,
Songes and complaintes that thou make,
For that woll meuen in her hart,
When they readen of thy smart.
Looke that no man for scarce thee hold,
For that may greeue thee manifold:
Reason woll that a louer be,
In his yeftes more large and free
Than churles that been not of louing,
For who thereof can any thing,
He shall be lefe ate for to peue,
In londes lore who so would leue,
For he that through a sodain sight,
Or for a killing anon right,
Haue hole his heart, in will and thought,
And to himselfe keepeth right nought,
After this swikt, it is good reason,
He peue his good in abandon.

NOw woll I shortly here reherse,
Of that I haue sayd in verse,
All the sentence by and by,
In wordes fewe compendiously,
That thou the better mayest on hem thinke,
Whether so it be thou wake or winke,
For the wordes little greeue,
A man to keepe, when it is greeue,
Who so with Loue woll goone or ride,
He mote be courteous, and voide of pride,
Merry, and full of iollite,
And of Largesse a loued be,

First I ioyne thee here in penaunce,
That euer without repentaunce,
Thou set thy thought in thy louing
To last without repenting,
And thinke vpon thy mirthes sweet
That shall follow after when ye meet.

And for thou true to Loue shalt be,
I will and commaund thee,
That in one place thou set all hole
Thine heart, without halfen dole,
For trecherie and likernesse,
For I loued neuer doublenesse:
☞ To many his heart that woll depart,
Eucrich shall haue but little part,
But of hem drede I me right nought,
That in one place setteth his thought:
Therefore in o place it set,
And let it neuer thence flet:
For if thou peuest it in lening,
I hold it but wretched thing:
Therefore peue it whole and quite,
And thou shalt haue the more merite.
If it be lent then after sone,
The bountie and the thankes is done,
☞ But in Loue, free peuen thing
Requireth a great guerdoning.
Peue it in pefect all quite fully,
And make thy gift debonairly:
☞ For men that pefect hold more dere
That peuen is with gladsome chere.
☞ That gift nought to praysen is
That man peueth maugre his:
When thou hast peuen thine heart (as I
Haue sayd) thee here openly:
Then aduentures shull thee fall,
Which hard and heauie been withall:
For oft when thou bethinkest thee
Of thy louing, where so thou be,
Fro folke thou must depart in hie,
That none perceiue thy maladie,
But hide thine harme thou must alone,
And go forth sole, and make thy mone:
Thou shalt no while be in o state,
But whilom cold and whilom hate,
Now redde as Rose, now yellow and fade,
Such sorow I trow thou neuer hade:
Cotidien, ne quarteine,
It is not so full of peine,
For often times it shall fall,
In loue among thy paines all,
That thou thy selfe all holy,
For yetten shalt so vtterly,
That many times thou shalt bee,
Still as an image of tree,
Domme as a stone, without stirring
Of foote or honde, without speaking.
Then soone after all thy paine,
To memorie shalt thou come againe,
A man abashed wonder sore,
And after sighen more and more:
For wit thou wele without en wene,
In such a state full oft haue bene,
That haue the euill of loue assarde,
Where through thou art so dismaide.

After a thought shall take thee so,
That thy loue is too ferre the fro:
Thou shalt say (God) what may this be,
That I ne may my Ladie see?
Mine heart alone is to her goe,
And I abide all sole in woe,
Departed fro mine owne thought,
And with mine eien se right nought.
Alas mine eyen lene I ne may,
My carefull heart to conuay,
Mine hearts guide, but they be,
I praise nothing what euer they se:
Shull they abide then nay,
But gone and visiten without delay
That mine heart desireth so
For certainly, but if they go.
A foole my selfe I may well hold,
when I ne se what mine hart wold,
Wherefore I woll gone her to sene,
Or eased shall I neuer bene,
But I haue some tokenning.
Then goest thou forth without dwelling,
But oft thou faylest of thy desire,
Er thou mayest come her any nere,
And wastest in vaine thy passage:
Then fallest thou in a new rage,
For want of sight thou ginnest murne,
And homeward pensiue thou doest returne:
In great mischiefe then shalt thou bee,
For then againe shall come to thee
Sighes and plaintes with new wo,
That no itching pricketh so:
Who wote it nought, he may goe lere,
Of hem that buyen loue so dere.
Nothing thine heart appeasen may,
That oft thou wolt gone and assay,
If thou maiest seene by aduenture
Thy liues ioy, thine hearts cure,
So that by grace, if thou might
Attaine of her to haue a sight,
Then shalt thou done none other deed,
But with that sight thine eyen feed:
That faire fresh when thou mayst see,
Thine heart shall so rauished be,
That neuer thou wouldest thy thankes lete
Ne remoue, for to see that swete:
The more thou seest in soothfastnesse,
The more thou couetest of that sweetnesse:
The more thine heart brenneth in fire,
The more thine heart is in desire.

For

For who considreth euerie dele,
It may be likened wonder wele,
The paine of loue vnto a fere,
For euermore thou neighest nere,
Thought, or who so that it be,
For verie sooth I tell it thee,
The hotter euer shalt thou brenne,
As experience shall thee kenne,
Where so commest in any cost,
Who is next fire he brenneth most,
And yet forsooth for all thine heat,
Though thou for loue swelt and sweat,
Ne for no thing thou kelen may,
Thou shalt not willen to passe away,
And though thou goe, yet must thou nede,
Thinke all day on her faire hede,
Whome thou beheld with so good will,
And hold thy selfe beguiled ill,
That thou ne hadst ne hardiment,
To shew her ought of thine entent,
Thine heart full sore thou wolt dispise,
And eke repreue of cowardise,
That thou so dull in euerie thing,
Were domme for drede, without speaking.
Thou shalt eke thinke thou didst folly,
That thou were here so fast by,
And durst not aucnture thee to say
Some thing er thou came away,
For thou hadst no more wonne.
To speake of her when thou begonne:
But yet she would for thy sake,
In armes goodly thee haue take,
It should haue be more worth to thee,
Than of treasour great plente.
Thus shalt thou mourne and eke complain,
And get enchelon to gone again,
Unto thy walke, or to thy place,
Where thou beheld her fleshly face,
And neuer for false suspection,
Thou wouldest finde occasion,
For to gone vnto her house,
So art thou then desirous,
A sight of her for to haue,
If thou thine honour mightest saue,
Or any errand mightest make
Thider, for thy loues sake:
Full faine thou would, but for drede
Thou gost not, least that men take heede,
Wherefore I read in thy going,
And also in thine againe comming,
Thou be well ware that men ne wit,
Feine thee other cause than it,
To goe that way, or fast bie,
To heale well is no follie:
And if so be it happe thee,
That thou thy Loue there mayst see,
In liker wise thou her salewe,
Where with thy colour woll transmewe,
And eke thy blood shall all to quake,
Thy hewe eke chaungen for her sake,
But word and wit, with chere full pale,
Shull want for to tell thy tale,
And if thou mayest so ferre forth winne,
That thou reason durst beginne,
And wouldest saine three thinges or mo,
Thou shalt full scarcely saine the two,
Though thou bethinke thee neuer so wele,
Thou shalt forgete yet somedele.

But if thou deale with trecherey,
For false Louers mowe all fouly
Sain what hem lust withouten dred,
They be so double in her falshed,
For they in heart can thinke o thing
And saine another, in her speaking,
And when thy speech is ended all,
Right thus to thee it shall befall:
If any word then come to minde,
That thou to say hast left behinde,
Then thou shalt brenne in great martire,
For thou shalt brenne as any fire,
This is the strife and eke the affraie,
And the battaile that lasteth aie:
This bargaine, end may neuer take,
But if that she thy peace will make.
And when the night is commen anon,
A thousand angres shall come vpon,
To bed as fast thou wolt thee dight,
There thou shalt haue but small delight,
For when thou wenest for to sleepe,
So full of paine shalt thou creepe,
Stert in thy bed about full wide,
And turne full oft on euerie side:
Now downeward grofle, and now vpright,
And wallow in woe the long night,
Thine armes shalt thou spreade a brede,
As man in warre were forwerede.
Then shall thee come a remembraunce
Of her shape and her semblaunce,
Whereto none other may be pere,
And wete thou well without were,
That thee shall see sometime that night,
That thou hast her, that is so bright,
Naked betweene thine armes there,
All soothfastnesse as though it were,
Thou shalt make Castles then in Spaine,
And dreame of ioy, all but in vaine,
And thee delighten of right nought,
While thou so slumbrest in that thought,
That is so sweete and delitable,
The which in sooth nis but a fable,
For it ne shall no while last,
Then shalt thou sigh and weepe fast,
And say deere God, what thing is this,
My dreame is turned all amis,
Which was full sweet and apparent:

But now I wake it is all shent,
Now pede this merry thought away,
Twentie times vpon a day,
I would this thought would come againe,
For it alleggeth well my paine,
It maketh me full of ioyfull thought,
It sleeth me that it lasteth nought.
Ah Lord, why nill ye me succour?
The ioy I trow that I langour,
The death I would me should slo,
While I lye in her armes two,
Mine harme is hard withouten wene,
My great vneale full oft I mene.

BVt would Loue do so I might
Haue fully ioy of her so bright,
My paine were quit me richly,
Alas too great a thing aske I:
It is but folly, and wrong wening,
To aske so outragious a thing,
And who so asketh follily,
He mote be warned hastely,
And I ne wote what I may say,
I am so ferre out of the way,
For I would haue full great liking,
And full great ioy of lasse thing,
For would she of her gentlenesse,
Withouten more, me ones kesse,
It were to me a great guerdon,
Release of all my passion:
But it is hard to come thereto,
All is but folly that I do,
So high I haue mine heart set,
Where I may no comfort get,
I wote not where I say well or nought,
But this I wote well in my thought,
That it were bette of her alone
For to stint my woe and mone,
A looke on her I cast goodly,
That for to haue all vtterly,
Of another all hole the play,
Ah Lord, where I shall bide the day
That euer she shall my Ladie be,
He is ful cured, that may her see.
A God, when shall the dawning spring,
To leggen thus as an angrie thing,
I haue no ioy thus here to ly,
When that my loue is not me by,
A man to lyen hath great disease,
Which may not sleepe ne rest in ease,
I would it dawed, and were now day,
And that the night were went away,
For were it day, I would vp rise,
Ah slow sunne, shew thine enprise,
Speede thee to spread thy beames bright,
And chase the darkenesse of the night,
To put away the stoundes strong,
Which in me lasten all too long.

The night shalt thou continue so,
Without rest, in paine and wo,
If euer thou knew of loue distresse,
Thou shall nowe learne in that sickenesse,
And thus enduring shalt thou lye
And rise on morow vp earlye,
Out of thy bed, and harneis thee
Er euer dawning thou maist see:
All priuily then shalt thou gone,
What whider it be thy selfe alone,
For raine, or haile, for snow, for slete,
Theder the dwelleth that is so swete,
The which may fall a sleepe bee,
And thinketh but little vpon thee.
Then shalt thou goe, full foule aferde,
Looke if the gate be vnsperde,
And wayte without in woe and paine,
Full euill a cold in wind and raine:
Then shalt thou goe the doze before,
If thou mayest finde any shore,
Or hole, or reft, what euer it were,
Then shalt thou stoupe, and lay to eare
If they within a sleepe be,
I meane all saue thy Ladie free,
Whom waking if thou mayest aspie,
Goe put thy selfe in icopardie,
To aske grace, and thee bimene,
That she may wete without wene,
That thou night no rest hast had,
So sore for her thou were bestad.
Women well ought pitie to take
Of hem that sorrowen for her sake,
And looke for loue of that relike,
That thou thinke none other like,
For when thou hast so great anney,
Shall kisse thee er thou goe awey,
And hold that in full great deinte,
And for that no man shall thee see
Before the house, ne in the way,
Looke thou be gon againe er day.
Such comming, and such going,
Such beauinesse, and such walking,
Maketh louers withouten wene,
Under her clothes pale and lene,
For Loue leaueth colour ne clearnesse,
Who loueth trew hath no fatnesse,
Thou shalt well by thy selfe see
That thou must needs assaied bee:
For men that shape hem other way
Falsely her ladies for to betray,
It is no wonder though they be fatte,
With false othes her loues they gatte,
For oft I see such losengeours
Fatter than Abbots or Priours.
Yet with o thing I thee charge,
That is to say, that thou be large
Vnto the maid that her doth serue,
So best her thanke thou shalt deserue.

Leue

Yeue her giftes, and get her grace,
For so thou may thanke purchace,
That she thee worthy hold and free,
Thy Ladie, and all that may thee see.
Also her seruaunts worship aie,
And please as much as thou maie,
Great good through hem may come to thee,
Because with her they been priue:
They shall her tell how they thee fand
Curteous and wise, and well doand,
And she shall preise well thee more.
Looke out of lond thou be not fore,
And if such cause thou haue, that thee
Behoueth to gone out of countree,
Leaue hole thine heart in hostage,
Till thou againe make thy passage,
Thinke long to see the sweet thing
That hath thine heart in her keeping.
Now haue I told thee, in what wise
A Louer shall doe me seruise,
Do it then, if thou wolt haue
The mede that thou after craue.

When Loue all this had boden me,
I said him: sir how may it be
That Louers may in such manere,
Endure the paine ye haue sayd here?
I maruaile me wonder fast,
How any man may liue or last
In such paine, and such brenning,
In sorrow and thought, and such sighing,
Aie vnrelesed woe to make,
Whether so it be they sleepe or wake,
In such annoy continually,
As helpe me God this maruaile I
How man, but he were made of steele,
Might liue a moneth, such paines to feele.

The God of Loue then sayd me,
Friend, by the faith I owe to thee,
May no man haue good, but he it buy:
A man loueth more tenderly
The thing that he hath bought most dere,
For were thou well without were,
In thanke that thing is taken more,
For which a man hath suffred sore:
Certes no woe ne may attaine,
Unto the sore of Loues paine,
None euill thereto ne may amount,
No more than a man count
The drops that of the water bee:
For drie as well the great see
Thou mightest, as the harmes tell
Of hem that with loue dwell
In seruice, for paine hem fleeth,
And that each would flee the death,
And trow they should neuer escape,
Were that hope couth hem make,
Glad as man in prison sete,
And may not getten for to ete,
But Barly bread, and water pure,
And lyeth in vermin and in ordure,
With all this yet can he liue,
Good hope such comfort hath him yeue,
Which maketh wene that he shall be
Deliuered and come to libertie:
In fortune is full trust,
Though he lye in straw or dust,
In hope is all his sustaining:
And so fare Louers in her wening,
Which Loue hath shette in his prison,
Good hope is her saluation:
Good hope (how sore that they smart)
Yeueth hem both will and hart
To proffer her body to martire,
For Hope so sore doth hem desire
To suffer each harme that men deuise,
For ioy that afterward shall arise.

Hope in desire catch victorie,
In hope of Loue is all the glorie,
For hope is all that Loue may yeue,
Were hope, there should no lenger liue,
Blessed be hope, which with desire,
Auaunceth Louers in such manire,
Good hope is curteis for to please,
To keepe Louers from all disease,
Hope keepeth his lond, and woll abide,
For any perill that may betide,
For hope to louers, as most chicke,
Doth hem endure all mischicke,
Hope is her helpe when mister is,
And I shall yeue thee eke iwis,
Three other thinges, that great sollace
Doth to hem that be in my lace,
The first good that may be found,
To hem that in my lace be bound,
Is Sweet thought, for to record
Thing wherewith thou canst accord
Best in thine heart, where she be,
Thinking in absence is good to thee,
When any louer doth complaine,
And liueth in distresse and in paine,
Then Sweet thought shall come as bliue,
Away his anger for to driue,
It maketh Louers to haue remembraunce
Of comfort, and of high pleasaunce,
That Hope hath hight him for to winne,
For Thought anone then shall beginne,
As farre God wote as he can finde,
To make a mirrour of his minde,
For to behold he woll not let,
Her person he shall afore him set,
Her laughing eyen persaunt and clere,
Her shape, her form, her goodly chere,
Her mouth that is so gracious,

So sweete, and eke so sauourous,
Of all her feiters he shall take heed,
His eyen with all her limmes feed.
Thus Sweet thinking shall aswage
The paine of Louers, and her rage,
Thy ioy shall double without gesse
When thou thinkest on her seemelinesse,
Or of her laughing, or of her chere
That to thee made thy Lady dere,
This comfort woll I that thou take,
And if the next thou wolt forsake
Which is not lesse sauerous,
Thou shouldest not ben too daungerous.

The second shall be Sweet speech,
That hath to many one be leech,
To bring hem out of woe and were,
And helpe many a bachelere,
And many a Ladie sent succour,
That haue loued Paramour,
Through speaking, when they might heare
Of her Louers to hem so deare:
To me it voideth all her smart,
The which is closed in her hart.
In heart it maketh hem glad and light,
Speech, when they mowe haue sight.
And therefore now it commeth to mind,
In old dawes as I find,
That Clerkes written that her knew,
There was a Ladie fresh of hew,
Which of her Loue made a song,
On him for to remember among,
In which she sayd, when that I heare
Speaken of him that is so deare,
To me it voideth all smart,
Iwis he sitteth so nere mine hart,
To speake of him at eue or morrow,
It cureth me of all my sorrow,
To me is none so high pleasaunce
As of his person daliaunce:
She wist full well that Sweet speaking
Comforteth in full much thing,
Her she had full well assaide,
Of him she was full well apaide,
To speake of him her ioy was set.
Therefore I read thee that thou get,
A fellow that can well counsele,
And keepe thy counsaile, and welhele
To whom goe shew wholly thine hart
Both well and woe, ioy and smart:
To get comfort to him thou go,
And priuely betweene you two,
Ye shall speake of that goodly thing,
That hath thine heart in her keeping,
Of her beaute and her semblaunce,
And of her goodly countenaunce,
Of all thy state, thou shalt him say,
And aske him counsaile how thou may,
Do any thing that may her please,
For it to thee shall doe great ease,
That he may wete thou trust him so,
Both of thy wele and of thy wo.
And if his heart to loue be set,
His companie is much the bet,
For Reason woll he shew to thee
All vtterly his priuite,
And what she is he loueth so
To thee plainly he shall vndo,
Without drede of any shame,
Both tell her renome and her name.
Then shall he further farre and nere,
And namely to thy Ladie dere
In liker wise, ye euery other,
Shall helpen as his owne brother,
In trouth without doublenesse,
And keepen close in sikernesse:
For it is noble thing in fay,
To haue a man thou darst say,
Thy priuie counsaile euerie dele,
For that woll comfort thee right wele,
And thou shalt hold thee well apaide,
When such a friend thou hast assaide.

The third good of great comfort
That yeueth to Louers most disport,
Commeth of sight and beholding,
That cleped is Sweet looking,
The which may none ease do,
When thou art ferre thy Ladie fro,
Wherefore thou preasse alway to be
In place, where thou mayest her see:
For it is thing most amerous
Most delectable and sauerous.
For to asswage a mannes sorrow
To seen his Ladie by the morrow,
For it is a full noble thing
When thine eyen haue meeting,
With that relike precious,
Whereof they be so desirous.
But all day after sooth it is,
They haue no drede to faren amis,
They dreden neither winde ne raine,
Ne none other manner paine:
For when thine eyen were thus in blisse,
Yet of her courtesie iwisse,
Alone they cannot haue her ioy,
But to the heart they conuoy
Part of her blisse to him thou send,
Of all this harme to make an end.
The eye is a good messenger,
Which can to the heart in such manner
Tidings send, that hath sene
To voide him of his paines clene:
Whereof the heart reioyseth so
That a great partie of his wo
Is voided, and put away to flight,

Right

Right as the darkenesse of the night
Is chased with clerenesse of the moone,
Right so is all his woe full soone
Deuoided cleane, when that the sight
Beholden may that fresh wight
That the heart desireth so,
That all his darknesse is ago,
For then the heart is all at ease,
When they seen that may hem please.
Now haue I declared thee all out,
Of that thou were in dread and dout,
For I haue told thee faithfully,
What thee may curen vtterly,
And all Louers that woll be
Faithfull, and full of stabilite,
Good hope alway keepe by thy side,
And sweet thought make eke abide,
Sweet looking and sweet speech
Of all thine harmes they shall be lech,
Of euerie thou shalt haue great pleasaunce,
If thou canst bide in sufferaunce,
And serue well without fantise,
Thou shalt be quite of thine empryse
With more guerdoun, if that thou liue,
But all this time this I thee yeue.

THe God of Loue, when all the day
Had taught me, as ye haue heard say,
And enformed compendously,
He vanished away all sodainly,
And I alone left all soole,
So full of complaint and of doole,
For I saw no man there me by.
My woundes me greeued wonderly,
Ne for to curen nothing I knewe,
Saue the bothum bright of hewe,
Whereon was sette holly my thought,
Of other comfort knew I nought,
But it were through the God of Loue,
I knew nat else to my behoue
That might me ease or comfort gette,
But if he would him entremette.
The Roser was withouten dout
Closed with an hedge without,
As ye tofore haue heard me saine,
And fast I besied, and would faine
Haue passed the haie, if I might
Haue getten in by any sleight
Unto the bothum so faire to see,
But euer I dradde blamed to bee,
If men would haue suspection
That I would of entention
Haue stole the Roses that there were,
Therefore to enter I was in fere.
But at the last, as I bethought
Whether I should passe or nought,
I sawe come with a glad chere
To me, a lusty Bachelere,
Of good stature and of good height,
And Bialacoil forsooth he height:
Sonne he was to Curtesie,
And he me graunted full gladly,
The passage of the vtter hay,
And sayd: sir, how that you may
Passe, if your will bee
The fresh Roser for to see:
And ye the sweet sauour fele,
Your warrans may right wele,
So thou thee keepe fro folly,
Shall no man doe thee villany,
If I may helpe you in ought,
I shall not faine, dredeth nought,
For I am bound to your seruise,
Fully deuoid of feintise.
Then vnto Bialacoil sayd I,
I thanke you full hartely,
And your behest take at gree,
That ye so goodly proffer mee,
To you it commeth of great fraunchise,
That ye me proffer your seruise.
Then after full deliuerly,
Through the breres anon went I,
Whereof encombred was the haie,
I was well pleased, the soth to saie,
To see the bothum faire and swote,
So fresh sprong out of the rote.

AND Bialacoil me serued wele,
When I so nigh me might fele
Of the bothum the sweet odour,
And so lusty hewed of colour:
But then a churle, foule him betide,
Beside the Roses gan him hide,
To keepe the Roses of that Roser,
Of whom the name was Daungere:
This churle was hid there in the greues,
Couered with grasse and with leues,
To spie and take whom that he fond
Unto that Roser put an hond.
He was not soole, for there was mo,
For with him were other two
Of wicked manners, and euill fame,
That one was cleped by his name,
Wicked tongue, God yeue him sorrow,
For neither at euene at morrow,
He can of no man good speake,
On many a iust man doth he wreake.
There was a woman that eke hight
Shame, that who can reckon right,
Trespasse was her fathers name,
Her mother Reason, and thus was Shame
Brought of these ilke two:
And yet had Trespasse neuer ado
With Reason, ne neuer leie her by,
He was hidous and so vgly,
I meane this that Trespasse hight,

But Reason conceiueth of a sight,
Shame of that I spake afore.
And when that Shame was thus borne,
It was ordained, that Chastite,
Should of the Roser Ladie be:
Which of the bothums more and las,
With sundrie folkes assailed was,
That she ne wist what to do,
For Venus her assaileth so,
That night and day for her she stall
Bothoms and Roses our all.
To Reason then prayeth Chastite,
Whom Venus hath flemed ouer the see,
That she her daughter would her leue,
To keepe the Roser fresh and greue,
Anon Reason to Chastite,
Is fully assented that it be,
And graunted her at her request,
That Shame, because she is honest,
Shall keeper of the Roser be:
And thus to keepe it, there were three,
That none should hardy be ne bold,
(Were he young or were he old)
Againe her will away to bere
Bothoms ne Roses, that there were.
I had well sped, had I not been
Awaited with these three, and seen:
For Bialacoil, that was so faire,
So gracious and debonaire,
Quitte him to me full courteously,
And me to please bad that I,
Should draw to the bothom nere,
Pleasé in to touch the Rosere
Which bare the Roses, he yaue me leue,
This graunt ne might but little greue:
And for he saw it liked me,
Right nigh the bothom pulled he
A leafe all grene, and yaue me that
The which full nigh the bothom sat.
I made of that leafe full queint,
And when I felt I was acqueint
With Bialacoil, and so prime,
I wende all my will had be.
Then wext I hardy for to tell
To Bialacoil how me befell,
Of Loue, that tooke and wounded me,
And sayd: sir so mote I thee,
I may no ioy haue in no wise,
Upon no side, but it arise,
For sith (if I shall not faine)
In heart I haue had so great paine,
So great annoy, and such affraie,
That I ne wotte what I shall saie,
I drede your wroth to deserue,
Leuer me were, that knives kerue
My bodie should in peces small,
Than in any wise it should fall,
That ye wrothed should been with me.
Say boldly thy will (quoth he)
I will be wroth if that I may,
For nought that thou shalt to me say.

Then sayd I sir, not you displease,
To knowen of my great vnease,
In which onely Loue hath me brought,
For paines great, disease and thought,
Fro day to day it doth me drie,
Supposeth not sir, that I lie,
In me fiue woundes did he make,
The sore of which shall neuer slake,
But ye the bothom graunt me,
Which is most pleasaunt of beaute,
My life, my death, and my martire,
And treasour that I most desire.
Then Bialacoil affraied all
Sayd sir, it may not fall,
That ye desire it may not arise,
What would ye shend me in this wise?
A mokell foole then I were,
If I suffred you away to beare
The fresh bothom, so faire of sight,
For it were neither skill ne right,
Of the Roser ye broke the rinde,
Or take the Rose afore his kinde,
Ye are not courteous to aske it,
Let it still on the Roser sit,
And let it grow till it amended be,
And perfectly come to beaute,
I nolde not that it pulled were,
Fro the Roser that it bere,
To me it is so leefe and dere.
With that anon start out Daungere,
Out of the place where he was hidde,
His malice in his chere was kidde:
Full great he was and blacke of hewe,
Sturdy, and hidous, who so him knewe,
Like sharpe brechons his haire was grow,
His eyes red sparkling as the fire glow,
His nose frounced full kirked stood,
He come criand as he were wood,
And sayd, Bialacoil tell me why
Thou bringest hider so boldly
Him that so nigh the Rosere,
Thou worchest in a wrong manere,
He thinketh to dishonour thee,
Thou art well worthy to haue maugre,
To let him of the Rosere witte,
Who serueth a Felon is euill quitte.
Thou wouldest haue done great bounte,
And he with shame would quite thee,
Flye hence fellow, I rede thee go,
It wanteth little he woll thee slo,
For Bialacoil ne knew thee nought,
When thee to serue he set his thought,
For thou wolt shame him if thou might,
Both againe reason and right,

I woll no more in thee affie,
That commeth so slightly for tespie:
For it prooueth wonder wele,
Thy sleight and treason euerie dele.
I durst no more make there abode,
For the churle he was so wode,
So gan he threat and manace,
And through the haie he did me chace,
For feare of him I trembled and quoke,
So churlish his head he shoke,
And sayd, if eft he might me take,
I should not from his hands scape.
Then Bialacoil is fled and mate,
And I all soole and disconsolate,
Was left alone in paine and thought,
Fro shame to death I was nigh brought
Then thought on my high folly,
How that my bodie vtterly,
Was yeue to paine and martire,
And thereto had I so great desire,
That I ne durst the haies passe,
There was no hope, there was no grace,
I trow neuer man wist of paine,
But he were laced in Loues chaine,
Ne no man, and sooth it is,
But if he loue, what anger is.
Loue holdeth his hest to me right wele,
When paine (he sayd) I should fele,
No heart may thinke, no tongue saine,
A quarter of my woe and paine,
I might not with the anger last,
Mine heart in point was for to brast,
When I thought on the Rose, that so,
Was through daunger cast me fro,
A long while stoode I in that state,
Till that me sawe so madde and mate,
The Ladie of the high ward,
Which from her tower looked thiderward.

Reason, men clepe that Lady,
Which from her tower deliuerly,
Come downe to me without more,
But she was neither young, ne hore,
Ne high ne low, ne fat ne leane,
But best, as it were in a meane,
Her eyen two were clere and light
As any candle that brenneth bright,
And on her head she had a croune,
Her seemed well an high persoune:
For round enuiron her crounet
Was full of rich stones fret.
Her goodly semblaunt by deuise,
I trow was made in Paradise,
For nature had neuer such a grace,
To forge a worke of such compace:
For certain, but if the letter lye,
God himselfe that is so hye
Made her after his image,
And take her sith such auantage,
That she hath might and seignory
To keepe men from all folly,
Who so woll trowe her lore,
Ne may offenden neuermore.

And while I stoode this darke and pale,
Reason began to me her tale,
She saied: alhaile my sweete frend,
Folly and childhood woll thee shend,
Which thee haue put in great affraie
Thou hast bought dere time of Maie,
That made thine heart merrie to be,
In euill time thou wentest to see
The gardin, whereof Idlenesse
Bare the key and was maistresse
When thou yedest in the daunce
With her, and had acquaintaunce:
Her acquaintance is perillous,
First soft, and after noyous,
She hath thee trashed without wene,
The God of Loue had thee not sene,
Ne had Idlenesse thee conuaid
In the berge where Mirth him pleid,
If Folly haue surprised thee,
Doe so that it recouered be,
And be well ware to take no more
Counsaile, that greeueth after sore:
He is wise, that woll himselfe chastise,
And though a young man in any wise
Trespasse emong, and doe follie,
Let him not tarie, but hastelie
Let him amend what so be mis,
And eke I counsaile thee iwis,
The God of Loue holly forgete,
That hath thee in such paine sete,
And thee in heart tormenteth so,
I cannot seen how thou maist go
Other waies thee to garisoun,
For daunger, that is so felloun,
Fellie purposeth thee to werreie,
Which is full cruell the sooth to seie.

AND yet of daunger commeth no blame,
In reward of my daughter shame,
Which hath the Roses in her ward,
As she that may be no mulard,
And wicked tongue is with these two,
That suffreth no man thider goe
For er a thing be doe he shall,
Where that he commeth ouer all,
In sorrie places, if it be sought,
Saie thing that neuer was done ne wrought,
So much treason is in his male,
Of falsenesse for to faine a tale,
Thou dealest with angrie folke iwis,
Wherefore to thee better is,
From these folke away to fare,

For they woll make thee liue in care,
This is the cuill that loue they call,
Wherein there is but folly all,
For loue is folly euerie dell
Who loueth, in no wise may doe well
Ne set his thought on no good werke,
His schoole he leseth, if he be a Clerke,
Or other Craft eke, if that he be,
He shall not thriue therein, for he
In loue shall haue more passioun,
Than Monke, Hermite, or Chanoun:
This paine is heard out of measure,
The ioy may eke no while endure,
And in the possession,
Is much tribulation,
The ioy it is so short and lasting,
And but in hap is the getting,
For I see there many in trauaile,
That at last foule faile,
I was nothing thy counsailer,
When thou were made the homager
Of God of loue so hastely:
Where was no wisedome but folly,
Thine heart was iolly, but not sage,
When thou were brought in such a rage,
To yeeld thee so readyly,
And to Loue of his great maistrie.

I Rede thee Loue away to driue,
That maketh the retch not of thy liue,
The folly more fro daie to daie
Shall growe, but thou it put awaie,
Take with thy teeth the bridle fast,
To daunt thy heart, and eke the cast
If that thou mayest, to get the defence
For to redresse thy first offence.
Who so his heart alwaie woll leue,
Shall finde emong that shall him greue.
When I her heard thus me chastise,
I answeard in full angrie wise,
I prayed her cesse of her speach,
Either to chastice me or teach,
To bidde me my thought refrein,
Which Loue hath caught in his demein:
What were ye Loue woll consent,
(That me assaieth with bowe bent)
To draw mine heart out of his hond,
Which is so quickly in his bond:
That ye counsaile, may neuer bee,
For when he first arested mee,
He tooke mine heart so sore him till,
That it is nothing at my will,
He tought it so him for to obey,
That he it sparred with a key.
I pray you let me be all still,
For ye may well, if that ye will,
Your wordes wast in idleneſſe,
For vtterly withouten gesse,
All that ye saine is but in vaine,
We were leuer die in the paine,
That loue to me ward should arette,
Falshed or treason on me sette,
I woll me get pris or blame,
And Loue true to saue my name,
Who that me chastiseth, I him hate.
With that word, Reason went her gate,
When she saw for no sermoning
She might me fro my folly bring.
Then dismayed I lett all soole,
Forwearie, forwandred as a foole,
For I ne knew ne cherisaunce.
Then fell into my remembraunce,
How loue bad me to puruey
A fellow, to whome I might sey
My counsaile and my priuite,
For that should much auaile me.
With that bethought I me, that I
Had a fellow fast by,
True and siker, courteous, and hend,
And he called was by name a Frend,
A truer fellow was no where none,
In hast to him I went anone,
And to him all my woe I told,
Fro him right nought I would withhold,
I told him all without were,
And made my complaint on Daungere,
How for to sey he was hidous,
And to me ward contrarious,
The which through his cruelte,
Was in point to haue meimed me,
With Bialacoil, when he me sey
Within the gardin walke and pley,
Fro me he made him for to goe,
And I be left alone in woe:
I durst no longer with him speake,
For Daunger sayd he would be wreake,
When that he saw how I went,
The fresh bothum for to hent,
If I were hardie to come nere,
Betweene the haie and the Rosere.

This Friend when he wist of my thought,
He discomforted me right nought,
But saied fellow, be nat so madde,
Ne so abashed nor bestadde,
Myselfe I know full well Daungere,
And how he is fierce of chere,
At prime temps, Loue to manace,
Full oft I haue beene in his case,
A felon first though that he be,
After thou shalt him couple see,
Of long passed I knew him wele,
Ungodly first though men him fele,
He woll meeke after in his bearing
Been, for seruice and obeising,
I shall thee tell what thou shalt do:

Meekely

Meekely I rede thou go him to,
Of heart pray him specially
Of thy trespace to haue mercy,
And hote him well here to please,
That thou shalt neuer more him displease,
Who can best serue of flattery,
Shall please Daunger most vtterly.

My Friend hath saied to me so wele,
That he me eased hath somedele,
And eke allegged of my tourment,
For through him had I hardement
Againe to Daunger for to go,
To preue if I might meeke him so.

TO Daunger came I all ashamed,
The which afore me had blamed,
Desiring for to pease my wo,
But ouer hedge durst I not go:
For he for forbode me the passage,
I found him cruell in his rage,
And in his hond a great bourdoun,
To him I kneeled low adoun,
Full meeke of port, and simple of chere,
And saied, sir, I am comen here
Onely to aske of you mercy,
It greeueth me full greatly
That euer my life I wrathed you,
But for to amend I am come now,
With all my might, both loud and still,
To doen right at your owne will,
For Loue made me for to do
That I haue trespalled hiderto,
Fro whom I ne may withdraw mine hart,
Yet shall I neuer for ioy ne smart
(What so befall good or ill)
Offend more againe your will,
Leuer I haue endure disease,
Than doe that should you displease.

I You require, and pray that ye
Of me haue mercy and pite,
To stint your ire that greueth so,
That I woll sweare for euermo
To be redressed at your liking
If I trespace in any thing,
Saue that (I pray thee) graunt me
A thing, that may nat warned be,
That I may loue all onely,
None other thing of you aske I:
I shall doen all ywis,
If of your grace ye graunt me this,
And ye may not letten mee,
For well wote ye that loue is free:
And I shall louen such that I will,
Who euer like it well or ill:
And yet ne would I not for all Fraunce
Doe thing to doe you displeasaunce.

Then Daunger fell in his entent
For to forgeue his male talent,
But all his wrath yet at last
He hath released, I praide so fast:
Shortly (he saied) thy request
Is not too mockell dishonest,
Ne I woll not werne it thee,
For yet nothing engreeueth mee:
For though thou loue thus euermore,
To me is neither sokt ne sore:
Loue where that thee list, what rethyeth me,
So ferre fro my Roses be:
Trust not on me for none affaire,
In any time to passe the haie.
Thus hath he graunted my prayere,
Then went I forth without ne were
Unto my friend, and told him all,
Which was right ioyfull of my tale,
(He saied) now goeth well thine affaire,
He shall to thee be debonaire,
Though he afore me was despitous,
He shall hereafter be gracious:
If he were touched on some good veine,
He should yet rewen on thy peine,
Sufker I rede, and no boast make,
Till thou at good mes maist him take.
By suffraunce, and by words soft,
A man may ouercome oft
Him that afore he had in drede,
In bookes soothly as I rede.
Thus hath my freend with great comfort
Auaunced me with high disport,
Which would me good, as much as I:
And then anon full sodainely
I tooke my leaue, and streight I went
Unto the hay, for great talent
I had to seene the fresh bothom,
Wherein lay my saluation,
And Daunger tooke keepe, if that I
Keepe him couenaunt truely,
So sore I drede his manasing,
I durst not breake his bidding,
For least that I were of him shent,
I brake not his commaundement,
For to purchase his good will,
It was for to come there till,
His mercy was too ferre behind
I kept, for I ne might it find.
I complained and sighed sore,
And languished euermore,
For I durst nat ouergo,
Unto the Rose I loued so,
Throughout my deming vtterly,
That he had knowledge certainly:
Then Loue me ladde in such wise,
That in me there was no feintise,
Falshood, ne no trecherie:
And yet he full of villanie,

Of disdaine, and crueltie,
On me ne would haue pitie
His cruell will for to refraine,
Tho I wept alway, and me complaine.

AND while I was in this turment,
Were come of grace, by God sent,
Fraunchise, and with her Pity,
Fulfilde the bothum of bounty,
They go to Daunger anon right
To ferther me with all her might,
And helpe in word and in deed,
For well they saw that it was need.
First of her grace dame Fraunchile
Hath taken of this empzise:
She saied, Daunger great wrong ye do
To wrenche this man so much wo,
Or pinen him so angerly,
It is to you great villany:
I cannot see why ne how
That he hath trespassed againe you,
Saue that he loueth, wherefore ye shold
The more in charitie of him hold:
The force of loue maketh him doe this,
Who would him blame he did amis,
He loueth more than he may do,
His paine is hard, ye may see so:
And Loue in no wise would consent
That ye haue power to repent,
For though that quicke ye would him slo,
Fro Loue his heart may nat go.
Now sweet sir, it is your ease
Him for to anger or disease.
Alas, what may it you auaunce
To doen to him so great greuaunce,
What worshipis it againe him take,
Or on your man a werre make,
Sith he so lowly euery wise
Is ready, as ye list deuise.
If Loue haue caught him in his laas,
You for to bete in euery caas,
And been your subiect at your will,
Should ye therefore willen him ill,
ye should him spare more all out,
Than him that is both proud and stout:
Courtesie would that ye succoure
Hem that been meeke vnder your cure,
His heart is hard that woll not meeke,
When men of meekenesse him beseeke.

THis is certaine, saied Pitie,
We see oft that Humilitie,
Both ire, and also fellonie,
Venquisheth, and also melancholie,
To stond forth in such durelle
This crueltie and wickednesse:
Wherefore I pray you sir Daungere
For to maintaine no lenger here
Such cruell warre againe your man,
As wholly yours as euer he can,
For that ye worchen no more wo
Upon this caitife that languisheth so,
Which woll no more to you trespace,
But put him wholly in your grace,
His offence ne was but lite,
The God of Loue it was to wite,
That he your thrall so greatly is,
And if ye harme him ye doen amis,
For he hath had full hard pennaunce,
Sith that ye reft him thacquaintaunce
Of Bialacoil, his most ioy,
Which all his paines might acoy:
He was before annoyed sore,
But then ye doubled him well more,
For he of blisse hath been full bare,
Sith Bialacoil was fro him fare.
Loue hath to him great distresse,
He hath no need of more durelle:
Voided from him your ire I rede,
Ye may not winnen in this dede,
Maketh Bialacoil repaire againe,
And haueth pitie vpon his paine,
For Fraunchise woll, and I Pite,
That mercifull to him ye be,
And sith that she and I accorde,
Haue vpon him misericorde,
For I you pray, and eke moneste,
Nought to refusen our requeste:
For he is hard and fell of thought,
That for vs two woll doe right nought.
Daunger ne might no more endure,
He mecked him vnto measure.

I woll in no wise, saieth Daungere,
Denie that ye haue asked here:
It were too great vncourtesie,
I woll ye haue the companie
Of Bialacoil, as ye deuise,
I woll him let in no wise.
To Bialacoil then went in hie,
Fraunchise, and saied full curteslie:
Ye haue too long be deignous
Unto this louer, and daungerous
For him to withdraw your presence,
Which hath doe to him great offence,
That ye not would vpon him see,
Wherefore a sorrowfull man is hee:
Shape ye to pay him, and to please,
Of my loue if ye woll haue ease,
Fulfill his will, sith that ye know
Daunger is daunted and brought low
Through helpe of me and of Pite
You dare no more aferde be.
I shall doe right as ye will
Saieth Bialacoil, for it is skill,
Sith Daunger woll that it so be,

Then

Then Fraunchise hath him sent to me.

BIalacoil at the beginning
Salued me in his comming,
No straungenesse was in him seene,
No more than he ne had wrathed been,
As faire semblaunt then shewed he me,
And goodly, as afore ne did he,
And by the hond without dout,
Within the haie right all about,
He lad me with right good chere,
All enuiron the vergere,
That Daungere had me chased fro:
Now haue I leaue ouer all to go,
Now am I raised at my deuise,
Fro hell vnto Paradise.
Thus Bialacoil of gentlenesse
With all his paine and busines,
Hath shewed me onely of grace
The ekters of the swote place.
I saw the Rose when I was nigh,
Was greater woxen, and more high,
Fresh, roddy, and faire of hew,
Of colour euerilche new:
And when I had it long seene,
I saw that through the leaues greene
The Rose spread to spannishing,
To seene it was a goodly thing,
But it ne was so sprede on brede,
That men within might know the sede,
For it couert was and close
Both with the leaues and with the Rose,
The stalke was euen and grene vpright,
It was thereon a goodly sight,
And well the better without wene
For the seed was not sene,
Full faire it sprad the God of blesse,
For such another, as I gesse,
Afore ne was ne more vermaile,
I was abawed for maruaile,
For euer the fairer that it was,
The more I am bounden in loues laas.
Long I abode there sooth to say,
Till Bialacoil I gan to pray,
When that I saw him in no wise
To me warnen his seruise,
That he me would graunt a thing,
Which to remember is well sitting:
This is to saine, that of his grace
He would me yeue leisure and space
To me that was so desirous
To haue a killing precious
Of the goodly fresh Rose,
That so swetly smelleth in my nose,
For if it you displeased nought,
I woll gladly, as I haue sought,
Haue a kisse thereof freely
Of your yeft, for certainely
I woll none haue but by your leue,
So loth me were you for to greue.

HE saied, friend so God me spede,
Of Chastitie I haue such drede,
Thou shouldest not warned be for me,
But I dare not for Chastite:
Againe her dare I not misdo,
For alway bidden she me so
To yeue no louer leaue to kisse,
For who thereto may winnen twisse,
He of the surplus of the praie
May liue in hope to get some day,
For who so killing may attaine,
Of Loues paine hath (sooth to saine)
The best and most auenaunt,
And earnest of the remenaunt.

OF his answere I sighed sore,
I durst assay him tho no more,
I had such drede to greue him ape,
A man should not too much assaye
To chase his friend out of measure,
Nor put his life in auenture,
For no man at the first stroke
Ne may not fell downe an Oke,
Nor of the reisins haue the wine,
Till grapes be ripe and well afine,
Be fore empressed, I you ensure,
And drawen out of the pressure:
But I forpeined wonder strong,
Though that I abode right long
And after the kisse, in paine and wo,
Sith I to kisse desired so:
Till that renning on my distresse,
There come Venus the goddesse
(Which aye werrieth Chastite)
Came of her grace to succour me,
Whose might is know ferre and wide,
For she is mother of Cupide

THe God of Loue, blind as stone,
That helpeth louers many one.
This lady brought in her right hond
Of brenning fire a blasing brond,
Whereof the flame and hote fire
Hath many a Lady in desire
Of Loue brought, and sore hette,
And in her seruice her heart is sette.
This Lady was of good entaile,
Right wonderfull of apparaile,
By her attire so bright and shene,
Men might perceiue well and sene,
She was not of Religioun:
Nor I nill make mentioun
Nor of robe, nor of treasour,
Of broche, neither of her rich attour,
Ne of her girdle about her side,

For

For that I nill not long abide,
But knoweth well, that certainely
She was arraied richely,
Deuoid of pride certaine she was,
To Bialacoil she went apaas,
And to him shortely in a clause
She said: sir, what is the cause
Ye ben of port so daungerous
Unto this louer and dainous,
To graunt him nothing but a kisse
To warne it him ye done amisse,
Sith well ye wot, how that hee
Is Loues seruaunt, as ye may see,
And hath beautie, where through is
Worthy of Loue to haue the blis:
How he is seemely behold and see,
How he is faire, how he is free,
How he is swote and debonaire,
Of age young, lusty, and faire,
There is no Lady so hautaine,
Duchesse, Countesse, ne Chastelaine,
That I nolde hold her vngodly,
For to refuse him vtterly.
His breath is also good and swete,
And eke his lips roddy and mete,
Onely to plaine, and to kisse,
Graunt him a kisse of gentlenisse.
His teeth arne also white and clene,
Me thinketh wrong withouten wene,
If ye now warne him, trusteth me,
To graunt that a kisse haue he,
The lasse ye helpe him that ye hast,
And the more time shall ye wast.
When the flame of the very brond
That Venus brought in her right hond,
Had Bialacoil with his hete smete,
Anone he bad me withouten lete,
Graunt to me the Rose kisse,
Then of my paine I gan to lisse,
And to the Rose anon went I,
And kissed it full faithfully:
There need no man aske if I was blith,
When the sauour soft and lith
Stroke to mine heart without more,
And me allegged of my sore,
So was I full of ioy and blisse,
It is faire such a floure to kisse,
It was so swote and sauerous,
I might not be so anguishous,
That I more glad and iolly be,
When that I remembre me,
Yet euer among soothly to saine,
I suffer note and much paine.

The see may neuer be so still,
That with a little wind at will
Ouerwhelme and tourne also,
As it were wood in wawes go,
After the calme the trouble soone
Note follow, and chaunge as the moone.
Right so fareth Loue, that selde in one
Holdeth his anker, for right anone
When they in ease wene best to liue,
They ben with tempest all fordriue:
Who serueth Loue, can tell of wo,
The stoundmele ioy mote ouergo,
Now he hurteth, and now he cureth,
For selde in o point Loue endureth.

Now is it right me to proceed,
How Shame gan meddle and take heed,
Through whom fell angers I haue hade,
And how the strong wall was made,
And the Castle of brede and length,
That God of Loue wan with his strength,
All this Romance will I set,
And for no thing ne will I let,
So that it liking to her be,
That is the floure of beaute,
For she may best my labour quite,
That I for her Loue shall endite.
Wicked tongue, that the couine
Of euery Louer can deuine
Worst, and addeth more somdele
(For wicked tongue saith neuer wele)
To me ward bare he right great hate,
Espying me early and late,
Till he hath seene the great chere
Of Bialacoil and me ifere:
He might not his tongue withstond
Worse to report than he fond,
He was so full of cursed rage,
It sat him wele of his linage,
For him an irous woman bare,
His tongue was filed sharpe and square,
Poignaunt and right kerung,
And wonder bitter in speaking,
For when that he me gan espy,
He swore (affirming sikerly)
Betweene Bialacoil and me
Was euill acquaintaunce and priue,
He spake thereof so folilie,
That he awaked Ielousie,
Which all afraied in his rising,
When that he heard iangling,
He ran anon as he were wood
To Bialacoil there that he stood,
Which had leuer in this caas
Haue ben at Reines or Amias,
For sote hote in his fellonie,
To him thus said Ielousie:
Why hast thou ben so negligent,
To keepen, when I was absent,
This verger here left in thy ward?
To me thou haddest no regard,
To trust (to thy confusion)

Him thus to whom suspection
I haue right great for it is nede,
It is well shewed by the dede.
Great fault in thee now haue I found,
By God anon thou shalt be bound,
And fast locken in a Toure,
Without refuite or succoure.

FOr Shame too long hath be thee fro,
Ouersoone she was ago,
When thou hast lost both drede and fere,
It seemed well she was not here,
She was busie in no wise,
To keepe thee and chastise,
And for to helpen Chastite
To keepe the Roser, as thinketh me,
For then this boy knaue so boldly,
Ne should nat haue be hardy
In this verge had such game,
Which now me turneth to great shame.

BIalacoil nist what to say,
Full faine he would haue fled away,
For feare haue hid, nere that he
All suddainly tooke him with me:
And when I saw he had so,
This Iealousie take vs two,
I was astonied, and knew no rede,
But fled away for very drede.

Then Shame came forth full simply,
She wend haue trespaced full greatly,
Humble of her port, and made it simple,
Wearing a vaile in stede of wimple,
As Nonnes done in her Abbey,
Because her heart was in affray,
She gan to speake within a throw
To Iealousie, right wonder low.
First of his grace she besought,
And said: sir ne leueth nought
Wicked tongue, that false espie,
Which is so glad to faine and lie,
He hath you made, through flattering,
On Bialacoil a false leasing:
His falsenesse is not now anew,
It is too long that he him knew:
This is not the first daie,
For Wicked tongue hath custome aie,
Young folkes to bewrie,
And false leasings on hem lie.

Yet neuertheless I see among,
That the soigne it is so long
Of Bialacoil, hearts to lure,
In Loues seruice for to endure,
Drawing such folke him to,
That he hath nothing with to do,
But in soothnesse I trow nought,
That Bialacoil had euer in thought
To do trespace or villanie,
But for his mother Curtesie
Hath taught him euer to be
Good of acquaintaunce and priue,
For he loueth none heauinesse,
But mirth and play, and all gladnesse,
He hateth all trechours,
Soleine folke and enuious:
For ye weten how that he
Woll euer glad and ioyfull be
Honestly with folke to play,
I haue be negligent in good fey
To chastise him, therefore now I
Of heart I crie you here mercy,
That I haue ben so recheles
To tamen him wtihouten lees,
Of my folly I me repent,
Now woll I hole set mine entent
To keepe both low and still
Bialacoil to do your will.
Shame, Shame (said Iealousy)
To be bitrashed great drede haue I.
Lecherie hath clombe so hie,
That almost bleared is mine eie,
No wonder is, if that drede haue I,
Ouer all reigneth Lechery,
Whose might groweth night and dey,
Both in Cloyster and in Abbey,
Chastitie is werried ouer all,
Therefore I woll with siker wall
Close both Roses and Rosere,
I haue too long in this manere
Left hem vnclosed wilfully:
Wherefore I am right inwardly
Sorrowfull, and repent me,
But now they shall no lenger be
Unclosed, and yet I drede sore,
I shall repent ferthermore,
For the game goeth all amis,
Counsaile I must new ywis,
I haue too long trusted thee,
But now it shall no lenger bee:
For he may best in euery cost
Deceiue, that men trusten most:
I see well that I am nigh shent,
But if I set my full entent
Remedy to puruey:
Wherefore close I shall the wey
From hem that woll the Rose espie,
And come to wait me villonie,
For in good faith and in trouth
I woll not let for no slouth
To liue the more in siker nesse,
Do make anon a fortresse.
Then close the Roses of good sauour,
In middes shall I make a tour,
To put Bialacoil in prison,

For

For euer I drede me of treason,
I trow I shall him keepe so,
That he shall haue no might to go
About to make companie
To hem that thinke of villanie,
Ne to no such as hath ben here
Afore, and found in him good chere,
Which han assailed him to shend,
And with her trowandise to blend.
A foole is eith to beguile,
But may I liue a little while,
He shall forthinke his faire semblaunt.
And with that word came Drede auaunt,
Which was abashed, and in great fere,
When he wist Jelousie was there,
He was for drede in such affray,
That not a word durst he say,
But quaking stood full still alone
(Till Jelousie his way was gone)
Saue Shame, that him not forsoke,
Both Drede and he full sore quoke,
That at last Drede abraide,
And to his cousin Shame saide.

Shame (he said) in soothfastnesse,
To me it is great heauinesse,
That the noise so ferre is go,
And the slaunder of vs two:
But sith that it is befall,
We may it not againe call,
When once sprung is a fame:
For many a yeare withouten blame
We haue ben, and many a day,
For many an Aprill and many a May
We han passed, not shamed,
Till Jelousie hath vs blamed
Of mistrust and suspection
Causelesse, without encheson:
Go we to Daunger hastely,
And let vs shew him openly,
That he hath not aright wrought,
When that he set not his thought
To keepe better the purprise,
In his doing he is not wise.
He hath to vs do great wrong,
That hath suffred now so long
Bialacoil to haue his will
All his lustes to fulfill:
He must amend it vtterly,
Or els shall he villainously
Exiled be out of this lond:
For he the warre may not withstond
Of Jelousie, nor the greefe,
Sith Bialacoil is at mischeefe.

TO Daunger Shame and Drede anon
The right way ben gon:
The chorle they found hem afore
Ligging vnder an hawthorne.
Vnder his head no pillow was,
But in the stede a trusse of gras:
He slombred, and a nappe he tooke,
Till Shame pitously him shoke,
And great manace on him gan make.
Why sleepest thou when thou should wake
(Od. Shame) thou dost vs villanie,
Who trusteth thee, he doth follie,
To keepe roses or bothoms
When they ben faire in her seasons,
Thou art wore too familiere
Where thou should be straunge of chere,
Stout of thy port, ready to greue,
Thou doest great folly for to leue
Bialacoil here in to call
The ponger man, to shenden vs all.
Though that thou sleepe, we may here
Of Jelousie great noise here,
Art thou now late, rise vp an hye,
And stop soone and deliuerlye
All the gaps of the hay,
Do no fauour I thee pray.
It falleth not thing to thy name,
To make faire semblãt, were thou maist blame.

IF Bialacoil be sweet and free,
Dogged and fell thou shouldest bee,
Froward and outragious iwis,
A chorle chaungeth that curteis is:
This haue I heard oft in saying,
That man may for no daunting
Make a sperhauke of a bosarde,
All men hold thee for musarde,
That debonaire haue founden thee,
It sitteth thee nought curteis to bee,
To doe men pleasaunce or seruise,
In thee it is reereaundise:
Let thy werkes ferre and nere
Be like thy name, which is Daungere.
Then all abashed in shewing,
Anon spake Drede, right thus saying,
And said, Daunger I drede me,
That thou ne wolt besie be
To keepe that thou hast to keepe,
When thou shouldest wake, thou art asleepe:
Thou shalt be greeued certainely,
If thee aspie Jelousy,
Or if he find thee in blame.
He hath to do assailed Shame,
And chased away with great manace
Bialacoil out of this place,
And sweareth shortly that he shall
Enclose him in a sturdy wall,
And all is for thy wickednesse,
For that thee faileth straungenesse,
Thine heart I trow be failed all,
Thou shalt repent in speciall,

If Jelousie the sooth knew,
Thou shalt forthinke, and sore rew.

With that the chorle his clubbe gan shake,
Frouning his eyen gan to make,
And hidous chere, as man in rage,
For ire he brent in his visage,
When that he heard him blamed so,
He said, out of my witte I go,
To be discomfite I haue great wrong,
Certes, I haue now liued too long,
Sith I may not this closer keepe,
All quicke I would be doluen deepe,
If any man shall more repaire
Into this garden for foule or faire,
Mine heart for ire gothe afere,
That I let any entre here,
I haue doe folly now I see,
But now it shall amended be,
Who setteth foot here any more,
Truly he shall repent it sore,
For no man more into this place
Of me to enter shall haue grace,
Leuer I had with swerds twaine,
Throughout mine heart, in euery vaine
Perced to be, with many a wound,
Than slouth should in me be found:
From henceforth by night or day,
I shall defend it if I may
Withouten any exception
Of each manner condition,
And if I it any man graunt,
Holdeth me for recreaunt.

Then Daunger on his feet gan stond,
And hent a burdon in his hond,
Wroth in his ire ne left he nought,
But through the verger he hath sought,
If he might find hole or trace,
Where through that me mote forth by pace,
Or any gappe, he did it close,
That no man might touch a Rose
Of the Roser all about,
He shetteth euery man without.
Thus day by day Daunger is wers,
More wonderfull and more diuers,
And feller eke than euer he was,
For him full oft I sing alas,
For I ne may nought, through his ire
Recouer that I most desire,
Mine heart alas woll brest atwo,
For Bialacoil I wrathed so:
For certainly in euery member
I quake, when I me remember
Of the bothum, which I would
Full ofte a day seene and behold,
And when I thinke vpon the kisse,
And how much ioy and blisse
I had through the sauour swete,
For want of it I grone and grete,
Me thinketh I fele yet in my nose
The sweet sauour of the Rose,
And now I wote that I mote go
So ferre the fresh floures fro,
To me full welcome were the death,
Absence thereof (alas) me sleath,
For whylome with this Rose, alas,
I touched nose, mouth, and face,
But now the death I must abide,
But Loue consent another tide,
That ones I touch may and kisse,
I trow my paine shall neuer lisse,
Thereon is all my couetise,
Which brent my heart in many wise,
Now shall repaire againe sighing,
Long watch on nights, and no sleeping,
Thought in wishing, turment, and wo,
With many a turning to and fro,
That halfe my paine I cannot tell,
For I am fallen into hell,
From paradise and wealth, the more
My turment greueth more and more,
Annoyeth now the bitternesse,
That I tofore ne haue felt sweetnesse,
And Wicked tongue, through his falshede,
Causeth all my wo and drede,
On me he lieth a pitous charge,
Because his tongue was too large.

Now it is time shortly that I
Tell you something of Jelousie,
That was in great suspection,
About him left he no mason,
That stone could lay, ne querrour,
He hired hem to make a tour:
And first the Roses for to keepe,
About hem made he a ditch deepe,
Right wonder large, and also brode,
Upon the which also stode
Of squared stone a sturdy wall,
Which on a cragge was founded all,
And right great thicknesse eke it bare,
About it was founded square
An hundred fadome on euery side,
It was all liche long and wide,
Least any time it were assailed,
Full well about it was battailed,
And round enuiron eke were set
Full many a rich and faire tournet,
At euery corner of this wall
Was set a tour full principall,
And eueriche had without fable
A portcullise defensable
To keepe off enemies, and to greue,
That there her force would preue.
And eke amidde this purprise

Was made a tour of great maistrise,
A fairer saugh no man with sight,
Large and wide, and of great might,
They dradde none assaut,
Of ginne, gonne, nor skaffaut,
The tempzure of the morter
Was made of liquour wonder dere,
Of quicke lime persaunt and egre,
The which was tempzed with vinegre.
The stone was hard of Adamaunt,
Whereof they made the foundemaunt,
The toure was round made in compas,
In all this world no richer was,
Ne better ordained therewithall,
About the tour was made a wall,
So that betwixt that and the tour,
Roses were set of sweet sauour,
With many Roses that they bere,
And eke within the castle were
Springolds, Gonnes, Bowes, and Archers,
And eke about at corners
Ywen seine ouer the wall stond
Great engins, who were nere hond,
And in the kernels here and there,
Of arblasters great plentie were,
None armour might her stroke withstond,
It were folly to preache to hond,
Without the ditch were listes made,
With wall battailed large and brade,
For men and horse should not attaine
Too nigh the diche ouer the plaine,
Thus Ielousie hath enuiron,
Sette about his garnison
With wals round, and diche deepe,
Onely the Roser for to keepe,
And Daunger early and late
The keyes kept of the vtter gate,
The which opened toward the east,
And he had with him at least
Thirtie seruaunts echone by name.
That other gate kept Shame,
Which opened, as it was couth,
Toward the part of the South,
Sergeaunts assigned were her to
Full many, her will for to do.
Then Drede had in her Baillie
The keeping of the constablerie,
Toward the North I understond,
That opened vpon the left hond,
The which for nothing may be sure,
But if she doe busie cure
Early on morow and also late,
Strongly to shette and barre the gate:
Of euery thing that she may see,
Drede is aferde, where so she bee,
For with a puffe of little wind,
Drede is astonied in her mind,
Therefore for stealing of the Rose,
I rede her nat the pate vnclose,
A foules flight would make her flee,
And eke a shaddow if she it see.

When Wicked tongue full of enuie,
With souldiers of Normandie,
As he that causeth all debate,
Was keeper of the fourth gate,
And also to the tother three,
He went full oft for to see,
When his lotte was to walke a night,
His instruments would he dight,
For to blow and make soune,
Ofter than he hath enchesoune,
And walken oft vpon the wall,
Corners and wicketts ouer all,
Full narrow searchen and espie,
Though he nought fond, yet would he lie
Discordaunt euer fro armonie,
And dissoned from melodie,
Controue he would, and foule faile,
With hornepipes of Cornewaile,
In notes made he discordaunce,
And in his musicke with mischaunce,
He would seine with notes new,
That he fond no woman trew, 78
Ne that he saw neuer in his life,
Unto her husbond a trew wife:
Ne none so full of honeste,
That she nill laugh and merry be,
When that she heareth or may espie
A man speaken of Lecherie.
Eueriche of hem hath some vice,
One is dishonest, another is nice,
If one be full of villanie,
Another hath a licorous eie,
If one be full of wantonnesse,
Another is a chidersse.

Thus Wicked tong, God yeue him shame,
Can put hem euerichone in blame,
Without desert and causeless,
He lieth, though they ben guiltless,
I haue pity to seene the sorrow,
That waketh both euen and morrow,
To innocents doth such greuaunce,
I pray God yeue him euill chaunce,
That he euer so busie is,
Of any woman to seine amis.
Eke Ielousie God confound,
That hath made a toure so round,
And made about a garison,
To sette Bialacoil in prison,
The which is shette there in the tour,
Full long to hold there soiour,
There for liue in pennaunce,
And for to doe him more greuaunce,
Which hath ordained Ielousie,

In old weke for to espie
The manner of his gouernaunce,
The which Deuill in her enfaunce
Had learned of Loues art,
And of his plais tooke her part,
She was except in his seruise,
She knew each wrenche and euery gise
Of Loue, and euery wile,
It was hard her to beguile.
Of Bialacoil she tooke ayehede,
That euer he liueth in wo and drede,
He kept him coy and eke priue,
Least in him she had see
Any folly countenaunce,
For she knew all the old daunce.
And after this, when Jelousie
Had Bialacoil in his Baillie,
And shette him vp that was so free,
For sure of him he would bee:
He trusteth sore in his castell,
The strong werke him liketh well,
He dradde nat that no glotons
Should steale his Roses or bothoms,
The Roses weren allured all
Defenced with the strong wall,
Now Jealousie full well may be
Of drede deuoid in liberte,
Whether that he sleepe or wake,
For of his Roses may none be take.

But I (alas) now mourne shall,
Because I was without the wall,
Full much dole and mone I made,
Who had wist what wo I hade,
I trow he would haue had pite,
Loue too deare had sold me
The good that of his loue had I,
I went about it all queintly,
But now through doubling of my paine
I see he woll it sell againe,
And me a new bargaine lete,
The which all out the more is dere,
For the sollace that I haue lorne,
Than I had it neuer afore,
Certaine I am full like indeed
To him that cast in earth his seed,
And hath top of the new springing,
When it greeneth in the ginning,
And is also faire and fresh of flour,
Lustie to seene, swote of odour,
But ere he it in his sheues shere,
May fall a weather that shall it dere,
And make it to fade and fall,
The stalke, the greene, and floures all,
That to the tillers is forgone,
The hope that he had too soone:
I drede certaine that so fare I,
For hope and trauaile likerly
Ben me berakt all with a storme,
The floure nill seden of my corne,
For Loue hath so auaunced me,
When I began my priuite,
To Bialacoil all for to tell,
Whom I ne found froward ne fell,
But tooke agree all whole my play,
But Loue is of so hard assay,
That all at ones he reued me,
When I weent best abouen to haue be,
It is of Loue, as of Fortune,
That chaungeth oft, and nill continue,
Which whylome woll of folke smile,
And glombe on hem another while,
Now friend, now foe, thalt her tele,
For a twinckling tourneth her wheele:
She can writhe her head away,
This is the concourse of her play,
She can areise that doeth mourne,
And whirle adoune, and ouertourne
Who sitteth highest, but as her lust,
A foole is he that woll her trust,
For it is I that am come doun
Through charge and reuolutioun,
Sith Bialacoil mote fro me twin,
Shette in her prison ponde within,
His absence at mine heart I fele,
For all my ioy and all mine hele
Was in him, and in the Rose,
That but you will, which him doeth close,
Open, that I may him see,
Loue woll not that I cured bee
Of the paines that I endure,
Nor of my cruell auenture.

Ah, Bialacoil mine owne dere,
Though thou be now a prisonere,
Keepe at least thine heart to me,
And suffer not that it daunted be,
Ne let not ielousie in his rage,
Putten thine heart in no seruage,
Although he chastice thee without,
And make thy bodie vnto him lout
Haue heart as hard as Diamaunt,
Stedfast, and naught pliaunt:
In prison though thy bodie bee
At large keepe thine heart free,
A true heart will not plie
For no mannace that it may drie.
If Jelousie doeth thee paine,
Quite him his while thus againe,
To benge thee at least in thought.
If other way thou maiest nought.
And in this wise subtelly
Worch, and winne the maistrie.
But yet I am in great affray,
Least thou doe nat as I say,
I drede thou canst me great maugre,

That thou empriſoned art for me,
But that nat for my treſpas,
For through me neuer diſcouered was
Yet thing that ought be ſecre:
Well more annoy is in me,
Than is in thee of this miſchaunce,
For I endure more hard pennaunce
Than any can ſaine or thinke,
That for the ſorrow almoſt I ſinke,
When I remember me of my wo,
Full nigh out of my witte I go.
Inward mine heart I feele blede,
For comfortleſſe the death I drede,
Owe I nat well to haue diſtreſſe,
When falſe, through her wickedneſſe,
And traitours, that arne enuious,
To noien me be ſo coragious.
Ah, Bialacoil full well I ſee,
That they hem ſhape to deceiue thee,
To make thee buxum to her law,
And with her cord thee to draw
Where ſo hem luſt, right at her will,
I drede they haue thee brought theretill:
Without comfort, thought me ſleath,
This game would bring me to my death.
For if your good will I leſe,
I mote be dead, I may not cheſe,
And if that thou forgete me,
Mine heart ſhall neuer in liking be,
Nor elſwhere find ſollace,
If I be put out of your grace,
As it ſhall neuer ben I hope,
Then ſhould I fall in wanhope.
Alas, in wanhope, nay parde,
For I will neuer diſpaired be,
If hope me faile, then am I
Ungracious and unworthy,
In hope I will comforted be,
For Loue, when he betaught her me,
Saied, that Hope where ſo I go,
Should aye be relees to my wo.
But what and ſhe my bales bete,
And be to me curteis and ſwete,
She is in nothing full certaine.
Louers ſhe put in full great paine,
And maketh hem with wo to dele,
Her faire beheſte deceiueth fele,
For ſhe will behote likerly,
And failen after utterly.
Ah, that is a full noyous thing,
For many a louer in louing
Hangeth upon her, and truſteth faſt,
Which leſe her trauaile at the laſt.
Of thing to commen ſhe wot right nought,
Therefore if it be wiſely ſought,
Her counſaile follie is to take,
For many times, when ſhe will make
A full good ſillogiſme, I drede,
That afterward there ſhall inde
Follow an euill concluſion,
This put me in confuſion,
For many times I haue it ſeene,
That many haue beguiled beene,
For truſt that they haue ſet in Hope,
Which fell hem afterward a ſlope.

But natheleſſe yet gladly ſhe would,
That he that will him with her hold,
Had all times her purpoſe clere,
Without deceit any where,
That ſhe deſireth likerly,
When I her blamed, I did folly,
But what auaileth her good will,
When ſhe ne may ſtaunch my ſtound ill,
That helpeth little that ſhe may do,
Or take beheſt unto my wo:
And heſte certaine in no wiſe,
Without ikete is not to preiſe.

When heſte and deed aſunder vary,
They doen a great contrary:
Thus am I poſted up and doun
With dole, thought, and confuſioun,
Of my diſeaſe there is no number,
Daunger and Shame me encumber,
Drede alſo, and Jelouſie,
And wicked Tongue full of enuie,
Of which the ſharpe and cruell ire
Full oft me put in great martire,
They haue my ioy fully let,
Sith Bialacoil they haue beſhet
Fro me in priſon wickedly,
Whom I loue ſo entierly,
That it will my bane bee,
But I the ſooner may him ſee.
And yet moreouer worſt of all,
There is ſet to keepe, foule her befall,
A Rimpled becke ferre ronne in rage,
Frouning and yellow in her viſage,
Which in await lieth day and night,
That none of him may haue a ſight.

Now mote my ſorrow enforced be,
Full ſooth it is, that Loue yaf me
Three wonder yefts of his grace,
Which I haue lorne now in this place,
Sith they ne may without drede
Helpen but little, who taketh hede:
For here auaileth no Sweet thought,
And Sweet ſpeech helpeth right nought,
The third was called Sweet Looking,
That now is lorne without leſing.

Yefts were faire, but nat for thy
They helpe me but ſimply,
But Bialacoil looſed bee

To gone at large and to be free,
For him my life lieth all in dout,
But if he come the rather out.
Alas I trow it woll nat beene,
For how should I euermore him seene?
He may nat out, and that is wrong,
Because the toure is so strong,
How should he out, or by whose prowesse
Of so strong a forteresse?
By me certaine it nill be do,
God wote I haue no wit thereto,
But well I wote I was in rage,
When I to Loue did homage,
Who was the cause (in soothfastnesse)
But her selfe dame Idlenesse?
Which me conueide through faire praiere
To enter into that faire bergere:
She was to blame me to leue,
The which now doeth me sore greue,
A fooles word is nought to trow,
Ne worth an apple for to low,
Men should hem snibbe bitterly,
At prime temps of his folly:
I was a foole, and she me leued,
Through whom I am right nought releued,
She accomplished all my will,
That now me greueth wonder ill.

REason me saied what should fall,
A foole my selfe I may well call,
That loue aside I had not laied,
And trowed that dame Reason saied.
Reason had both skill and right,
When she me blamed with all her might
To meddle of Loue, that hath me shent,
But certaine now I woll repent.

AND should I repent? May parde,
A false traitour then should I be,
The deuils engins would me take,
If I loue would forsake,
Or Bialacoil falsly betray,
Should I at mischeefe hate him? nay,
Sith he now for his courtesie
Is in prison of Jelousie,
Courtesie certaine did he me,
So much, that it may not yolden be,
When he the haie passen me lete,
To kisse the Rose, faire and swete,
Should I therefore conne him maugre,
Nay certainely, it shall nat be,
For Loue shall neuer (yeue God will)
Here of me, through word or will,
Offence or complaint more or lesse,
Neither of Hope nor Idlenesse:
For certes, it were wrong that I
Hated hem for her courtesie.
There is not els, but suffer and thinke,
And waken when I should winke,
Abide in hope, till loue through chaunce
Send me succour or allegeaunce,
Expectaunt aye till I may mete,
To getten mercie of that swete.

Whilome I thinke how Loue to mee
Saied he would take at gree
My seruice, if vnpatience
Caused me to doen offence:
He saied, in thanke I shall it take,
And high maister eke thee make,
If wickednesse ne reue it thee,
But soone I trow that shall nat bee.
These were his words by and by,
It seemed he loued me truely.
Now is there not but serue him wele,
If that I thinke his thanke to fele,
My good, mine harme, lithe hole in me,
In Loue may no defaut be,
For true Loue ne failed neuer man:
Soothly the faute mote needs than,
As God forbide, be found in me,
And how it commeth, I cannot see.
Now let it gone as it may go,
Whether Loue woll succour me or slo,
He may doe hole on me his will,
I am so fore bound him till,
From his seruice I may not flene,
For life and death withouten wene
Is in his hand, I may nat chese,
He may me doe both winne and lese,
And sith so sore he doth me greue,
Yet if my lust he would acheue,
To Bialacoil goodly to be,
I yeue no force what fell on me:
For though I die, as I mote nede,
I pray Loue of his goodlyhede,
To Bialacoil doe gentienesse,
For whom I liue in such distresse,
That I mote dien for pennaunce,
But first, without repentaunce,
I woll me confesse in good entent,
And make in hast my Testament,
As louers doen that feelen smart:
To Bialacoil leaue I mine heart
All hole, without departing,
Or doublenesse of repenting.

¶ Coment Raison vient a Lamant.

THus as I made my passage
In complaint, and in cruell rage,
And I not where to find a leche,
That couth vnto mine helping eche
Suddainely againe comen doun,
Out of her toure I saw Reasoun,
Discreet and wise, and full pleasaunt,

And of her port full auenaunt,
The right way she tooke to me,
Which stood in great perplexite,
That was polled in euery side,
That I nist where I might abide,
Till she demurely sad of chere
Saied to me as she came nere.
Mine owne friend, art thou greued,
How is this quarrell yet atcheued
Of loues side? Anone me tell,
Hast thou not yet of Loue thy fill?
Art thou nat wearie of thy seruice?
That thee hath in such wise.
What ioy hast thou in thy louing?
Is it sweet or bitter thing.
Canst thou yet chese, let me see
What best thy succour might bee.

Thou seruest a full noble Lord,
That maketh thee thrall for thy reward,
Which aye reneweth thy tourment,
With folly so he hath thee blent,
Thou fell in mischeefe thilke day,
When thou diddest the sooth to say
Obeisaunce and eke homage
Thou wroughtest nothing as the sage,
When thou became his liege man,
Thou diddest a great follie than,
Thou wistest nat what fell thereto,
With what Lord thou haddest to do,
If thou haddest him well know
Thou haddest nought be brought so low,
For if thou wist what it were,
Thou noldest serue him halfe a yere,
Nat a weeke, nor halfe a day,
Ne yet an houre without delay,
Ne neuer iloued paramours,
His Lordship is so full of shours,
Knowest him ought?
Lamaunt. Ye dame parde.
Raison. Nay, nay. Lamaunt. Yes I.
Raison. Wherefore let see.
Lamaunt. Of that he saied I should be
Glad to haue such Lord as (he)
And maister of such seignorie.
Raison. Knowest him no more?
Lamaunt. Nay certes, I
Saue that he take me rules there,
And went his way I nist where,
And I abode bound in ballaunce,
Lo there a noble cognisaunce.

¶ Raison.

But I woll that thou know him now
Ginning and end, sith that thou
Art so anguishous and mate,
Disfigured out of astate,
There may no wreche haue more of wo,
Ne caitife none endure so,
It were to euery man sitting,
Of his Lord haue knowledging:
For if thou knew him out of dour,
Lightly thou shouldest scapen out
Of thy prison that marreth thee.

¶ Lamaunt.

Yea dame sith my Lord is hee,
And I his man made with mine hond,
I would right faine vnderstond
To know of what kind he be,
If any would enforme me.

¶ Raison.

I would (saied Reason) thee lere,
Sith thou to learne hast such desire,
And shew thee withouten fable
A thing that is not demonstrable,
Thou shalt withouten science,
And know withouten experience
The thing that may not knowen bee,
Ne wist ne shewed in no degree,
Thou maiest the sooth of it not witten,
Though in thee it were written,
Thou shalt not know thereof more,
While thou art ruled by his lore,
But vnto him that loue will flie,
The knotte may vnlosed be,
Which hath to thee, as it is found,
So long to knitte and not vnbound,
Now set well thine entention,
To heare of Loue the description.

Loue it is an hatefull pees,
A free acquitaunce without reles,
And thrugh the fret full of falshede,
A sikernesse all set in drede,
In heart is a despairing hope,
And full of hope it is wanhope,
Wise woodnesse, and void Reason,
A sweet perill in to droun,
An heauie burthen light to beare,
A wicked wawe away to weare.
It is Caribdes perillous,
Dilagreeable and gracious,
It is discordaunce that can accord,
And accordaunce to discord,
It is conning without science,
Wisedome without sapience,
Witte without discretion,
Hauoire without possession,
It is like heale and hole sickenesse,
A trust drowned and dronkennesse,
And healthy full of maladie,

And Charitie full of enuie,
And anger full of aboundaunce,
And a greedie suffisaunce,
Delight right full of heauinesse,
And dreried full of gladnesse,
Bitter sweetnesse and sweet errour,
Right euill sauoured good sauour,
Sin that pardon hath within,
And pardon spotted without sin,
A paine also it is ioyous,
And fellonie right pitous,
Also play that selde is stable,
And stedfast right meuable,
A strength weiked to stond vpright,
And feeblenesse full of might,
Witte vnaused, sage follie,
And ioy full of tourmentrie,
A laughter it is weeping ate,
Rest that trauaileth night and daie,
Also a sweete hell it is,
And a sorowfull Paradis,
A pleasaunt gaile and easie prisoun,
And full of Frost Summer seasoun,
Prime temps full of Frostes white,
And Maie deuoid of all delite,
With leer braunches, blossoms vngrene,
And new fruit filled with Winter tene,
It is a flowe may nat forbeare,
Ragges ribaned with gold to weare:
For also well woll loue be sette
Under ragges as rich rotchette,
And eke as well by amorettes
In mourning blacke, as bright burnettes,
For none is of so mokell prise,
Ne no man founden so wise,
Ne none so high of parage,
Ne no manne found of witte so sage,
No man so hardie ne so wight,
Ne no man of so mokell might,
None so fulfilled of bounte,
That he with Loue may daunted be,
All the world holdeth this way,
Loue maketh all to gone miswaye,
But it be they of euill life,
Whom Genius curseth man and wife,
That wrongly werke againe nature,
None such I loue, ne haue no cure
Of such as loues seruaunts beene,
And woll nat by my counsaile fleene,
For I ne prise that louing,
Wherethrough man at the last ending
Shall call hem wretches full of wo,
Loue greueth hem and shendeth so,
But if thou wolt well loue eschew,
For to escape out of his mew,
And make all whole the sorrow to slake
No better counsaile maiest thou take,
Than thinke to fleen well iwis,
May nought helpe els: for wit thou this,
If thou flye it, it shall flye thee,
Follow it, and followen shall it thee.

¶ Lamaunt.

WHen I had heard Reason sain,
Which had spilt her speech in vain:
Dame (sayd I) I dare well say
Of this auaunt me well I may
That from your schoole so deuiaunt
I am, that neuer the more auaunt.
Right nought am I through your doctrine,
I dull vnder your discipline,
I wote no more than wist euer
To me so contrarie and so fer
Is euerie thing that ye me lere,
And yet I can it all by partuere:
Mine heart foyeteth thereof right nought,
It is so writen in my thought,
And deepe grauen it is so tender
That all by heart I can it render,
And rede it ouer communely,
But to my selfe lewdest am I.

BUt sith ye Loue discriuen so
And lacke and preise it both two,
Defineth it into this Letter,
That I may thinke on it the better:
For I heard neuer defined here,
And wilfully I would it lere.
If Loue be searched well and sought
It is a sickenesse of the thought
Annexed and knedde betwixt tweine,
With male and female with o cheine,
So freely that bindeth, that they nill twinne,
Whether so thereof they lese or winne,
The roote springeth through hot brenning
Into disordinate desiring,
For to kissen and embrace,
And at her lust them to solace,
Of other thing loue retcheth nought
But setteth her heart and all her thought,
More for delectatioun,
Than any procreatioun
Of other fruit by engendrure:
Which loue, to God is not pleasure,
For of her bodie fruit to get
They yeue no force, they are so set
Upon delight to play in fere.
And some haue also this manere,
To fainen hem for Loue seke.
Such loue I preise not at a leke,
For Paramours they doe but faine,
To loue truely they disdaine,
They falsen Ladies traitorously,
And sweren hem othes vtterly,
With many a leasing, and many a fable,

And all they finden deceiuable.
And when they han her lust getten
The hote ernes they all forgetten,
Women the harme buyen full sore:
But men thus thinken euermore,
The lasse harme is, so mote I thee,
Deceiue them, than deceiued be.
And namely where they ne may
Find none other meane way.
For I wote well in soothfastnesse,
That who doeth now his busynesse
With any woman for to dele,
For any lust that he may fele,
But if it be for engendrure,
He doth trespasse I you ensure:
For he should setten all his will
To getten a likely thing him till,
And to sustaine, if he might,
And keepe forth by kindes right
His owne likenesse and semblable:
For because all is corrumpable
And faile should succession
Ne were there generation,
Our sectes sterne for to saue,
When father or mother arne in graue,
Her children should, when they been dead,
Full diligent been in her stead
To vse that worke on such a wise,
That one may through another rise.
Therefore set kinde therein delight,
For men therein should hem delight,
And of that deed be not erke,
But oft sithes haunt that werke:
For none would draw thereof a draught
Ne were delight, which hath hem caught,
This had subtil dame Nature:
For none goeth right I thee ensure
Ne hath entent hoole ne parfite,
For her desire is for delite,
The which forthened encrease, and eke
The play of Loue, for oft seeke
And thrall hem selfe they be so nice
Unto the Prince of euerie vice:
For of each sinne it is the roote
Unlefull lust, though it be soote,
And of all euill the racine,
As Tullius can determine,
Which in his time was full sage,
In a booke he made of age,
Where that more he praiseth Elde
Though he be crooked and vnwelde,
And more of commendation,
Then Youth in his description:
For Youth set both man and wife
In all perill of soule and life.
And perill is, but men haue grace,
The perill of Youth for to pace,
Without any death or distresse,
It is so full of wildnesse
So oft it doeth shame and domage
To him or to his linage,
It leadeth man, now vp now doun
In mokell dissolution,
And maketh him loue euill companie,
And lead his life distrublie,
And halt him payd with none estate
Within himselfe is such debate,
He chaungeth purpose and entent,
And palt into some couent,
To liuen after her empryse,
And leeseth freedome and fraunchise,
That nature in him had set,
The which againe he may not get,
If he there make his mansion,
For to abide profession,
Though for a time his heart absent
It may not faile, he shall repent,
And eke abide thilke day,
To leaue his abite, and gone his way,
And leaseth his worship and his name,
And dare not come againe for shame,
But all his life he doth so mourne,
Because he dare not home retourne,
Freedome of kinde so lost hath he
That neuer may recured be,
But that if God him graunt grace
That he may, er he hence pace,
Conteine vnder obedience
Through the vertue of patience,
For Youth set man in all follie,
In vnthrift and in ribaudrie,
In lecherie, and in outrage,
So oft it chaungeth of courage.
Youth ginneth oft such bargaine,
That may not end without paine.
In great perill is set Youth hede
Delight so doeth his bridell lede,
Delight this hangeth, drede thee nought,
Both mannes bodie and his thought,
Onely through Youthes chambere,
That to doen euill is customere,
And of naught elle taketh hede,
But onely folkes for to lede
Into disport and wildenesse,
So is froward from sadnesse,
But Elde draweth hem therefro,
Who wote it not, he may well go,
And mo of them, that now arne old,
That whilom Youth had in hold,
Which yet remembreth of tender age
How it him brought in many a rage,
And many a follie therein wrought:
But now that Elde hath him through sought
They repent hem of her follie,
That Youth hem put in icopardie,
In perill and in much woe,

And made hem oft amisse to doe,
And sewen euill companie
Riot and aduoutrie.

But Elde gan againe restraine
From such folly, and refraine
And set men by her ordinaunce
In good rule and gouernaunce,
But euil she spendeth her seruise,
For no man woll her loue, neither preise,
She is hated, this wote I wele,
Her acquaintance would no man fele,
Ne han of Elde companie,
Men hate to be of her alie,
For no man would becommen old,
Ne die, when he is young and bold,
And Elde maruaileth right greatly,
When they remember hem inwardly
Of many a perillous empryse
Which that they wrought in sundry wise,
How euer they might without blame
Escape away without shame,
In youth without domage
Or repryfe of her linage,
Losse of member, shedding of blood,
Perill of death, or losse of good,
Wost thou nat where youth abit,
That men so preisen in her wit?
With Delight she hait soiour,
For both they dwellen in o tour,
As long as youth is in season,
They dwellen in one mansion:
Delight, of Youth woll haue seruise
To doe what so he woll deuise,
And Youth is readie euermore
For to obey, for smert or sore,
Unto Delight, and him to yeue
Her seruice, while that she may liue.

Where Elde abitte, I woll thee tell
Shortly, and no while dwell,
For thider behoueth thee to go
If death in youth thee not slo:
Of this iourney thou mayst not faile,
With her labour and trauaile,
Lodged been with sorrow and wo,
That neuer out of her Court go:
Paine and distresse, sickenesse, and ire,
And melancholy that angrie sire,
Ben of her paleis senatours,
Groning and grutching, her herbegeours,
The day and night her to tourment
With eruell death they her present,
And tellen her erlich and late
That death stondeth armed at her gate:
Then bring they to her remembraunce
The folly deedes of her enfaunce,
Which causen her to mourne in wo
That youth hath her beguiled so
Which sodainly away is hasted,
She weeped the time that she hath wasted,
Complayning of the preterite,
And the present, that nat abitte,
And of her old vanitee
That but afore her she may see,
In the future some succour,
To leggen her of her dolour
To graunt her time of repentaunce,
For her sinnes to doe penaunce,
And at the last so her gouerne
To winne the ioy that is eterne,
Fro which goe backeward youth he made
In vanitie to drowne and wade,
For present time abideth nought,
It is more swift than any thought,
So little while it doth endure
That there nis compt ne measure.
But how that euer the game go
Who list to loue ioy and mirth also
Of loue, be it he or she,
Hie or low who it be,
In fruite they should hem delite,
Her part they may not else quite,
To saue hem selfe in honeste,
And yet full many one I see
Of women, soothly for to saine,
That desire and would faine
The play of Loue, they be so wilde
And not couet to goe with childe:
And if with childe they be perchaunce
They woll it hold a great mischaunce,
But whatsoeuer woe they fele
They woll not plaine, but concele,
But if it be any foole or nice,
In whome that shame hath no iustice,
For to Delight eachone they draw,
That haunt this worke both hie and law,
Sauc such that arne worth right nought,
That for money woll be bought,
Such loue I preise in no wise,
When it is giuen for couetise
I praise no woman, though she be wood
That peueth her selfe for any good:
For little should a man tell
Of her, that will her bodie sell,
Be she maide, be she wife,
That quicke woll sell her by her life,
How faire there that euer she make,
He is a wretch I vndertake
That loued such one, for sweete or soure,
Though she him called her Paramoure,
And laugheth on him, and maketh him feast,
For certainly no such beast
To be loued is not worthy
Or beare the name of Dury,
None should her please, but he wer wood,

That

That woll dispoile him of his good:
Yet natheleſſe I woll not say
That she for solace and for play,
Way a Jewell or other thing
Take of her Loues free yeuing:
But that she aske in no wise,
For drede of shame, or couetise.
And she of hers may him certaine
Without slaunder yeuen againe,
And ioyne her hearts togither so
In Loue, and take and yeue also.
Trow not that I will hem twinne,
When in her loue there is no sinne,
I woll that they together go,
And done all that they han ado,
As curtes should and debonaire,
And in her loue beren hem faire,
Without vice, both he and she,
So that alway in honeste,
Fro folly loue to keepe hem clere
That brenneth herts with his fere,
And that her loue in any wise,
Be deuoide of Couetise.
☞ Good loue should engendred be
Of true heart, iust, and secree,
And not of such as set her thought
To haue her lust, and else nought:
So are they caught in Loues lace,
Truely for bodyly solace,
Fleshly delight is so present
With thee, that set all thine entent,
Without more, what should I glose,
For to get and haue the Rose,
Which maketh thee so mate and wood
That thou desirest none other good,
But thou art not an inch the nerre,
But euer abidest in sorrow and werre,
As in thy face it is seene,
It maketh thee both pale and leene,
Thy might, thy vertue goeth away:
☞ A sorrie guest (in good fay)
Thou harbourest in thine Inne
The god of Loue when thou let inne:
Wherefore I read thou shette him out,
Or he shall greue thee out of dout,
For to thy profite it woll tourne,
If he no more with thee soiourne.
In great mischiefe and sorrow sonken,
Ben hearts, that of Loue arne dronken,
As thou peraunture knowen shall,
When thou hast lost the time all,
And ispent thy thought in idlenesse,
In wast, and wofull lustinesse:
If thou maiest liue the time to see
Of loue for to deliuered bee,
Thy time thou shalt beweepe sore
The which neuer thou mayest restore:
☞ For time lost, as men may see,
For nothing may recouered be,
And if thou scape, yet at last,
Fro loue that hath thee so fast
Knitte and bounden in his lace,
Certaine I hold it but a grace,
For many one as it is seine
Haue lost, and spent also in beine
In his seruice without succour
Bodie and soule, good, and treasour,
Wit, and strength, and eke richesse,
Of which they had neuer redresse.

¶ Lamant.

THus taught and preached hath Reason,
But Loue spilt her Sermon,
That was so imped in my thought,
That her doctrine I set at nought,
And yet ne sayd she neuer a dele,
That I ne vnderstood it wele,
Word by word the matter all,
But vnto Loue I was so thrall,
Which calleth ouer all his prate,
He chaseth so my thought aie,
And holdeth mine heart vnder his sele,
As trustie and true as any stele:
So that no deuotion
Ne had I in the Sermon
Of dame Reason, ne of her rede
I tooke no soiour in mine hede,
For all pede out at one ere
That in that other she did lere,
Fully on me she lost her lore
Her speech me greeued wonder sore.

THat vnto her for ire I sayd,
For anger, as I did abraid:
Dame, and is it your will algate,
That I not Loue, but that I hate
All men, as ye me teach,
For if I doe after your speach,
Sith that you seine Loue is not good,
Then must I needs say with moode
If I it leue, in hatred aie
Liuen, and voide Loue awaie,
From me a sinfull wretch,
Hated of all that tetch,
I may not go none other gate,
For either must I loue or hate,
And if I hate men of new,
More than Loue it woll me rew
As by your preching seemeth me
For Loue nothing ne praiseth thee
Ye yeue good counsaile sikerly
That precheth me all day, that I
Should not loues lore alowe,
He were a foole woulde you not trowe.
In Speech also ye han me taught,

Another Loue that knowne is naught
Which I haue heard you not repreue,
To loue each other by your leue,
If ye would diffine it me,
I would gladly here to see,
At the leaſt if I may lere
Of ſundrie Loue the manere.

¶ Raiſon.

CErtes friend, a foole art thou
When that thou nothing wilt allow
That I for thy profite ſay:
Yet woll I ſay thee more in fay.
For I am readie at the leeſt,
To accompliſh thy requeſt,
But I not where it woll auaile,
In vaine perauenture I ſhall trauaile:
Loue there is in ſundrie wiſe,
As I ſhall thee here deuiſe.
For ſome Loue leſull is and good,
I meane not that which maketh thee wood,
And bringeth thee in many a fitte,
And rauiſheth fro thee all thy witte,
It is ſo marualous and queint,
With ſuch loue be no more aquaint.

¶ Comment Raiſon diffiniſt Aunſete.

LOue of frendſhip alſo there is
Which maketh no man done amis,
Of will knitte betwixt two,
That woll not breake for wele ne wo,
Which long is likely to continue,
When will and goods been in commune,
Grounded by Gods ordinaunce,
Hoole without diſcordaunce,
With hem holding commaunce
Of all her good in charite,
That there be none exceptioun,
Through chaunging of ententioun,
That each helpe other at her need,
And wiſely hele both word and dede,
True of meaning deuoide of Slouth,
For wit is nought without Trouth:
So that the tone dare all his thought
Saine to his friend, and ſpare nought,
As to himſelfe without dreding,
To be diſcouered by wreiyng,
For glad is that coniunction,
When there is none ſuſpection,
Whom they would proue
That true and perfite weren in Loue,
For no man may be amiable:
But if he be ſo firme and ſtable,
That fortune change him not ne blinde,
But that his friend alway him finde,
Both poore and rich in o ſtate:
For if his friend through any gate,
Woll complaine of his powerte,
He ſhould not bide ſo long, till he
Of his helping him require,
For good deed done through praiere
Is ſold and bought too deere iwis
To heart that of great valour is.
For heart fulfilled of gentilneſſe,
Can euill demeane his diſtreſſe.
And man that worthy is of name,
To aſken often hath great ſhame.
A good man brenneth in his thought,
For ſhame when he aſketh ought,
He hath great thought, and dreadeth ate
For his diſeaſe when he ſhall praie
His friend, leaſt that he warned be
Till that he preue his ſtabilitie:
But when that he hath founden one
That truſtie is and true as ſtone,
And aſſayed him at all,
And found him ſtedfaſt as a wall,
And of his frendſhip be certaine,
He ſhall him ſhew both ioy and paine,
And all that dare thinke or ſay,
Without ſhame, as he may,
For how ſhould he aſhamed be,
Of ſuch one as I told thee?
For when he wote his ſecret thought,
The third ſhall know therof right nought,
For twey in number is bet than three,
In euerie counſaile and ſecree:
Repreue he dreadeth neuer a dele,
Who that beſet his wordes wele,
For euerie wiſe man out of drede,
Can keepe his tongue till he ſee nede.
And fooles cannot hold her tongue,
A fooles bell is ſoone ronge,
Yet ſhall a true friend doe more
To helpe his fellow of his ſore,
And ſuccour him when he hath need
In all that he may done indeed,
And gladder that he him pleaſeth
Than his fellow that he eaſeth,
And if he doe not his requeſt,
He ſhall as much him moleſt
As his fellow, for that he
Maie noe fulfill his volunte
Fully, as he hath required,
If both the hearts loue hath fired
Joy and woe they ſhall depart,
And take euenly each his part,
Halfe his annoy he ſhall haue ate,
And comfort what that he may,
And of this bliſſe part ſhall he,
If Loue woll departed be.

AND whilom of this vnitie
Spake Tullius in a ditie,

And

And should maken his request
Unto his friend, that is honest,
And he goodly should it fulfill,
But it the more were out of skill,
And otherwise not graunt thereto,
Except onely in causes two.
If men his friend to death would drive
Let him be busie to saue his liue.
Also if men wollen hem assaile,
Of his worship to make him faile
And hinderen him of his renoun
Let him with full entention,
His deuer done in each degree
That his friend ne shamed be.
In this two case with his might,
Taking no keepe to skill nor right,
As farre as Loue may him excuse,
This ought no man to refuse.
This Loue that I haue told to thee
Is nothing contrarie to mee,
This woll I that thou follow wele,
And leaue the other euerie dele,
This Loue to vertue all attendeth,
The tother fooles blent and shendeth.

Another Loue also there is,
That is contrarie vnto this,
Which delire is so constrained,
That is but will fained
Away fro trouth it doth so varie
That to good Loue it is contrarie,
For it maymeth in any wise
Sicke hearts with couetise,
All in winning and in profite,
Such loue setteth his delite:
This Loue so hangeth in balaunce
That if it lese his hope perchaunce,
Of lucre that he is set vpon,
It woll falle, and quench anon,
For no man may be amorous,
Ne in his liuing vertuous,
But he loue more in mood
Wen for hem selfe than for her good:
For Loue that profite doth abide,
Is false, and bideth not in no tide.
Loue commeth of dame Fortune,
That little while woll contune,
For it shall chaungen wonders soone,
And take Eclips as the Moone
When he is from vs let
Through earth, that betwixt is set
The sunne and her, as it may fall,
Be it in partie, or in all,
The shadow maketh her beames merke,
And her hornes to shew derke,
That part, where she hath lost her light
Of Phebus fully, and the sight,
Till when the shadow is ouerpast,
She is enlumined againe as fast,
Through the brightnesse of the sunne beames
That peeceth to hem againe her leames:
That Loue is right of such nature,
Now is faire, and now obscure,
Now bright, now Clipsy of manere,
And whilom dimme, and whilom clere,
Assoone as pouerte ginneth take,
With mantell and weedes blake
Hideth of Loue the light away,
That into night it tourneth day,
It may not see richesse shine,
Till the blacke shadowes fine,
For when richesse shineth bright
Loue recouereth ayen his light,
And when it faileth, he woll flit,
And as she greeueth, so greeueth it.
Of this Loue heare what I saie,
The rich men are loued aie:
And namely tho that sparand beene,
That woll not wash her hearts cleene
Of the filth, nor of the vice
Of greedy brenning Auarice.
The rich man full fond is iwis,
That weneth that he loued is,
If that his heart it vnderstood,
It is not he, it is his good,
He may well weten in his thought,
His good is loued, and he right nought:
For if he be a Niggard eke,
Men would not set by him a leke,
But haten him, this is the sooth,
Lo what profite his catell dooth,
Of euerie man that may him see,
It getteth him nought but enmitee:
But he amend himselfe of that vice,
And know himselfe, he is not wise.
Certes he should aye friendly be,
To get him loue also been free,
Or else he is not wise ne sage
No more than is a gote ramage:
That he not loueth, his deede proueth,
When he his richesse so well loueth,
That he woll hide it aie and spare,
His poore friends seene forfare
To keepen aie his purpose
Till for drede his eyen close,
And till a wicked death him take
Him had leuer asunder shake,
And let all his limmes asunder riue,
Than leaue his richesse in his liue,
He thinketh to part it with no man,
Certaine no loue is in him than:
How should loue with him be,
When in his heart is no pite,
That he trespasseth well I wate,
For each man knoweth his estate,
For well him ought to be reproued

That

That loueth nought, ne is not loued.
But sith we arne to fortune comen,
And hath our Sermon of her nomen,
A wonder will I tell thee now,
Thou heardest neuer such one I trow,
I not where thou me leuen shall
Though soothfastnesse it be all
As it is written, and is sooth
That vnto men more profite dooth
The froward fortune and contraire,
Than the swote and debonaire:
And if they thinke it is doutable,
It is through argument prouable
For the debonaire and soft,
Falseth and beguileth oft,
For lich a mother she can cherish,
And milken as doth a norice,
And of her good to him deles
And feueth him part of her iewels,
With great riches and dignitie,
And hem she hoteth stabilitie,
In state that is not stable,
But chaunging aie and variable,
And feedeth him with glorie vaine,
And worldly blisse none certaine,
When she him setteth on her whele,
Then wene they to be right wele,
And in so stable state withall
That neuer they wene for to fall,
And when they set so high to be,
They wene to haue in certaintie
Of heartly friends to great numbre,
That nothing might her state encombre,
They trust hem so on euerie side,
Wening with hem they would abide,
In euerie perill and mischaunce
Without chaunge or variaunce,
Both of catell and of good,
And also for to spend her blood,
And all her members for to spill
Onely to fulfill her will,
They maken it whole in many wise
And hoten hem her full seruise
How sore that it doe hem smert,
Into her verie naked shert,
Heart and also hole they yeue,
For the time that they may liue
So that with her flatterie,
They maken fooles glorifie
Of her wordes speaking,
And han there of a recoyling,
And trow hem as the Euangile
And it is all falshede and gile,
As they shall afterward see,
When they arne full in pouerte
And ben of good and catell bare
Then should they seene who friends ware,
For of an hundred certainly,
Nor of a thousand full scarcely,
Ne shall they finde branches one,
When pouertie is commen vpon.
For thus Fortune that I of tell,
With men when her lust to dwell,
Maketh hem to lese her countaunce,
And nourisheth hem in ignorance.

But froward Fortune and pernerse,
When high estates she doth reuerse,
And maketh hem to tumble doune
Off her whele with sodaine tourne,
And from her richesse doth hem flie,
And plungeth hem in pouertie,
As a stepmother enuious,
And layeth a plaister dolorous,
Unto her hearts wounded egre,
Which is not tempered with vinegre,
But with pouertie and indigence,
For to shew by experience,
That she is Fortune verelie
In whome no man should affie,
Nor in her yeftes haue fiaunce,
She is so full of variaunce.
Thus can she maken hye and lowe,
When they from richesse arne throwe
Fully to knowen without were
Friend of effect, and friend of chere,
And which in loue weren true and stable,
And which also weren variable,
After Fortune her Goddesse,
In pouertie, either in richesse,
For all that yeueth here out of drede,
Unhappe beareth it indeede,
For infortune let not one
Of friends, when Fortune is gone,
I meane tho friends that woll flie
Anone as entreth Pouerte,
And yet they woll not leaue hem so,
But in each place where they go
They call hem wretch, scorne and blame,
And of her misshappe hem diffame,
And namely such as in richesse,
Pretendeth most of stablenesse
When that they saw him set on loft,
And weren of hem succoured oft,
And most iholpe in all her need:
But now they take no maner heed,
But faine in voice of flatterie,
That now appeareth her follie,
Ouer all where so they fare,
And sing, go farewell felde fare.
All such friends I beshrew,
For of true there be too few,
But soothfast friends, what so betide
In euerie fortune wollen abide,
They han her hearts in such no blesse
That they nill loue for no richesse,

For for that fortune may hem send,
They wollen hem succour and defend,
And chaunge for seft ne for sore,
For who his friend loueth euermore
Though men draw sword him to slo,
He may not hew her loue a two:
But in case that I shall say,
For pride and ire lese it he may,
And for reproue by nicete,
And discouering of priuite,
With tongue wounding, as felon,
Through venemous detraction.
Friend in this case woll gone his way,
For nothing grieue him more ne may,
And for nought else woll he fle,
If that he loue in stabilitie.
And certaine he is well begone
Among a thousand that findeth one:
For there may be no richesse,
Ayenst frendship of worthynesse,
For it ne may so high attaine,
As may the valour, sooth to saine,
Of him that loueth true and well.
Frendship is more than is cattell,
For friend in Court aie better is
Than penny in purse certis.
And fortune misshaping,
When vpon men she is fabling,
Through misturning of her chaunce,
And cast hem out of balaunce.
She maketh through her aduersite,
Hem full clerely for to see
Him that is friend in existence
From him that is by apparence:
For infortune maketh anone,
To know thy friends fro thy fone,
By experience, right as it is,
The which is more to praise twis,
Than in much richesse and treasour,
For more deepe profite and valour,
Pouertie, and such aduersitie
Before, than doth prosperitie
For that one geueth conisaunce,
And the tother ignorraunce.
And thus in pouertie is indeed,
Trouth declared fro falshede,
For faint friends it woll declare,
And true also, what way they fare.
For when he was in his richesse,
These friends full of doublenesse,
Offred him in many wise,
Heart and bodie, and seruice,
What wold he then haue yon to haue bought,
To knowen openly her thought,
That he now hath so clerely seen,
The lasse beguiled he should haue been,
And he had then perceiued it,
But Richesse nolde not let him wit,
Well more auauntage doeth him than,
Sith that it maketh him a wise man,
The great mischiefe that he perceiueth
Than doeth Richesse that him deceiueth,
Richesse rich ne maketh nought
Him that on treasour set his thought:
For richesse stont in sufficiaunce,
And nothing in aboundaunce:
For sufficiaunce all onely
Maketh men to liue richly.

For he that hath mitches tweine,
Ne value in his demeine,
Liueth more at ease, and more is rich,
Than doeth he that is chich,
And in his barne hath sooth to saine,
An hundred mauis of wheat graine,
Though he be chapman or marchaunt,
And haue of Gold many besaunt:
For in getting he hath such woo,
And in the keeping drede also,
And set euermore his businesse
For to encrease, and not to lesse,
For to augment and multiply,
And though on heapes that lye him by,
Yet neuer shall make his richesse,
Asseth vnto his greedinesse:
But the poore that reccheth nought,
Saue of his liuelode in his thought,
Which that he getteth with his trauaile,
He dredeth nought that it shall faile,
Though he haue little worldes good,
Meate and drinke, and easie food,
Vpon his trauaile and liuing,
And also sufficiaunt clothing,
Or if in sickenesse that he fall,
And loath meat and drinke withall,
Though he haue not his meat to buy
He shall bethinke him hastely,
To put him out of daungere,
That he of meat hath no mistere,
Or that he may with little eke
Be founden, while that he his seke,
Or that men shull him berne in hast,
To liue till his sickenesse be past,
To some Maisondewe beside,
He cast nought what shall him betide,
He thinketh nought that euer he shall
Into any sickenesse fall,

And though it fall, as it may be,
That all be time spare shall he
As mokell as shall to him suffice,
While he is sicke in any wise,
He doeth for that he woll be
Content with his pouerte
Without neede of any man,
So much in little haue he can,

He

He is apaide with his fortune,
And for he nill be importune
Unto no wight, ne onerous,
Nor of her goodnesse couetous:
Therefore he spareth, it may well been,
His poore estate for to sustenn.

OR if him lust not for to spare,
But suffereth forth, as not yet were,
At last it happeneth, as it may
Right vnto his last day,
And take the world as it would be:
For euer in heart thinketh he
The sooner that death him slo,
To Paradise the sooner go
He shall, there for to liue in blisse
Where that he shall no good misse
Thider he hopeth God shall him send
After this wretched liues end,
Pythagoras himselfe rehearses
In a Booke that the gold verses
Is cleped, for the Nobilite
Of the honourable dite.
Then when thou goest thy bodie fro,
Free in the ayre thou shalt vp go
And leaue all humanitie,
And purely liue in deitie,
He is a foole withouten were
That troweth haue his countrey here.
In yearth is not our Countrey,
That may these Clarkes seine and sey,
In Boece of consolation
Where it is maked mention
Of our Countrey p'aine at the eie,
By teaching of Philosophie,
Where lewd men might lere wit
Who so that would translaten it,
If he be such that can well liue
After his rent may him peue,
And not desireth more to haue,
Than may fro pouertie him saue.
A wise man sated, as we may seen,
Is no man wretched, but he it ween,
Be he king, knight, or ribaude,
And many a Ribaud is merrie and baude,
That swinketh, and beareth both day & night,
Many a burthen of great might,
The which doeth him lasse offence,
For he suffreth in patience,
They laugh and daunce, trippe and sing,
And lay nought vp for her liuing,
But in the Tauerne all dispendeth
The winning that God hem sendeth,
Then goeth he fardels for to beare,
With as good chere as he did eare
To swinke and trauaile he not faineth,
For to robben he disdaineth
But right anon, after his swinke,
He goeth to Tauerne for to drinke,
All these are rich in abundance,
That can thus haue sufficsance,
Well more than can an vsurere
As God well knoweth, without were,
For an vsurer, so God me see
Shall neuer for richesse rich bee,
But euermore poore and indigent,
Scarce, and greedy in his entent.

For sooth it is, whome it displease
There may no marchaunt liue at ease,
His heart in such a where is set
That it quicke brenneth to get
Ne neuer shall, though he hath getten
Though he haue gould in garners yeten,
For to be needy he dredeth sore:
Wherefore to getten more and more
He set his heart and his desire,
So hote he brenneth in the fire
Of couetise, that maketh him wood
To purchase other mens good,
He vndertongeth a great paine,
That vndertaketh to drinke vp Saine:
For the more he drinketh aie
The more he leaueth, the sooth to say:
Thus is thurst of false getting,
That last euer in coueting,
And the anguish and distresse
With the fire of greedinesse,
She fighteth with him aie, and striueth
That his hart asunder riueth,
Such greedinesse him assaileth,
That when he most hath, most he faileth.
Phisitions and Aduocates
Gone right by the same pates,
They sell her science for winning,
And haunt her craft for great getting:
Her winning is of such sweetnesse,
That if a man fall in sickenesse,
They are full glad, for her encrease:
For by her will, without lease,
Euerich man should be seeke,
And though they die, they set not a Leeke,
After when they the gould haue take,
Full little care of hem they make,
They would that fortie were sicke at ones,
Yea two hundred in flesh and bones,
And yet two Thousand, as I gesse,
For to encreasen her richesse.
They woll not worchen in no wise,
But for lucre and couetise,
For Phisicke ginneth first by (Phi)
The Phisition also soothly,
And sithen it goeth fro fie to fie,
To trust on hem it is follie,
For they nill in no manner gree,
Doe right nought for charitee,

Eke in the same sect are set,
All tho that preachen for to get
Worshipe, honour, and richesse.
Her hearts arne in great distresse,
That folke liue not holyly,
But aboven all specially,
Such as preachen vaine glorie
And toward God haue no memorie,
But forth as Ipocrites trace,
And to her soules death purchace
And outward shewing holynesse,
Though they be full of cursednesse,
Not lich to the Apostles twelue,
They deceiue other and hem selue:
Beguiled is the guiler than,
For preaching of a cursed man
Though to other may profite
Himselfe it auaileth not a mite:
For oft good predication
Commeth of euill entention,
To him not daileth his preaching
All helpe he other with his teaching
For where they good example take,
There is he with vaine glory shake.
But let vs leauen these preachours,
And speake of hem which in her tours
Heape vp her gould, and fast shet,
And sore thereon their heart set,
They neither loue God ne drede,
They keepe more than it is nede,
And in her bagges sore it bind
Out of the Sunne, and of the wind,
They put vp more than need ware,
When they seen poore folke forfare
For hunger die, and for cold quake,
God can wel vengeance therof take,
The great mischiefes hem assaileth,
And thus in gadering ay trauaileth,
With much paine they winne richesse,
And drede hem holdeth in distresse,
To keepe that they gather fast,
With sorrow they leaue it at the last:
With sorrow they both die and liue,
That vnto richesse her hearts yeue.
And in defaute of Loue it is
As it sheweth full well iwis:
For if these greedy, the sooth to saine,
Loueden, and were loued againe,
And good Loue raigned ouer all,
Such wickednesse ne should fall,
But he should yeue, that most good had
To hem that weren in neede bestad,
And liue without false blure,
For charitie, full cleane and pure,
If they hem yeue to goodnesse
Defending hem from idlenesse,
In all this world then poore none
We should finde, I trow not one:
But chaunged is this world vnstable,
For Loue is ouer all vendable,
We see that no man loueth now
But for winning and for prow,
And loue is thralled in seruage
When it is sold for aduantage,
Yet women woll her bodies sell,
Such soules goeth to the Diuell of hell.

When Loue had told hem his entent,
The baronage to counsaile went,
In many sentences they fell,
And diuerslly they said her will:
But after discord they accorded,
And her accord to Loue recorded:
Sir sayden they, we been at one,
By euen accord of eucrichone,
Out take richesse all onely
That swore hath full hauteinly,
That she the Castle nill not assaile
Ne smite a stroke in this battaile,
With dart, ne mace, speare, ne knife,
For man that speaketh and beareth the life,
And blameth your empryse iwis,
And from our host departed is,
At least wise, as in this plite
So hath she this man in dispite:
For she sayth he ne loued her neuer,
And therefore she woll hate him euer,
For he woll gather no treasore,
He hath her wrathe for euermore,
He agilte her neuer in other caas,
Lo here all holly his trespas.
She sayeth well, that this other day
He asked her leaue to gone the way
That is cleped Too much yeuing,
And spake full faire in his praying:
But when he prayed her, poore was he,
Therefore she warned him the entre,
Ne yet is he not thriuen so
That he hath getten a penny or two,
That quietly is his owne in hold,
Thus hath Richesse vs all told:
And when Richesse vs this recorded,
Withouten her we been accorded.

And we finde in our accordaunce,
That false Semblant and Abstinaunce,
With all the folke of her battaile
Shull at the hinder gate assaile,
That wicked tongue hath in keeping,
With his Normans full of iangling,
And with hem courtelie and Largesse,
That shull shew her hardynesse,
To the old wife that kept so hard
Faire welcomming within her ward:
Then shall Delight and well Heling,
Fond, Shame adoune to bring,

With

With all her host early and late,
They shull assaylen that ilke gate,
Against Dzede shall Hardynesse
Assaile, and also Sikernesse,
With all the folke of her leading
That neuer wist what was slaying.

FRaunchise shall fight and eke Pite,
With Daunger full of cruelte,
Thus is your host ozdained weale
Downe shall the Castle euerie deale,
If euerichc doe his entent,
So that Uenus be present,
Your mother full of vesselage
That can inough of such vsage,
Without en her may no wight speed
This wozke, neither foz wozd ne deed:
Therefoze is good ye foz her send,
Foz thzough her may this wozke amend.

LOzdinges my mother the Gooddes,
That is my Ladie, and my Mistres,
Nis nat all at my willing,
Ne doth all my desiring.
Yet can she sometime doen labour,
When that her lust, in my succour.
As my neede is foz to atchieue:
But now I thinke her not to grieue,
My mother is she, and of childhede,
I both wozship her, and eke dzede,
Foz who that dzedeth sire ne dame,
Shall it abie in bodie oz name.
And natheless, yet can we
Send after her if need be,
And were she nigh, she commen would,
I trow that nothing might her hold.

My mother is of great pzowesse,
She hath tane many a foztresse,
That cost hath many a pound er this,
There I nas not present iwis,
And yet men sayd it was my deede,
But I come neuer in that steede,
Ne me ne liketh so mote I thee,
That such towers been take with mee,
Foz why? Me thinketh that in no wise,
It may be cleped but marchaundise.

GO buy a courser blacke oz white,
And pay therefoze, then art thou quite,
The Marchaunt oweth thee right nought,
Ne thou him when thou it bought.
I woll not selling clepe yeuing,
Foz selling asketh no guerdoning,
Here lithe no thanke, ne no merite,
That one goeth from that other all quite,
But this selling is not semblable:
Foz when his hozse is in the stable
He may it sell againe parde,
And winnen on it, such happe may be,
All may the manne not lese iwis,
Foz at the least the skinne is his.
Oz else, if it so betide
That he woll keepe his hozse to ride,
Yet is he Lozd ate of his hozse:
But thilke chafare is well wozse,
There Uenus entermeteth ought,
Foz who so such chaffare hath bought,
He shall not wozchen so wisely,
That he ne shall lese vtterly
Both his monney and his chaffare:
But the seller of the ware,
The pzise and pzofite haue shall,
Certaine the buyer shall lese all,
Foz he ne can so dere it buy
To haue lozdship and full maistrie,
Ne haue power to make letting,
Neither foz yeft ne foz pzeaching,
That of his chaffare maugre his,
Another shall haue as much iwis,
If he woll yeue as much as he,
Of what countrey so that he be,
Oz foz right nought so happe may,
If he can flatter her to her pay.
Been then such marchaunts wise?
No, but fooles in euerie wise,
When they buy such thing wilfully,
There as they lese her good follily.
But natheless, this dare I say,
My mother is not wont to pay,
Foz she is neither so foole ne nice,
To entremete her of such vice,
But trust well, he shall pay all,
That repent of his bargaine shall,
When pouerte put him in distresse,
All were he scholler to Richesse,
That is foz me in great yerning,
When she assenteth to my willing.

BUt my mother saint Uenus,
And by her father Saturnus,
That her engendzed by his life,
But nat vpon his wedded wife,
Yet woll I mozе vnto you swere,
To make this thing the surere.
Now by that faith, and that beautee
That I owe to all my bzethzen free,
Of which there nis wight vnder heuin,
That can her fathers names neuin,
So diuers and so many there be,
That with my mother haue be pziue,
Yet woll I sweare foz sikernesse,
The Pole of hell to my witnesse,
Now dzinke I not this yeare clarre,
If that I lye, oz fozswozne be,
Foz of the Goddes the vsage is,

That who so him forswereth amis,
Shall that yeere drinke no clarre.
Now haue I swore inough parde,
If I forsweare me then am I lorne,
But I woll neuer be forsworne:
Sith richesse hath me failed here,
She shall abie that trespasse full dere,
At least way but her harme
With sweard, or sparth, or gisarme.
For certes sith she loueth not me,
Fro thilke time that she may see
The Castle and the Tower to shake,
In sorrie time she shall awake,
If I may gripe a rich man
I shall so pull him, if I can,
That he shall in a fewe stoundes,
Lese all his markes, and his poundes.
I shall him make his pence out sling,
But they in his garner spring,
Our maidens shall eke plucke him so,
That him shall needen feathers mo,
And make him sell his lond to spend,
But he the bet can him defend.

POore men han made her Lord of me,
Although they not so mightie be,
That they may feede me in delite,
I woll not haue them in dispite:
No good man hateth hem, as I gesse,
For chinch and keloun is Richesse,
That so can chase hem and dispise,
And hem defoule in sundrie wise,
They louen full bette, so God me spede
Than doeth the rich chinchy grede,
And been (in good faith) more stable
And truer, and more seruiable:
And therefore it sufficeth me
Her good heart, and her beaute,
They han on me set all their thought,
And therefore I forpete hem nought.
I woll hem bring in great noblesse,
If that I were God of Richesse,
If that I were God of Loue soothly,
Such ruth vpon her plaint haue I:
Therefore I must his succour be,
That paineth him to seruen me,
For if he dyed for loue of this,
Then seemeth in me no loue there is.

Sir sayd they, sooth is euerie dele
That ye rehearse, and we wote wele
Thilke oath to hold is reasonable,
For it is good and couenable,
That ye on rich men han sworne:
For sir, this wote we well beforne
If rich men doen you homage,
That is as fooles doen outrage,
But ye shull not forsworne be,
Ne let therefore to drinke clarre,
Or piment maked fresh and new,
Ladies shull hem such pepir brew,
If that he fall into her laas,
That they for woe mow fame alas,
Ladies shullen euer so courteous be,
That they shall quite your oath all free,
Ne seeketh neuer other vicaire,
For they shall speake with him so faire,
That ye shall hold you payd full well,
Though ye you meddle neuer a deale,
Let Ladies worch with her thinges,
They shall hem tell so fele tidinges,
And moue hem eke so many requestes
By flatterie, that not honest is,
And thereto yeue hem such thankinges,
What with kissing, and with talkings:
That certes if they trowed be,
Shall neuer leaue hem lond ne fee
That it nill as the moeble fare,
Of which they first deliuered are:
Now may you tell vs all your will,
And we your hestes shall fulfill.

BUt false Semblant dare not for drede
Of you sir, meddle him of this dede,
For he sayth that ye been his foe,
He not, if ye will worch him woe:
Wherefore we pray you all beau sire,
That ye forgeue him now your ire,
And that he may dwell as your man
With Abstinence his deere lemman,
This our accord and our will now.
Parfey sayd Loue, I graunt it you,
I woll well hold him for my man,
Now let him come, and he forth ran.
False Semblant (qd. Loue) in this wise,
I take thee here to my seruice,
That thou our friends helpe alwaie,
And hindereth hem neither night ne daie,
But doe thy might hem to relieue,
And eke our enemies that thou grieue,
Thine be this might, I graunt it thee,
My king of harlotes shalt thou bee:
We woll that thou haue such honour,
Certaine thou art a false traitour,
And eke a theefe, sith thou were borne,
A thousand times thou art forsworne:
But natheless in our hearing,
To put our folke out of doubting,
I bidde thee teach hem, wost thou how
By some generall signe now
In what place thou shalt founden be,
If that men had mister of thee,
And how men shall thee best espie,
For thee to know is great maistrie,
Tell in what place is thine haunting.
Sir I haue full diuers wonning,

That

That I keepe not rehearsed be,
So that ye would respiten me,
For if that I tell you the sooth,
I may haue harme and shame both,
If that my fellowes wisten it,
My tales shoulden me be quit,
For certaine they would hate me,
If euer I knew her cruelte,
For they would ouer all hold hem still
Of troth, that is againe her will,
Such tales keepen they not here,
I might ektloone buy it full dere,
If I saied of hem any thing,
That ought displeaseth to her heating,
For what word that hem pricketh or biteth,
In that word none of hem deliteth,
All were it Gospell the Euangile,
That would reproue hem of her guile,
For they are cruell and hautain,
And this thing wote I well certain,
If I speake ought to paire or loos,
Your court shall not so well be cloos,
That they ne shall wite it at last.
Of good men am I nought agast,
For they woll taken on hem nothing,
When that they know all my meaning.
But he that woll it on him take,
He woll himselfe suspecious make,
That he his like let couertly,
In guile and in hypocrisie,
That me engendred and yaue fostring.
They made a full good engendring
(Qd. Loue) for who so soothly tell,
They engendred the diuell of hell.

But needely, howsoeuer it bee
(Qd. Loue) I will and charge thee,
To tell anon thy wonning place,
Hearing each wight that in this place is:
And what life thou liuest also,
Hide it no lenger now, whereto?
Thou must discouer all thy worching,
How thou seruest, and of what thing,
Though that thou shouldest for thy sothsaw,
Ben all to beaten and to draw,
And yet art thou not wont parde,
But natheless, though thou beaten be,
Thou shalt not be the first, that so
Hath for soothsaw suffred wo.

Sir, sith that it may liken you,
Though that I should be slaine right now,
I shall doen your commaundement,
For thereto haue I great talent.

Withouten words mo, right than
False Semblant his sermon began,
And saied hem thus in audience.

Barons, take heed of my sentence,
That wight that list to haue knowing
Of false Semblant full of flattering,
He must in worldly folke him seke,
And certes in the Cloysters eke,
I won no where, but in hem tway,
But not like euen, sooth to say,
Shortly I woll herborow me,
There I hope best to hulstred be,
And certainely, sikerest hiding,
Is vnderneath humblest clothing.
Religious folke ben full couert,
Seculer folke ben more apert:
But natheless, I woll not blame
Religious folke, ne hem diffame,
In what habite that euer they go:
Religion humble, and true also,
Woll I not blame, ne despise,
But I nill loue it in no wise,
I meane of false religious,
That stout been, and malicious,
That wollen in an habite go,
And setten not her heart thereto.

REligious folke been all pitous,
Thou shalt not seene one dispitous,
They louen no pride, ne no strife,
But humbly they woll lede her life,
With which folke woll I neuer be,
And if I dwell, I faine me
I may well in her habite go,
But me were leuer my necke atwo,
Than let a purpose that I take,
What couenaunt that euer I make.
I dwell with hem that proud be,
And full of wiles and subtelte,
That worship of this world coueiten,
And great nede connen expleiten,
And gone and gadren great pitaunces,
And purchase hem the acquaintaunces
Of men that mightie life may leden,
And faine hem poore, and hemselfe feden
With good morsels delicious,
And drinken good wine precious,
And preach vs pouert and distresse,
And sithen hemselfe great richesse,
With wily nettes that they cast,
It woll come foule out at the last.
They ben fro cleane religion went,
They make the world an argument,
That hath a foule conclusion,
I haue a robe of religion,
Then am I all religious,
This argument is all roignous,
It is not worth a crooked Bzere,
Habite ne maketh neither Monke ne Frere,
But cleane life and deuotion,
Maketh men of good religion.

Nathelesse, there can none answere,
How high that euer his head he shere,
With rasour whetted neuer so kene,
That guile in braunches cutte thurtene,
There can no wight distinct it so,
That he dare say a word thereto.
But what herborow that euer I take,
Or what semblaunt that euer I make,
I meane but guile, and follow that,
For right no more than Gibbe our Cat,
(That awaiteth Mice and Rattes to killen)
Ne entend I but to beguilen,
Ne no wight may, by my clothing
Wete with what folke is my dwelling,
Ne by my words yet parde,
So soft and so pleasaunt they be.
Behold the deeds that I do,
But thou be blind thou oughtest so,
For varie her words fro her deed,
They thinke on guile withouten dreed,
What manner clothing that they were,
Or what estate that euer they bere,
Lered or lewd, Lord or Ladie,
Knight, Squire, Burgeis, or Bailie.

Right thus while fals Sẽblant sermoneth,
Eftsoones Loue him aresoneth,
And brake his tale in his speaking,
As though he had him told leasing,
And saied: what deuill is that I heare?
What folke hast thou vs nempned here?
May men find religioun
In worldly habitatioun?
☞ Yea sir, it followeth nat that they
Should lead a wicked life parfey,
Ne not therefore her soules lese,
That hem to worldly clothes chese,
For certes it were great pitee,
Men may in secular clothes see,
Florishen holy religioun
Full many a saint in field and toun,
With many a virgine glorious,
Deuout, and full religious,
Han died, that common cloth aye beren,
Yet saintes neuertheless they weren.
I could recken you many a ten,
Yea welnigh all these holy women
That men in churches herry and seke,
Both maidens, and these wiues eke,
That baren full many a faire child here,
Weared alway clothes seculere,
And in the same diden they
That saints weren, and ben alway.
The ix. thousand maidens dere,
That beren in heauen her cierges clere,
Of which men rede in church and sing,
Were take in secular clothing,
When they receiued martirdome,
And wonnen heauen vnto her home.
Good heart maketh the good thought,
The clothing peuceth ne reueth nought:
The good thought and the worching,
That maketh the religion flouring,
There lieth the good religioun,
After the right ententioun.

Who so tooke a weathers skin,
And wrapped a greedy wolfe therein,
For he should go with lambes white,
Wenest thou not he would hem bite?
Yes: Neuertheless as he were wood
He would hem wirry, and drinke the blood,
And well the rather hem deceiue,
For sith they could nat perceiue
His tregette, and his crueltie,
They would him follow, altho he flie.

If there be wolues of such hew,
Amongs these Apostles new
Thou holy church thou maist be wailed,
Sith that thy citie is assailed
Through knights of thine owne table,
God wot thy lordship is doutable,
If they enforce it to win,
That should defend it fro within:
Who might defence ayenst hem make,
Without stroke it mote be take,
Of trepeget or mangonell,
Without displaying of pensell,
And if God will done it succour,
But let renne in this colour,
Thou must thy helles letten bee,
Then is there nought, but yeeld thee,
Or yeue him tribute doutles,
And hold it of hem to haue pees,
But greater harme betide thee,
That they all maister of it bee,
Well con they scorne thee withall,
By day stuffen they the wall,
And all the night they minen there,
Nay, thou planten must elswhere
Thine impes, if thou wolt fruit haue,
Abide not there thy selfe to saue.

But now peace, here I turne againe,
I will no more of this thing faine,
If I might maken you weary,
But I will heten you alway,
To helpe your friends what I may,
So they willen my company,
For they be shent all vtterly,
But if so fall, that I be
Oft with hem, and they with me,
And eke my lemman mote they serue,
Or they shull not my loue deserue,
Forsooth I am a false traitour,

God

God iudged me for a theefe trechour,
Forswore I am, but well nigh none
Wote of my guile, till it be done.

Through me hath many one deth receiued,
That my treget neuer aperceiued,
And yet receiueth, and shall receiue,
That my falsenesse shall neuer apperceiue:
But who so doth, if he wise be,
Him is right good beware of me.
But so sligh is the aperceiuing,
That all to late commeth knowing,
For Protheus that could him chaunge
In euery shape homely and straunge,
Could neuer such guile ne treasoun
As I, for I come neuer in toun
There as I might knowen be,
Though men me both might here and see.
Full well I can my clothes chaunge,
Take one, and make another straunge,
Now am I Knight, now Chastelaine,
Now Prelate, and now Chaplaine,
Now Priest, now Clerke, now Fostere,
Now am I Maister, now Scholiere,
Now Monke, now Chanon, now Baily,
What euer mister man am I.
Now am I Prince, now am I Page,
And can by heart euery language,
Sometime am I hoore and old,
Now am I young, stout, and bold,
Now am I Robert, now Robin,
Now Frere Minor, now Iacobin,
And with me followeth my loteby,
To done me solace and company,
That hight dame Abstinence, and raigned
In many a queint array faigned,
Right as it commeth to her liking,
I fulfill all her desiring.
Sometime a womans cloth take I,
Now am I a Maid, now Lady.
Sometime I am religious,
Now like an Anker in an hous.
Sometime am I Priorelle,
And now a Nonne, and now Abbesse,
And go through all regiouns,
Seeking all religiouns.
But to what order that I am swore,
I take the straw and beat the core,
To iolly folke I enhabite,
I aske no more but her habite.
What will ye more in euery wise,
Right as me list I me disguise:
Well can I beare me vnder wede,
Unlike is my word to my dede,
Thus make I into my trappes fall
The people, through my priuiledges all,
That ben in Christendome aliue.
I may assoile, and I may shriue,
That no Prelate may let me
All folke, where euer they found be,
I not no Prelate may done so,
But it the Pope be, and no mo,
That made thilke establishing,
Now is not this a proper thing?
But were my sleights apperceiued
As I was wont, and wost thou why?
For I did hem a tregetry,
But thereof yeue I a little tale,
I haue the siluer and the male,
So haue I preached and eke shriuen,
So haue I take, so haue I yeuen,
Through her folly, husbond and wife,
That I lede right a iolly life,
Through simplesse of the Prelacie,
They know not all my tregettrie.

But for as much as man and wife
Should shew her parish Priest her life
Ones a yeare, as sayth the Booke,
Ere any wight his housel tooke:
Then haue I priuiledges large,
That may of much thing discharge,
For he may say right thus pardee:
Sir Priest, in shrift I tell it thee,
That he to whom that I am shriuen,
Hath me assoyled, and me yeuen
Penaunce soothly for my sin,
Which that I found me guilty in,
Nor I ne haue neuer entencion
To make double confession,
Ne rehearse eft my shrift to thee,
O shrift is right ynough to mee,
This ought thee sufficе wele,
Ne be not rebell neuer a dele,
For certes, though thou haddest it swore,
I wote no Priest ne Prelate bore,
That may to shrift eft me constraine,
And if they done I will me plaine,
For I wote where to plaine wele,
Thou shalt not streine me a dele,
Ne enforce me, ne not me trouble,
To make my confession double,
Ne I haue none affection
To haue double absolution:
The first is right ynough to mee,
This latter assoyling quite I thee,
I am vnbound, what maist thou find
More of my sinnes me to vnbind?
For he that might hath in his hond,
Of all my sinnes me vnbond,
And if thou wolt me thus constraine
That me mote needs on thee plaine,
There shall no iudge imperiall,
Ne bishop, ne officiall,
Done iudgement on me, for I
Shall gone and plaine me openly

Unto my shrift father new,
That right Frere Wolfe untrew,
And he shall chuse him for mee,
For I trow he can hamper thee,
But lord he would be wroth withall,
If men would him Frere Wolfe call,
For he would haue no patience,
But done all cruell vengience,
He would his might done at the leest,
Nothing spare for Gods heest,
And God so wise be my succour,
But thou yeue me my sauiour
At Easter, when it liketh mee,
Without preasing more on thee,
I woll forth, and to him gone,
And he shall housell me anone,
For I am out of thy grutching,
I keepe not deale with thee nothing.
Thus may he shriue him, that forsaketh
His parish priest, and to me taketh,
And if the priest woll him refuse,
I am full ready him to accuse,
And him punish and hamper so,
That he his church shall forgo.

But who so hath in his feeling
The consequence of such shriuing,
Shal seene, that priest may neuer haue might
To know the conscience aright
Of him that is vnder his cure:
And this is ayenst holy scripture,
That biddeth euery herde honest,
Haue very knowing of his beest.
But poore folke that gone by strete,
That haue no gold, ne sums grete,
Hem would I let to her Prelates,
Or let her Priests know her states,
For to me right nought yeue they,
And why it is, for they ne may.
They ben so bare, I take no keepe,
But I woll haue the fat sheepe,
Let parish Priests haue the lene,
I yeue not of her harme a bene,
And if that Prelates grutch it,
That oughten wroth be in her wit,
To lese her fat beasts so,
I shall yeue hem a stroke or two,
That they shall lesen with force,
Yea, both her Mitre and her Croce.
Thus yape I hem, and haue do long,
My priuiledges ben so strong.

False Semblant would haue stinted here,
But Loue ne made him no such chere,
That he was weary of his saw,
But for to make him glad and faw,
He said, tell on more specially,
How that thou seruest vntruly.

Tell forth, and shame thee neuer adele,
For as thine habit sheweth wele,
Thou seruest an holy Hermite.
Sooth is, but I am but an hypocrite,
Thou goest and preachest pouerte:
Yea sir, but richesse hath poste,
Thou preachest abstinence also:
Sir, I woll fillen so mote I go
My paunch, of good meat and wine,
As should a maister of diuine,
For how that I me poore faine,
Yet all poore folke I disdaine.

I Loue better the acquaintaunce
Ten times of the king of Fraunce,
Than of a poore man of mild mood,
Though that his soule be also good.
For when I see beggers quaking,
Naked on mixins all stinking,
For hunger crie, and eke for care,
I entremet not of her fare,
They ben so poore, and full of pine,
They might not ones yeue me a dine,
For they haue nothing but her life,
What should he yeue that licketh his knife? ☜
It is but folly to entremete
To seeke in hounds nest fat mete:
Let beare him to the spittle anone,
But for me, comfort get they none,
But a rich sicke vsurere
Would I visite and draw nere,
Him would I comfort and rehete,
For I hope of his gold to gete,
And if that wicked death him haue,
I woll go with him in his graue,
And if there any reproue me,
Why that I let the poore be,
Wost thou how I not escape,
I say and sweare him full rape,
That rich men han more tetches
Of sinne, than han poore wretches,
And han of counsaile more mistere,
And therefore I would draw hem nere,
But as great hurt, it may so be,
Hath a soule in right great pouerte,
As soule in great richesse forsooth,
Albeit that they hurten both,
For richesse and mendicities ☜
Ben cleped two extremities,
The meane is cleped Sufficiaunce,
There lieth of vertue the aboundaunce.
For Salomon full well I wote,
In his Parables vs wrote,
As it is knowen of many a wight,
In his thirteene chapiter right,
God thou me keepe for thy poste,
Fro richesse and mendicite, ☜
For if a rich man him dresse,

To thinke too much on richesse,
His heart on that so ferre is sette,
That he his creator doth forgette,
And him that beggeth, woll aye greue,
How should I by his word him leue,
Unneth that he nis a micher,
Forswonne, or els Gods lier,
Thus sayth Salomon sawes.
Ne we find written in no lawes,
And namely in our Christen lay,
(Who saith ye, I dare say nay)
That Christ, ne his Apostles dere,
While that they walked in earth here,
Were neuer seene herbred begging,
For they nolden beggen for nothing.
And right thus were men wont to teach,
And in this wise would it preach,
The maisters of diuinitie
Sometime in Paris the citie.

AND if men would there gaine appose
The naked text, and let the glose,
It might soone alloiled bee,
For men may well the sooth see,
That parde they might aske a thing
Plainely forth without begging,
For they weren Gods heerdes dere,
And cure of soules hadden here,
They nolde nothing begge her food,
For after Christ was done on rood,
With their proper honds they wrought,
And with trauaile, and els nought,
They wonnen all her sustenaunce,
And liueden forth in her pennaunce,
And the remenaunt yafe away
To other poore folkes alway.
They neither builden toure ne halle,
But they in houses small with alle.
A mighty man that can and may,
Should with his hond and body alway,
Winne him his food in labouring,
If he ne haue rent or such a thing,
Although he be religious,
And God to seruen curious,
Thus mote he done, or do trespaas,
But if it be in certaine caas,
That I can rehearse, if mister bee,
Right well, when the time I see.

Seeke the booke of saint Augustine,
Be it in paper or perchemene,
There as he writte of these worchings,
Thou shalt seene that none excusings
A perfit man ne should seeke
By words, ne by deeds eke,
Although he be religious,
And God to seruen curious,
That he ne shall, so mote I go,
With proper honds and body also
Get his food in labouring,
If he ne haue properte of thing,
Yet should he sell all his substaunce,
And with his swinke haue sustenaunce,
If he be perfite in bounte,
Thus han the bookes told me:
For he that woll gone idelly,
And vseth it aye busily
To haunten other mens table,
He is a trechour full of fable,
Ne he ne may by good reason
Excuse him by his orison,
For men behoueth in some guise,
Ben sometime in Gods seruise,
To gone and purchasen her nede.
Men mote eaten, that is no drede,
And sleepe, and eke do other thing,
So long may they leaue praying.
So may they eke her prayer blinne,
While that they werke her meat to winne,
Saint Austine woll thereto accord,
In thilke booke that I record.
Justinian eke, that made lawes,
Hath thus forboden by old sawes:
No man, vp paine to be dead,
Mightie of body, to beg his bread,
If he may swinke it for to gete,
Men should him rather maime or bete,
Or done of him aperte iustice,
Than suffren him in such malice.
They done not well so mote I go,
That taken such almesse so,
But if they haue some priuiledge,
That of the paine hem woll alledge.
But how that is, can I not see,
But if the prince deceiued bee,
Ne I ne wene not sikerly,
That they may haue it rightfully.
But I woll not determine
Of princes power, ne define,
Ne by my word comprehend ywis,
If it so ferre may stretch in this,
I woll not entremete a dele,
But I trow that the booke sayth wele,
Who that taketh almesses, that bee
Dew to folke that men may see
Lame, feeble, weary, and bare,
Poore, or in such manner care,
That con winne hem neuermo,
For they haue no power thereto:
He eateth his owne dampning,
But if he lie that made all thing.
And if ye such a truant find,
Chastise him well, if ye be kind,
But they would hate you parcaas,
If ye fillen in her laas.
They would eftsoones do you scathe,

If

If that they might, late or rathe,
For they be not full patient,
That han the world thus foule blent,
And weteth well, that God bad
The good man sell all that he had,
And follow him, and to poore it yeue,
He would not therefore that he liue,
To seruen him in mendience,
For it was neuer his sentence,
But he bad werken when that need is,
And follow him in good dedis.
Saint Poule that loued all holy church,
He bade the Apostles for to wurch,
And winnen her liuelode in that wise,
And hem defended truandise,
And said, werketh with your honden,
Thus should the thing be vnderstonden.
He nolde twis haue bid hem begging,
Ne sellen Gospell, ne preaching,
Least they berafte, with her asking,
Folke of her cattell or of her thing.
For in this world is many a man
That yeueth his good, for he ne can
Werne it for shame, or els he
Would of the asker deliuered be,
And for he him encombreth so,
He yeueth him good to let him go:
But it can him nothing profite,
They lese the yeft and the merite.
The good folke that Poule to preached,
Profred him oft, when he hem teached,
Some of her good in charite,
But thereof right nothing tooke he,
But of his hond would he gette
Clothes to wrine him, and his mete.

TEll me then how a man may liuen,
That all his good to poore hath yeuen,
And woll but only bidde his bedes,
And neuer with honds labour his nedes.
May he do so? Yea sir: And how?
Sir I woll gladly tell you:
Saint Austen saith, a man may be
In houses that han properte,
As templers and hospitelers,
And as these Chanons regulers,
Or white Monkes, or these blake,
I woll no mo ensamples make,
And take thereof his susteining,
For therein lithe no begging,
But otherwaies not twis,
Yet Austen gabbeth not of this,
And yet full many a Monke laboureth,
That God in holy Church honoureth:
For when her swinking is agone,
They rede and sing in Church anone.

And for there hath ben great discord,
As many a wight may beare record,
Upon the estate of mendicience,
I woll shortely in your presence,
Tell how a man may begge at need,
That hath not wherewith him to feed,
Maugre his fellowes tanglings,
For soothfastnesse woll none hidings,
And yet percase I may abey,
That I to you soothly thus sey.

LO here the case especiall,
If a man be so bestiall,
That he of no craft hath science,
And nought desireth ignorence,
Then may he go a begging perne,
Till he some other craft can lerne,
Through which without truanding,
He may in trouth haue his liuing.
Or if he may done no labour,
For elde, or sicknesse, or langour,
Or for his tender age also,
Then may he yet a begging go.
Or if he haue peraventure,
Through vsage of his noriture,
Liued ouer deliciously,
Then oughten good folke comenly,
Han of his mischeefe some pite,
And suffren him also, that he
May gone about and begge his bread,
That he be not for honger dead,
Or if he haue of craft conning,
And strength also, and desiring
To worchen, as he had what,
But he find neither this ne that,
Then may he begge till that he
Haue getten his necessite.
Or if his winning be so lite,
That his labour woll not aquite
Sufficiauntly all his liuing,
Yet may he go his brede begging
Fro doore to doore, he may go trace,
Till he the remnaunt may purchase,
Or if a man would vndertake
Any emprise for to make,
In the rescous of our lay,
And it defenden as he may,
Be it with armes or lettrure,
Or other conuenable cure,
If it be so he poore be,
Then may he begge, till that he
May find in trouth for to swinke,
And get him cloth, meat, and drinke,
Swinke he with his honds corporell,
And not with hondes espirituell.

IN all this case, and in semblables,
If that there ben mo reasonables,
He may begge, as I tell you here,

And elſ not in no manere,
As William ſaint Amour would preach,
And oft would diſpute and teach
Of this matter all openly
At Paris full ſolemnely,
And alſo God my ſoule bleſſe,
As he had in this ſtedfaſtneſſe,
The accord of the vniuerſite
And of the people, as ſeemeth me.

No good man ought it to refuſe,
Ne ought him therof to excuſe,
Be wrothe or blithe, who ſo be,
For I woll ſpeake, and tell it thee,
All ſhould I die, and be put doun,
As was ſaint Poule in derke priſoun,
Or be exiled in this caas
With wrong, as maiſter William was,
That my mother Hypocriſie
Banished for her great enuie.

My mother ſtemed him ſaint Amour,
This noble did ſuch labour
To ſuſtaine euer the loyalte,
That hee too much agilte me,
He made a booke, and let it write,
Wherein his life he did all write,
And would eche renied begging,
And liue by my trauelling,
If I ne had rent ne other good,
What weneth he that I were wood?
For labour might me neuer pleaſe,
I haue more will to ben at eaſe,
And haue well leuer, ſooth to ſay,
Before the people patter and pray,
And wrie me in my foxerie
Under a cope of papelardie.
(Md. Loue) what diuell is this that I here,
What words telleſt thou me here,
What ſir Faiſeneſſe that apert is,
Then dredeſt thou not God? No certes:
For ſelde in great thing ſhall he ſpede
In this world, that God woll drede,
For folke that hem to vertue peuen,
And truely on her owne liuen,
And hem in goodneſſe aye content,
On hem is little thrift iſent,
Such folke drinken great miſeaſe,
That life may me neuer pleaſe.
But ſee what gold han vſurers,
And ſiluer eke in garners,
Tailagiers, and theſe moniours,
Bailiffes, Beadles, Bronoſt, Countours,
Theſe liuen well nigh by rauine,
The ſmall people hem mote encline,
And they as wolues woll hem eten:
Upon the poore folke they geten
Full much of that they ſpend or kepe,
Nis none of hem that he nill ſtrepe,
And wrine hemſelfe well at full
Without ſcalding they hem pull.
The ſtrong the feeble ouergothe,
But I that weare my ſimple clothe,
Robbe both robbed, and robbours,
And guile guiling, and guilours:
By my treget, I gather and threſte
The great treaſour into my cheſte,
That lieth with me ſo faſt bound,
Mine high paleis doe I found,
And my delights I fulfill,
With wine at feaſtes at my will,
And tables full of entremees,
I woll no life, but eaſe and pees,
And winne gold to ſpend alſo,
For when the great bagge is go,
It commeth right with my papes,
Make I not well comble mine apes,
To winnen is alway mine entent,
My purchaſe is better than my rent,
For though I ſhould beaten be,
Ouer all I entremete me,
Without me may no wight dure,
I walke ſoules for to cure,
Of all the world cure haue I
In brede and length boldly,
I woll both preach and eke counſaile,
With hondes woll I not trauaile,
For of the Pope I haue the bull,
I ne hold not my wittes dull,
I woll not ſtinten in my liue
Theſe Emperours for to ſhriue,
Of Kings, Dukes, and Lords grete:
But poore folke all quite I lete,
I loue no ſuch ſhriuing parde,
But it for other cauſe be:
I recke not of poore men,
Her eſtate is not worth an hen.
Where findeſt thou a ſwinker of labour
Haue me to his confeſſour?
But Empreſſes, and Duchelles,
Theſe Queenes, and eke Counteſſes,
Theſe Abbeſſes, and eke Bigins,
Theſe great Ladies palaſins,
Theſe iolly Knights, and Bailiues,
Theſe Nonnes, and theſe Burgeis wiues
That rich been, and eke pleaſing,
And theſe Maidens welfaring,
Where ſo they clad or naked be,
Uncounſailed goeth there none fro me,
And for her ſoules ſaſete,
At Lord and Lady, and her meine,
I aſke, when they hem to me ſhriue
The propertie of all her liue,
And make hem trow both moſt and leaſt
Her pariſh Prieſt is but a beaſt
Ayenſt me and my company,

That shrewes been as great(as I)
For which I woll not hide in hold,
No priuete that me is told,
That I by word or signe wis,
We woll make hem know what it is,
And they wollen also tellen me,
They hele fro me no priuite.
And for to make you hem perceiuen,
That vsen folke thus to deceiuen,
I woll you saine withouten drede,
What men may in the Gospell rede,
Of saint Mathew the Gospeliere,
That saieth, as I shall you say here.

VPon the chaire of Moses
Thus it is glosed doubtles,
(That is the old Testament,
For thereby is the chaire ment)
Sitte Scribes and Pharisen,
That is to saine, the cursed men,
Which that we, Ipocrites call:
Doeth that they preach I rede you all,
But doeth not as they doen adele,
That been not weary to say wele,
But to doe well, no will haue they,
And they would bind on folke alway,
(That been to be beguiled able)
Burdons that been inportable,
On folkes shoulders things they couchen,
That they nill with their fingers touchen.
And why woll they not touch it, why?
For hem ne list nat sikerly,
For sadde burdons that men taken,
Make folkes shoulders aken.
And if they do ought that good bee,
That is for folke it should see.
Her burdons larger maken they,
And maken her hemmes wide alwey,
And louen seates at the table
The first and most honourable,
And for to han the first chaires,
In Synagogues to hem full dere is,
And willen that folke hem lout and grete,
When that they passen through the strete,
And wollen be cleped maister also:
But they ne should not willen so,
The Gospell is there ayenst I gesse,
That sheweth well her wickednesse.

ANother custome vse we
Of hem that woll ayenst vs be,
We hate hem deadly euerychone,
And we woll werrey him, as one,
Him that one hateth, hate we all,
And conieet, how to doen him fall:
And if we seene him winne honour,
Richesse or preise, through his valour,
Prouende, rent, or dignite,
Full fast iwis compassen we,
By what ladder he is clomben so,
And for to maken him downe to go,
With treason we woll him defame,
And doen him lese his good name.
Thus from his ladder we him take,
And thus his frends foes we make,
But word ne wete shall he none,
Till all his frendes been his fone,
For if we did it openly,
We might haue blame readily,
For had he wist of our malice,
He had him kept, but he were nice.

Another is this, that if so fall,
That there be one among vs all,
That doeth a good tourne, out of drede,
We saine it is our alder dede,
Yea sikerly, though he it fained,
Or that him list, or that him dained
A man through him auaunced be,
Thereof all parteners be we,
And tellen folke where so we go,
That man through vs is sprongen so.
And for to haue of men praising,
We purchase through our flattering
Of rich men of great poste
Letters, to witnesse our bounte,
So that man weeneth that may vs see,
That all vertue in vs bee.
And alway poore we vs faine,
But how so that we beggc or plaine,
We ben the folke without leasing,
That all thing haue without hauing.
Thus be dradde of the people iwis,
And gladly my purpose is this.
I deale with no wight, but he
Haue gold and treasour great plente,
Her acquaintaunce well loue I,
This much my desire shortly,
I entremete me of brocages,
I make peace and mariages,
I am gladly executour,
And many times a procuratour,
I am sometime messangere,
That falleth not to my mistere.
And many times I make enquest,
For me that office is nat honest,
To deale with other mens thing,
That is to me a great liking:
And if that ye haue ought to do
In place that I repaire to,
I shall it speden through my wit,
As soone as ye haue told me it,
So that ye serue me to pay,
My seruice shall be yours alway.
But who so woll chastice me,
Anone my loue lost hath he,

For

For I loue no man in no gise,
That will me reproue or chastise,
But I will all folke vndertake,
And of no wight no teaching take,
For I that other folke chastie,
Will not be taught fro my follie.

I Loue none Hermitage more,
All deserts and holtes hoore,
And great woods euerychon,
I let hem to the Baptist Iohn,
I quelh him quite, and him relesse
Of Egipt all the wildernesse,
Too ferre were all my mansions
Fro all cities and good touns.
My paleis and mine house make I
There men may renne in openly,
And say that I the world forsake,
But all amidde I build and make
My house, and swim and play therein
Bette than a fish doeth with his finne.

OF Antichristes men am I,
Of which that Christ sayeth openly,
They haue habite of holinesse,
And liuen in such wickednesse:
To the copie, if him talent tooke
Of the Euangelistes booke,
There might he see by great traisoun
Full many a false comparisoun.
As much as through his great might,
Be it of heat or of light,
The Sunne surmounteth the Moone,
That troubler is, and chaungeth soone,
And the nutte kernell the shell,
I scorne nat that I you tell.
Right so withouten any gile
Surmounteth this noble Euangile,
The word of any Euangelist,
And to her title they tooken Christ,
And many such comparisoun,
Of which I make no mentioun,
Might men in that booke find,
Who so could of hem haue mind.

The vniuersitie that tho was asleepe,
Gan for to braied, and taken keepe,
And at the noise, the head vp cast,
Ne neuer sithen slept it fast,
But vp it stert, and armes tooke
Ayenst this false horrible booke,
All ready battaile for to make,
And to the Iudge the booke they take.
But they that broughten the booke there,
Hent it anone away for feare,
They nolde shew it no more adele,
But then it kept, and keepen wele,
Till such a time that they may see,
That they so strong woxen bee,
That no wight may hem well withstond,
For by that booke they durst not stond,
Away they gonne it for to bere,
For they ne durst not answere
By exposition no glose
To that that clerkes will appose,
Ayenst the cursednesse wits
That in that booke written is.
Now wote I nat, ne I can nat see
What manner end that there shall bee
Of all this that they hide,
But yet algate they shall abide,
Till that they may it bette defend,
This trow I best will be her end.

Thus Antechrist abiden we,
For we been all of his meine,
And what man that will not be so,
Right soone he shall his life forgo.
Outward Lambren seemen we,
Full of goodnesse and of pite,
And inward we withouten fable
Been greedy Wolues rauisable.
We enuiroun both lond and see,
With all the world werrien wee,
We will ordaine of all thing
Of folkes good, and her liuing.

If there be castell or cite
Within that any bougerons be,
Although that they of Millaine were,
For thereof been they blamed there.
Or of a wight out of measure,
Would lene her gold, and take vsure,
For that he is so couetous,
Or if he be too lecherous,
Or these that haunten Simonie,
Or Prouost full of trecherie,
Or Prelate liuing iolily,
Or Priest that halt his quein him by,
Or old hoores hostillers,
Or other baudes or bordellers,
Or els blamed of any vice,
Of which men shoulden doen iustice.
By all the saints that we prey,
But they defend them with lamprey,
With luce, with eles, with samons,
With tender geese, and with capons,
With tartes, or with chekes fat,
With daintie flaunes, brode and flat,
With caleweis, or with pullaile,
With coninges, or with fine vitaile,
That we vnder our clothes wide,
Waken through our gollet glide,
Or but he will doe come in hast,
Rae venison bake in past,
Whether so that loure or groine,

He shall haue of a corde a loigne,
With which men shall him bind and lede,
To brenne him for his sinfull dede,
That men shull heare him crie and rore
A mile way about and more,
Or els he shall in prison die,
But if he woll his friendship buy,
Or smerten that, that he hath do,
More than his guilt amounteth to.
But and he couth through his sleight
Doe maken vp a toure of height,
Nought rought I whether of stone or tree,
Or yearth, or turues though it be,
Though it were of no bounde stone,
Wrought with squier and scantilone,
So that the toure were stuffed well
With all riches temporell.
And then that he would vp dresse
Engines, both more and lesse,
To cast at vs by euery side,
To beare his good name wide.
Such sleights I shall you peuen
Barrels of wine, by sixe or seuen,
Or gold in sackes great plente,
He should soone deliuered be,
And if he haue no such pitences,
Let him studie in equipolences,
And let lies and fallaces,
If that he would deserue our graces,
Or we shall beare him such witnesse
Of sinne, and of his wretchednesse,
And doen his lose so wide renne,
That all quicke we should him brenne,
Or els peue him soch pennaunce,
That is well worse than the pitaunce.

For thou shalt neuer for nothing
Con knowen aright by her clothing,
The traitours full of trecherie,
But thou her werkes can espie.
And ne had the good keeping be
Whylome of the vniuersite,
That keepeth the key of Christendome,
We had been tourmented all and some.
Such been the stinking Prophetis,
Nis none of hem, that good Prophet is,
For they through wicked entention,
The peare of the incarnation
A thousand and two hundred pere,
Fine and fiftie ferther ne nere,
Brought en a booke with sorrie grace,
To peuen ensample in common place,
That saied thus, though it were fable,
This is the Gospell perdurable,
That fro the holy ghost is sent.
Well were it worth to be brent.
Entitled was in such manere
This booke, of which I tell here,
There nas no wight in all Paris,
Before our Ladie at paruis,
That they ne might the booke by,
The sentence pleased hem well truely.
But I woll stint of this matere,
For it is wonder long to here,
But had that ilke booke endured,
Of better estate I were ensured,
And friends haue I yet pardee,
That han me set in great degree.

Of all this world is Emperour,
Guile my father, the trechour,
And Empresse my mother is,
Maugre the holy ghost twis,
Our mightie linage and our rout
Reigneth in euery reigne about,
And well is worthy we ministers be,
For all this world gouerne we,
And can the folke so well deceiue,
That none our guile can perceiue,
And though they doen, they dare not say,
The sooth dare no wight bewray.
But he in Christes wrath him leadeth,
That more than Christ my brethren dredeth,
He nis no full good champion,
That dreadeth such similation,
Nor that for paine woll refusen,
Vs to correct and accusen.
He woll not entremete by right,
Ne haue God in his eyesight,
And therefore God shall him punice,
But me ne recketh of no vice,
Sithen men vs louen communably,
And holden vs for so worthy,
That we may folke repreue echone,
And we nill haue repreefe of none,
Whom shoulden folke worshippen so,
But vs that stinten neuer mo
To patren, while that folke may vs see,
Though it not so behind hem be.

And where is more wood follie,
Than to enhaunce chualrie,
And loue noble men and gay,
That tolly clothes wearen alway,
If they be such folke as they seemen,
So cleane, as men her clothes demen,
And that her workes follow her dede,
It is great pitie out of drede,
For they woll be none hypocritis,
Of hem me thinketh great spight is,
I cannot loue hem on no side.
But beggers with these hoods wide,
With sleigh and pale faces leane,
And gray clothes nat full cleane,
But fretted full of tatarwagges,
And high shoes knopped with dagges,

That

That frounceth like a quale pipe,
Or bootes riueling as a gipe.
To such folke as I you deuise,
Should princes and these lords wise,
Take all her lands and her things,
Both warre and peace in gouernings,
To such folke should a prince him yeue,
That would his life in honour liue.

And if they be nat as they seme,
They seruen thus the world to queme,
There would I dwell to deceiue
The folke, for they shall nat perceiue.
But I ne speake in no such wise,
That men should humble habite dispise,
So that no pride there vnder be,
No man should hate, as thinketh me,
The poore man in such clothing.
But God ne preiseth him nothing,
That saieth he hath the world forsake,
And hath to worldly glory him take,
And woll of such delices vse,
Who may that begger well excuse?
That papelarde, that him yeldeth so,
And woll to worldly ease go,
And saieth that he the world hath left,
And greedily it gripeth eft,
He is the hound, shame is to saine,
That to his casting goeth againe.

But vnto you dare I not lie,
But might I feelen or espie,
That ye perceiued it nothing,
Ye should haue a starke leasing,
Right in your hond thus to beginne,
I nolde it let for no sinne.
The God lough at the wonder tho,
And euery wight gan lough also,
And saied: lo here a man right,
For to be trustie to euery wight.

False Semblant (qd. Loue) say to mee,
Sith I thus haue auaunced thee,
That in my court is thy dwelling,
And of ribaudes shalt be my king,
Wolt thou well holden my forwardes?
Yea sir, from hence forwardes,
We woll a people vpon him areise,
And thrugh our guile doen him leise,
And him on sharpe speares riue,
Or other wates bring him fro liue,
But if that he woll follow ywis,
That in our booke written is.

Thus much woll our booke signifie,
That while Peter had maistrie,
May neuer Iohn shew well his might.
Now haue I you declared right,
The meaning of the barke and rinde,
That maketh the entencions blinde,
But now at erst I woll begin,
To expoune you the pith within,
And the seculers comprehend,
That Christs law woll defend,
And should it kepen and maintenen
Ayenst hem that all sustenen,
And falsly to the people teachen,
That Ihon betokeneth hem to preachen,
That there nis law couenable,
But thilke Gospell perdurable,
That fro the holy ghost was sent,
To turne folke that ben miswent.

The strength of Iohn they vnderstond,
The grace in which they say they stond,
That doeth the sinfull folke conuert,
And hem to Iesu Christ reuert,
Full many another horrible,
May men in that booke see,
That been commaunded doubtlesse
Ayenst the law of Rome expresse,
And all with Antichrist they holden,
As men may in the booke beholden.
And then commaunden they to sleen,
All tho that with Peter been,
But they shall neuer haue that might,
And God toforne, for strife to fight,
That they ne shall ynough find,
That Peters law shall haue in mind,
And euer hold, and so maintein,
That at the last it shall be seen,
That they shall all come thereto,
For aught that they can speake or do.
And thilke law shall not stond,
That they by Iohn haue vnderstond,
But maugre hem, it shall adoun,
And been brought to confusioun,
Had neuer your father here before,
Seruaunt so true, sith he was borne,
That is ayenst all nature.
Sir, put you in that auenture,
For though ye borowes take of me,
The liker shall ye neuer be
For hostages, ne likernesse,
Or chartres, for to beare witnesse,
I take your selfe to record here,
That men ne may in no manere
Tearen the wolfe out of his hide,
Till he be slaine backe and side,
Though men him beat and all defile,
What were ye that I woll beguile?
For I am clothed meekely,
There vnder is all my trechery,
Mine heart chaungeth neuer the mo
For none habite, in which I go,
Though I haue there of simplenesse,

I am not wearie of shrewdnesse
My lemman, strained Abstenaunce,
Hath mister of my purueiaunce,
She had full long ago be ded,
Nere my counsaile and my red,
Let her alone, and you and mee.
And Loue answerd, I trust thee
Without borow, for I woll none,
And false Semblant the theefe anone,
Right in that like same place,
That had of treason all his face,
Right blacke within, and white without,
Thanking him, gan on his knees lout.

Then was there nought, but euery man
Now to assaute, that sailen can
(Md. Loue) and that full hardely:
Then armed they hem comenly
Of such armour as to hem fell.
When they were armed fiers and fell,
They went hem forth all in a rout,
And set the castle all about,
They will not away for no dread,
Till it so be that they ben dead,
Or till they haue the castle take,
And foure battels they gan make,
And parted hem in foure anone,
And tooke her way, and forth they gone,
The foure gates for to assaile,
Of which the keepers woll not faile,
For they ben neither sicke ne dede,
But hardie folke, and strong in dede.

Now woll I faine the countenaunce
Of false Semblant, and Abstinaunce,
That ben to Wicked tongue went,
But first they held her parliament,
Whether it to doen were,
To maken hem be knowen there,
Or elis walken forth disguised:
But at the last they deuised,
That they would gone in tapinage,
As it were in a pilgrimage,
Like good and holy folke vnfeined:
And dame Abstinence streined
Tooke on a robe of Cameline,
And gan her gratche as a bigine.
A large couerchief of thread,
She wrapped all about her head,
But she forgate not her Psaltere.
A paire of beads eke she bere
Upon a lace, all of white thread.
On which that she her beads bede,
But she ne bought hem neuer adele,
For they were giuen her, I wote wele
God wote of a full holy Frere,
That saied he was her father dere,
To whom she had after went,
Than any Frere of his couent.
And he visited her also,
And many a sermon saied her to,
He nolde let for man on liue,
That he ne would her oke thriue,
And with so great deuotion
They made her confession,
That they had oft for the nones
Two heads in one hood at ones.
Of faire shape I deuised her thee,
But pale of face sometime was shee,
That false traitouresse vntrew,
Was like that sallow hosle of hew,
That in the Apocalips is shewed,
That signifieth tho folke beshrewed,
That been all full of trecherie,
And pale, through hypocrisie,
For on that horse no colour is,
But onely dead and pale iwis,
Of such a colour enlangoured,
Was Abstinence iwis coloured,
Of her estate she her repented,
As her visage represented.
She had a burdoune all of theft,
That Guile had yeue her of his eft,
And a scrippe of faint distresse,
That full was of elengenesse,
And forth she walked soberlie,
And false Semblant faint, ie vous die,
And as it were for such mistere,
Doen on the cope of a Frere,
With cheare simple, and full pitous,
His looking was not disdeinous,
Ne proud, but meeke and full pesible.
About his necke he bare a Bible,
And Squierly forth gan he gon,
And for to rest his limmes vpon,
He had of treason a potent,
As he were feeble, his way he went.
But in his sleue he gan to thring
A rasour sharpe, and well biting,
That was forged in a forge,
Which that men clepen Coupe gorge.
So long forth her way they nomen,
Till they to Wicked Tongue comen,
That at his gate was sitting,
And saw folke in the way passing.
The pilgrimes saw he fast by,
That bearen hem full meekely,
And humbly they with him mette,
Dame Abstinence first him grette,
And sithe him False Semblant salued,
And he hem, but he not remeued,
For he ne dred him not adele:
For when he saw her faces wele,
Alway in heart him thought so,
He should know hem both two,
For well he knew dame Abstinaunce,

But

But he ne knew not Constrainaunce,
He knew nat that she was constrained,
Ne of her theeues life fained,
But wend she come of will all free,
But she come in another degree,
And if of good will she began,
That will was failed her than,

And false Semblant had he seine alse,
But he knew nat that he was false,
Yet false was he, but his falseneſſe,
Ne coud he not espie, nor gesse,
For Semblant was so slie wrought,
That Falseneſſe he ne espyed nought,
But haddeſt thou knowen him beforne,
Thou wouldeſt on a booke haue sworne,
When thou him saw in thilke arraie
That he, that whilom was so gaie,
And of the daunce Jolly Robin
Was tho become a Jacobin:
But soothly what so men him call
Frere Preachours been good men all,
Her order wickedly they bearen
Such minstrels, if they wearen.
So been Augustins, and Cordileers,
And Carmes, and eke sacked Freers,
And all Freers shode and bare,
Though some of hem ben great and square,
Full holy men, as I hem deme,
Eucrich of hem would good man seme:
But shalt thou neuer of apparence
Seene conclude good consequence
In none argument iwis,
If existence all failed is:
For men may finde alway sopheme
The consequence to enuenime,
Who so that hath had the subtiltee
The double sentence for to see.

When the Pilgrimes commen were
To wicked Tongue that dwelled there,
Her harneis nigh hem was algate,
By wicked Tongue adoune they sate,
That bad hem nere him for to come,
And of tidinges tell him some,
And sayd hem: what case maketh you
To come into this place now?

SIr sayd strained Abstinance,
We for to drie our penance,
With hearts pitous and deuout
Are commen, as Pilgrimes gone about,
Well nigh on foote alway we go
Full doughtie been our heeles two,
And thus both we be sent
Throughout the world that is miswent,
To yeue ensample, and preach also,
To silben sinfull men we go,
For other filthing, ne filth we,
And sir, for that charite,
As we be wont, herbrow we craue,
Your life to amenne Christ it saue,
And so it should you not displease,
We woulden, if it were your ease,
A short Sermon vnto you sain,
And wicked Tong answered again.
The house (qd. he) such (as ye see)
Shall not be warned you for me,
Saie what you list, and I woll heare,
Graunt mercie sweet sir deare

(Qd. alderfirst) dame Abstinence,
And thus began she her sentence.
Sir, the first vertue certaine, 28
The greatest, and most soueraigne
That may be found in any man,
For hauing, or for wit he can,
That is his Tongue to refraine,
Thereto ought euerie wight him paine:
For it is better still be, 29
Than for to speaken harme parde,
And he that harkeneth it gladly,
He is no good man sikerly.
And sir, abouen all other sinne,
In that art thou most guiltie inne:
Thou speake a vape, not long agoe.
And sir, that was right euill doe
Of a young man, that here repaired,
And neuer yet this place repaired:
Thou saideſt he awaited nothing,
But to deceiue Faire Welcomming,
Ye sayd nothing sooth of that,
But sir, ye lye I tell ye plat,
He ne commeth no more, ne goeth parde,
I trow ye shall him neuer see,
Faire Welcoming in prison is,
That oft hath played with you er this,
The fairest games that he coude,
Without filth still or loude,
Now dare she not her selfe solace,
Ye han also the man doe chace,
That he dare neither come ne go,
What mooueth you to hate him so?
But properly your wicked thought,
That many a false leſing hath thought,
That mooueth your foule eloquence,
That iangleth euer in audience,
And on the folke ariseth blame,
And doth hem dishonour and shame,
For thing that may haue no preuing,
But likelineſſe, and contriuing.

For I dare saine, that Reason deemeth, 30
It is not all sooth thing that seemeth,
And it is sinne to controue
Thing that is to reprooue,

This wote ye wele, and sir, therefore
Ye arne to blame the more,
And natheleſſe, he recketh lite
He yeueth not now therof a mite,
For if he thought harme perfaie,
He would come and gone all daie,
He could himſelfe not abſteine,
Now commeth he not, and that is ſene,
For he ne taketh of it no cure,
But if it be through auenture,
And laſſe than other folke algate,
And thou her watcheſt at the gate,
With ſpeare in thine areſt alwaie,
There muſe muſard all the daie,
Thou wakeſt night and day for thought,
I wis thy trauaile is for nought,
And Ielouſie withouten faile,
Shall neuer quite thee thy trauaile,
And ſkath is, that faire Welcoming,
Without any treſpalling,
Shall wrongfully in priſon be,
There weepeth and languiſheth he,
And though thou neuer yet iwis,
Agilteſt man no more but this,
Take not a greefe it were worthy
To put thee out of this Baily,
And afterward in priſon lie
And fettred thee till that thou die,
For thou ſhalt for this ſinne dwell
Right in the Diuels arſe of Hell,
But if that thou repent thee.
Naifaie, thou lyeſt falſely (qd. he:)
What, welcome with miſchaunce now,
Haue I therefore herboured you
To ſay me ſhame, and eke reproue,
With ſorrie happe to your behoue,
Am I to day your herbegere
Go herber you elſewhere than here,
That han a lyer called me,
Two tregetours art thou and he,
That in mine houſe doe me this ſhame,
And for my ſoothſaw ye me blame.
Is this the Sermon that ye make?
To all the Diuels I me take,
Or elſe God thou me confound,
But er men didden this Caſtle found,
It paſſeth not ten dayes or twelue,
But it was told right to my ſelue,
And as they ſayd, right ſo told I,
He kiſt the Roſe priuily:
Thus ſayd I now, and haue ſayd yore,
I not where he did any more.
Why ſhould men ſay me ſuch a thing,
If it had been gabbing,
Right ſo ſaide I, and woll ſay yet,
I trow I lyed not of it,
And with my beines I woll blow
To all neighbours arrow,
How he hath both commen and gone.
Tho ſpake falſe Semblaant right anone,
All is not Goſpell out of dout,
That men ſaine in the towne about,
Lay no deſe eare to my ſpeaking,
I ſwere you ſir, it is gabbing,
I trow you wote well certainly,
That no man loueth him tenderly,
That ſayth him harme, if he wote it,
All be he neuer ſo poore of wit,
And ſooth is alſo likerly,
This know ye ſir, as well as I,
That Louers gladly woll viſiten
The places there her loues habiten,
This man you loueth and eke honoureth,
This man to ſerue you laboureth,
And clepeth you his freind ſo deere,
And this man maketh you good cheere,
And euerie man that you meeteth,
He you ſaleweth, and he you greeteth,
He preſeth not ſo oft, that ye
Ought of his comming encombred be:
There preſen other folke on you,
Full ofter than he doeth now,
And if his heart him ſtrained ſo
Unto the Roſe for to go,
Ye ſhould him ſeene ſo oft need,
That ye ſhould take him with the deed,
He could his comming not forbeare,
Though ye him thrilled with a ſpeare,
It nere not then as it is now,
But truſteth well, I ſweare it you,
That it is cleane out of his thought.
Sir, certes he ne thinketh it nought,
No more ne doth Faire Welcomming,
That ſore abieth all this thing,
And if they were of one aſſent,
Full ſoone were the Roſe hent,
The maugre yours would be.
And ſir, of o thing hearkeneth me,
Sith ye this man, that loueth you,
Han ſayd ſuch harme and ſhame, now
Witteth well, if he gelled it,
Ye may well demen in your wit,
He nolde nothing loue you ſo
Ne callen you his friend alſo,
But night and day he woll wake,
The Caſtle to deſtroy and take,
If it were ſooth, as ye deuiſe,
Or ſome man in ſome manner wiſe
Might it warne him eueridele,
Or by himſelfe perceiue wele,
For ſith he might not come and gone
As he was whilom wont to done,
He might it ſoone wite and ſee,
But now all otherwiſe wote hee.
Then haue we ſir, all vtterly
Deſerued Hell, and iollyly

The death of Hell doubtlesse
That thrallen folke so guiltlesse.

False Semblant so prooueth this thing,
That he can none answering,
And seeth alwaie such apparaunce,
That nigh he fell in repentaunce,
And sayd him, sir, it may well be
Semblant, a good man seemen ye,
And Abstinence, full wise ye seeme,
Of o talent you both I deeme,
What counsaile woll ye to me yeuen?
Right here anon thou shalt be shriuen
And say thy sinne, without more
Of this shalt thou repent sore,
For I am Priest, and haue poste,
To shriue folke of most dignite
That ben as wide as world may dure,
Of all this world I haue the cure,
And that had neuer yet personn,
Ne vicarie of no manner toun.
And God wote I haue of thee,
A thousand times more pitee,
Than hath thy Priest parochiall
Though he thy friend be speciall.
I haue auauntage, in o wise,
That your Priests be not so wise
Ne halfe so lettred (as am I)
I am licensed boldly,
In Diuinitie for to read,
And to confessen out of dread.
If ye woll you now confesse,
And leaue your sinnes more and lesse,
Without abode, kneele doune anon,
And you shall haue absolution.

¶ Here after followeth the Booke of Troilus and Creseide.

In this excellent Booke is shewed the feruent loue of Troylus to Creiseid, whome hee enioyed for a time: and her great vntruth to him againe in giuing her selfe to Diomedes, who in the end did so cast her off, that she came to great miserie. In which discourse Chaucer liberally treateth of the diuine purueiaunce.

THe double sorrow of Troilus to tellen,
That was Kinge Priamus Sonne of Troy,
In louing, how his auentures fellen
From woe to wele, and after out of ioy,
My purpose is, er that I part froy.
Thou Thesiphone, thou helpe me for tendite
These wofull verses, that wepen as I write.

To thee I clepe, thou Goddesse of torment
Thou cruell furie, sorowing euer in paine,
Helpe me that am the sorrowfull instrument,
That helpeth Louers, as I can complaine:
For well sit it, the sooth for to saine,
A wofull wight to haue a drery feare,
And to a sorrowfull tale a sorie cheare.

For I that God of Loues seruaunts serue,
Ne dare to Loue (for mine vnlikelynesse)
Prayen for speed, all should I therefore sterue,
So farre am I fro his helpe in derkenesse.
But natheless, if this may done gladnesse
To any Louer, and his cause auaile,
Haue he my thanke, and mine be the trauaile.

But ye Louers that bathen in gladnesse,
If any droppe of pitie in you be,
Remembreth you of passed heauinesse
That ye haue felt, and on the aduersite
Of other folke, and thinketh how that ye
Han felt, that loue durst you to displease,
Else ye han won him with too great an ease.

And prayeth for hem that been in the case
Of Troilus, as ye may after heare:
That he hem bring in heauen to solace.
And eke for me prayeth to God so deare,
That I haue might to shew in some manere,
Such paine and woe, as loues folke endure,
In Troilus vnsely auenture.

And biddeth eke for hem that ben dispeired
In Loue, that neuer will recouered be:
And eke for hem that falsely ben apeired,
Through wicked tongues, be it he or she:
Thus biddeth God for his benignite,
So grant hem sone out of this world to pace
That ben dispaired out of Loues grace.

And biddeth eke for hem that ben at ease,
That God hem graunt aie good perseuerance,
And send hem grace her loues for to please,
That it to loue be worship and pleasance:
For so hope I my selfe best to auance
To pray for hem, that loues seruaunts be,
And write her woe, and liue in charite.

And for to haue of hem compassioun,
As though I were her owne brother dere,
Now hearkeneth with a good entencioun,
For now will I go straight to my matere:
In which ye may the double sorrowes here
Of Troilus, in louing of Creseide,
And how she forsoke him er that she deide.

IT is well wist, how that the grekes strong
In armes all with a thousand ships went

To

To Troie wardes, and the Citie long
Besiegeden nigh ten yeres ere they stent,
And in diuers wise, and one entent,
The rauishing to wreake of Queene Helcine,
By Paris don, they wroughten all her peine.

Now fell it so, that in the toune there was
Dwelling a Lord of great authorite
A great diuine, that cleped was Calcas,
That in that science so expert was, that he
Knew well, that Troie should destroyed be,
By answeare of his God, that hight thus,
Dan Phebus, or Apollo Delphicus.

So when this Calcas knew by calculing,
And eke by the answeare of this God Apollo,
That the greckes should such a people bring,
Through which that Troy must be fordo,
He cast anone out of the toune to goe:
For well he wist by sort, that Troie sholde
Destroyed be, ye would who so or nolde.

Wherefore he to departen softly,
Tooke purpose full, this forknowing wise,
And to the Greekes host full priuely
He stale anone, and they in courteous wise
Did to him both worship and seruise,
In trust that he hath cunning hem to rede
In euerie perill, which that was to dread.

Great rumour rose, when it was first espied,
In all the toune, and openly was spoken,
That Calcas traitour fled was and alied
To hem of Grece: and cast was to be wroken
On him, that falsely hath his faith broken,
And sayd: he and all his kinne atones,
Were worthy to be brent, both fell and bones.

Now had Calcas left in this mischaunce,
Unwist of this false and wicked dede,
A daughter, which was in great penaunce,
And of her life she was full sore in drede,
And wist neuer what best was to rede:
And as a widdow was she, and all alone,
And nist to whome she might make her mone.

Creseide was this Ladies name aright,
As to my dome, in all Troies Citie
Most fairest Ladie, farre passing euerie wight
So angellike shone her native beaute,
That no mortall thing seemed she:
And therewith was she so perfect a creature,
As she had be made in scorning of nature.

This Ladie, that all day heard at eare
Her Fathers shame, falshede, and treasoun,
(Full nigh out of her wit for sorrow and feare,
In widdowes habite large of samite broun)
Before Hector on knees she fell adoun,
And his mercy bad, her selfe excusing,
With pitous voice, and tenderly weeping.

Now was this Hector pitous of nature,
And saw that she was sorrowfull begone,
And that she was so faire a creature,
Of his goodnesse he gladed her anone,
And said: let your fathers traison gone
Forth with mischance, and ye your selfe in ioy,
Dwelleth with vs while you list in Troy.

And all the honour that men may do ye haue,
As forforth as though your father dwelt here,
Ye shull haue, and your body shull men saue,
As ferre as I may ought enquire and here:
And she him thanked with full good chere,
And ofter would, and it had been his will.
She took her leue, went home, & held her still.

And in her house she abode with such meine,
As till her honour need was to hold,
And while she was dwelling in that cite,
She kept her estate, and of yong and old
Full well beloued, and men well of her told:
But whether that she childzen had or none,
I rede it nat, therefore I let it gone.

The things fellen as they don of werre,
Betwixen hem of Troy and Greekes oft,
For sometime boughten they of Troy it derre,
And eke the Greekes founden nothing soft
The folke of Troy: and thus fortune aloft,
And vnder eke gan hem to whelmen both,
After her course, aie while ỳ they were wroth.

But how this toune came to destruction,
Ne falleth not to purpose me to tell,
For it were a long digression
Fro my matter, and you too long to dwell,
But the Troyan iestes all as they fell,
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dite,
Who so ỳ can, may reden hem as they write.

But though ỳ Grecks hem of Troy in shetten,
And her citie besieged all about,
Her old vlages nolde they not letten,
As to honouren her gods full deuout,
But aldermost in honour out of dout,
They had a relike hight Palladion,
That was her trust abouen euerychon.

And so befell, when comen was the time
Of Aprill, when clothed is the mede,
With new greene, of lustie ver the prime,
And with sweet smelling floures white & rede
In sondrie wise shewed as I rede:
The folke of Troie, their obseruances old,

Palladi-

Palladions feast went for to hold.

Unto the Temple in all their best wise,
Generally there went many a wight,
To hearken of Palladions seruise,
And namely many a lustie knight,
And many a Ladie fresh, and maiden bright,
Full well arraied both most and least,
Both for the season and the high feast.

Among these other folke was Creseida,
In widdowes habite blacke: but natheles
Right as our first letter is now an a
In beautie first, so stoode she makeles,
Her goodly looking gladded all the prees,
Nas neuer seene thing to be praised so derre
Nor vnder cloude blacke so bright a sterre,

As was Creseide, they sayden euerichone,
That her behelden in her blacke wede,
And yet she stood full lowe and still alone,
Behinde other folke in little bread,
And nie the dore vnder shames dread,
Simple of attire, and debonaire of chere,
With full assured looking and manere.

This Troilus as he was wont to guide
His yong knights, he lad hem vp and doune,
In thilke large Temple on euerie side,
Beholding aie the Ladies of the toune,
Now here now there, for no deuotioune,
Had he to none, to reuen him his rest,
But gan to praise and lacke whome he lest.

And in his walke full fast he gan to waiten,
If knight or squier of his companie,
Gan for to like, or let his eyen baiten
On any woman, that he coud espie,
He would smile, and hold it a follie,
And say hem thus: O Lord she sleepeth soft
For loue of thee, when thou turnest full oft.

I haue heard tell pardieux of your liuing
Ye Louers, and eke your lewd obseruaunces,
And which a labour folke haue in winning,
Of loue, and in keeping such doutaunces,
And when your pray is lost, wo & penaunces:
O, verie fooles, blinde and nice be ye,
There is not one can ware by another be.

And with that word he gan cast vp the brow,
Ascaunces lo, is this not well ispoken,
At which the God of Loue gan looken low,
Right for dispite, and shope him to be wroken.
He kidde anone his bow was not broken:
For sodainly he hitte him at the full,
And yet as proude a peacocke gan he pull.

O blinde world, o blinde entention,
How often falleth all the effect contraire
Of sequedrie and foule presumption,
For caught is proude, & caught is debonaire:
This Troilus is clomben on the staire,
And little weneth that he mote descenden,
But all day it falleth that fooles wenden.

As proud bayard beginneth for to skippe
Out of the way, so pricketh him his corne,
Till he a lash haue of the long whippe,
Then thinketh he, though I praūce all beforn
First in the traise, full fat and new ishorne,
Yet am I but an horse, and horses law
I must endure, and with my feeres draw.

So fared it by this fiers and proude knight,
Though he a worthy kinges sonne were,
And wend nothing had had such might,
Ayenst his will, that should his heart stere,
Yet with a looke his heart wore on fire,
That he that now was most in pride aboue,
Wore sodainly most subiect vnto Loue.

For thy ensample taketh of this man,
Ye wise, proud, and worthy folkes all,
To scornen loue, which that so soone can
The freedome of your hearts to him thrall,
For euer it was, and euer it be shall,
That loue is he that all thing may bind,
For no man may fordo the law of kind.

That this be sooth, hath preued and doth yet
For this (I trow) ye know all and some
Men reden not that folke han greater wit
Than they ỹ han ben most with loue inome,
And strengest folke been therewith ouercome,
The worthyest and greatest of degree,
This was and is, and yet man shall it see.

And truelich that sitte well to be so,
For alderwisest han therewith ben pleased,
And they that han ben aldermost in wo,
With loue, han ben comforted and most eased,
And oft it hath the cruell heart apeased,
And worthy folke made worthier of name,
And causeth most to dreden vice and shame.

Now sith it may nat goodly be withstond,
And is a thing so vertuous in kind,
Refuseth nought to loue, ne to ben bond,
Sith as him selue list he may you bind,
The yerde is bette that bowen woll and wind
Than that that brest, and therfore I you rede,
Now followeth him, that so wel can you lede.

But for to tellen forth in speciall,
As of this kings sonne, of which I told,

And

And leuen other thing collaterall,
Of him thinke I my tale forth to hold,
Both of his ioy, and of his cares cold,
And his werke, as touching this matere,
For I it gan, I will thereto refere.

Within the temple he went him forth playing
This Troilus, of euerie wight about,
Now on this Ladie, a now on that looking,
Where so he were of towne, or of without:
And vpon case befell, that through a rout
His eye perced, and so deepe it went
Till on Creseide it smote, and there it stent,

And sodainly for wonder wext astoned,
And gan her bet behold in thriftie wise:
O very God thought he wher hast thou woned,
That art so faire and goodly to deuise,
Therewith his heart gan to spread and rise,
And soft sighed, least men might him here,
And caught ayen his first playing chere.

She nas nat with the most of her stature,
But all her limmes so well answearing
Weren to womanhood, that creature
Was neuer lasse mannish in seeming,
And eke the pure wise of her meaning
Shewed well, that men might in her gesse
Honour, estate, and womanly noblesse.

Tho Troilus, right wonder well withall
Gan for to like her meaning and her chere,
Which somdele deignous was, for she let fall
Her looke a little aside, in such manere
Disdaunces, what may I not stonden here,
And after that her looking gan she light,
That neuer thought him seen so good a sight.

And of her loke in him there gan to quicken
So great desire, and such affection,
That in his hearts bottome gan to sticken
Of her fire, and deepe impression:
And though he earst had pored vp and doun,
Then was he glad his hornes in to shrinke,
Unnethes wist he how to looke or winke.

Lo, he that lete him selfen so cunning,
And scorned hem that loues paines dyen,
Was full vnware that loue had his dwelling
Within the subtill streames of her eyen,
That sodainely him thought he felt dyen,
Right with her looke, the spirite in his heart,
Blessed be loue, that thus can folke conuert.

She thus in blacke, liking to Troilus,
Ouer all thing he stood for to behold:
But his desire, ne wherefore he stood thus,
He neither chere made, ne word thereof told,
But from a ferre, his manner for to hold,
On other thing sometime his looke he cast,
And eft on her, while that the seruice last:

And after this, nat full wish all awhaped,
Out of the Temple eftsoons he went,
Repenting him that euer he had yaped
Of loues folke, least fully the dissent
Of scorne fell on himselfe, but what he ment,
Least it were wist on any manner side,
His woe he gan dissimulen and hide.

When he was fro the Temple thus departed,
He straight anone vnto his Pallaice turneth,
Right with her loke through shotten and darted
All faineth he in hart that he sojourneth
And all his chere and speech also he burneth,
And aie of Loues seruaunts euerie while
Him selfe to wrie, at hem he gan to smile,

And sayd Lord, so they liue all in lust
Ye Louers, for the cunningest of you,
That seruen most ententifelich and best
Him tite as often harme thereof as prow,
Your hire is quit ayen, ye God wote how,
Not well for well, but scorne for good seruise,
In faith your order is ruled in good wise.

In no certaine been your obseruaunces,
But it onely a selfe few points be,
Ne nothing asketh so great attendaunces,
As doth your laie, and that know all ye,
But that is not the worst, as mote I thee:
But told I you the worst point, I leue,
All sayd I sooth, ye wouldden at me greue.

But take this: that ye Louers oft eschew,
Or elles done of good entention:
Full oft thy Ladie will it misse construe,
And deeme it harme in her opinion.
And yet if she for other enchelon,
Be wroth, then shalt thou haue a groin anon
Lord, well is him that may been of you one.

But for al this, when that he seeth his time
He held his peace, none other bote him gained.
For Loue began his feathers so to lime,
That well vneth vnto his folke he fained,
That other busie needs him distrained,
So woe was him, that what to done he nist,
But bad his folke to gon where as hem list.

And when that he in chamber was alone,
He doune vpon his beds feet him set,
And first he gan to sike, and eft to grone,
And thought aie on her so withouten let,
That as he sate and woke, his spirit met
That he her saw, and temple, and all the wise

Right

Right of her looke, and gan it new auise.

Thus gan he make a mirrour of his mind,
In which he saw all wholy her figure,
And that he well coud in his heart find
It was to him a right good auenture
To loue such one, and if he did his cure
To seruen her, yet might he fall in grace,
Or else, for one of her seruants pace.

Imagining, that trauaile nor grame
Ne might, for so gooly one be lorne
As she, ne him for his desire no shame
All were it wist, but in prise and vp borne
Of all Louers, well more than beforne
Thus argumented he, in his ginning,
Full vnauised of his wo comming.

Thus tooke he purpose loues craft to sewe
And thought he would worken priuily
First for to hide his desire in mewe
From euerie wight iborne, all ouerly,
But he might ought recouered been thereby
Remembring him, that loue too wide iblowe
Yelt bitter feuite, though sweet sred be sowe.

And ouer all this, full mokell more he thought
What for to speake, and what to holden inne
And what to arten, er to loue he sought,
And on a song anone right to beginne.
And gan loude on his sorrow for to winne
For with good hope, he gan fully assent,
Creseide for to loue, and nought repent.

And of his song not onely his sentence,
As write mine Authour called Lolius,
But plainely saue our tongues difference,
I dare well say, in all that Troilus
Sayed in his song, lo euerie word right thus,
As I shall saine, and who so list it heare
Lo this next verse, he may it finde there.

¶ The song of Troilus.

If no loue is, O God what feele I so?
And if Loue is, what thing and which is he?
If Loue be good, frō whence cometh my wo?
If it be wicke, a wonder thinketh me,
When euerie torment and aduersite
That cometh of him, may to me sauery think:
For aie thurst I the more that iche it drinke.

And if that at mine owne lust I brenne,
Frō whence cometh my wailing & my plaint:
If harme agree me, whereto plaine I thenne,
I not, ne why, vnwery that I feint,
O quicke death, o sweet harme so queint,
How may of the in me be such quantite,
But if that I consent that it so be?

And if that I consent, I wrongfully
Complaine iwis, thus possed to and fro,
All sterelesse within a bote am I
Amidde the sea, atwixen windes two,
That in contrarie stonden euer mo,
Alas, what is this wonder maladie?
For heat of cold, for cold of heat I die.

And to the God of loue thus sayd he
With pitous voice, O Lord now yours is
My spirite, which that oughten yours to be,
You thanke I Lord, ẏ han me brought to this:
But whether goddesse or woman iwis
She be, I not, which that ye doe me serue,
But as her man I woll aie liue and sterue.

Ye stonden in her eyen mightily,
As in a place to your vertue digne:
Wherefore Lord, if my seruise or I
May liken you, so beth to me benigne,
For mine estate royall here I resigne
Into her honde, and with full humble chere
Become her man, as to my Ladie dere.

In him ne deigned to sparen blood royall
The fire of loue, wherefro God me blesse,
Ne him forbare in no degree, for all
His vertue, or his excellent prowesse,
But held him as his thrall lowe in distresse,
And brend him so in sundrie wise aie newe,
That sixtie times a day he lost his hewe.

So muchell day fro day his owne thought
For lust to her, gan quicken and encrease,
That eueriche other charge he set at nought,
For thy full oft, his hot fire to cease,
To seen her goodly looke he gan to prease,
For thereby to ben eased well he wend,
And aie the nere he was, the more he brend.

For aie the nere the fire the hotter is,
This (trow I) knoweth all this companie:
But were he ferre or nere, I dare say this,
By night or day, for wisedome or follie,
His heart, which that is his brestes eie,
Was aie on her, that fairer was to seene
Than euer was Helein, or Polixene.

Eke of the day there passed not an houre,
Than to himselfe a thousand times he sayd,
God goodly, to whome I serue and labour
As I best can, now would to God Creseide
Ye woulden on me rue, er that I deide:
My dere heart alas, mine hele and my hew,
And life is lost, but ye woll on me rew.

All other dredes weren from him fled,
Both of thassiege, and his saluation,

Ne in desire none other founes bred,
But arguments to his conclusion,
That she on him would haue compassion
And he to ben her man, while he may dure,
Lo here his life, and from his death his cure.

The sharpe showers fell of armes preue
That Hector or his other brethren didden
Ne made him onely therefore ones meue,
And yet was he, where so men went or ridden,
Found one the best, and lengest time abiden
There perill was, and eke did such trauaile
In armes, that to thinke it was a maruaile.

But for none hate he to the Greekes had,
Ne also for the rescous of the toun,
Ne made him thus in armes for to mad,
But onely lo, for this conclusioun
To liken her the bet for his renoun,
Fro day to day in armes so he sped,
That all the Greekes as the death him dred.

And fro this forth tho reft him loue his slepe
And made his meate his foe, & eke his sorrow
Gan multiply, that who so tooke keepe,
In shewed in his hew both euen and morow:
Therefore a title he gan him for to borow
Of other sickenesse, least men of him wend
That the hot fire of loue him brend.

And sayd he had a feuer, and fared amis,
But were it certaine I cannot sey
If that his Ladie understood not this
Or fained her she nist, one of the twey:
But well rede I, that by no manner wey
Ne seemed it that she on him rought,
Or of his paine, what so euer he thought.

But then felt this Troilus such wo
That he was welnigh wood, for ate his dede
Was this, that she some wight loued so,
That neuer of him she would han take heed:
For which him thought he felt his hart bleed,
Ne of his woe ne durst he nought begin
To tellen her, for all this world to win.

But when he had a space left from his care,
Thus to himselfe full oft he gan to plaine:
He sayed, o foole now art thou in the snare,
That whilom paydest at louers paine:
Now art thou hēt, now gnaw thin own chain
Thou wert aie woned ech louer reprehend
Of thing fro which thou canst not thee defend.

What will now euerie louer saine of thee,
If this be wist? But euer in thine absence
Laughen in scorne, and saine, lo there goeth he
That is the man of great sapience,
That held vs louers least in reuerence:
Now thanked be God, he may gen on ỹ daunce
Of hem that loue list feebly auaunce.

But o, thou wofull Troilus, God would,
(Sith thou must louen, through thy destine)
That thou beset wer of soch one, that should
Know all thy wo, all lacked her pitee:
But all too cold in loue towards thee
Thy ladie is, as frost in Winter Moone,
And thou for do, as Snow in fire is soone.

God would I were arriued in the port
Of death, to which my sorow will me lede:
Ah Lord, to me it were a great comfort,
Then were I quite of languishing in drede:
For by my hidde sorow iblowe in brede,
I shall beraped been a thousand time,
Wore than that foole, of whose folly mē rime.

But now help God, & ye my sweet, for whom
I plaine, iought ye neuer wight so fast:
O mercie deare hart, and helpe me from
The death, for I, while that my life may last,
Wore than my selfe will loue you to my last,
And with some frendly look gladeth me swete,
Though neuermore thing ye to me behete.

These words, and full many another mo
He spake, and called euer in his complaint
Her name, for to tellen her his wo,
Till nigh that he in salt teares was dreint,
All was for nought, she heard nat his pleint:
And when that he bethought on that follie,
A thousand fold his woe gan multiplie.

Bewailing in his chamber thus alone,
A friend of his, that called his Pandare,
Came ones in vnware, and heard him grone,
And saw his friend in such distresse and care:
Alas (qd. he) who causeth all this fare?
O mercy God, what vnhappe may this mene?
Han now thus sone ỹ Greeks made you lene?

Or hast thou some remorse of conscience?
And art now fall in some deuotion,
And waylest for thy sinne and thine offence,
And hast for ferde cought contrition?
God saue hem, that besieged han our toun,
That so can laie our follitie on preste,
And bring our lustie folke to holynesse.

These wordes sayd he for the nones all,
ỹ with such thing he might him angry maken
And with his anger done his sorow fall,
As for a time, and his courage awaken:
But well wist he, as farre as tongues speaken,
There nas a man of greater hardinesse

Than

Than he,ne more desired worthinesse.

What cas(qd. Troilus)or what auenture
Hath guided thee to seen me languishing,
That am refuse of euerie creature?
But for the loue of God, at me praying
Goe hence away, for certes my dying,
Will thee disease,and I mote needs deie,
Therefore goe way, there nis no more to seie.

But if thou wene,I be thus sicke for drede,
It is not so,and therefore scorne nought:
There is an other thing I take of hede,
Wel more thã ought ỹ grekes han yet wrought
Which cause is of my deth for sorow & thought:
But though that I now tell it thee ne lest,
Be thou not wroth,I hide it for the best.

This Pandare, that nigh malt for wo & routh
Full often sayed alas,what may this be?
Now friend (qd. he) if euer loue or trouth
Hath been er this betwixen thee and me,
Ne doe thou neuer such a cruelte,
To hiden fro thy friend so great a care,
Wost thou not well that I am Pandare?

I woll parten with thee all thy paine,
If it so be I doe thee no comfort
As it is friends right, sooth for to saine,
To enterparten woe, as glad disport
I haue and shall, for true or false report
In wrong and right loued thee all my liue,
Hide not thy woe fro me,but tell it bliue.

Then gan this sorrowfull Troilus to sike,
And sayd him thus,God leue it be my best
To tellen thee,for sith it may thee like,
Yet woll I tell it, though my heart brest,
And well wote I, thou maiest doe me no rest,
But least thou deeme I trust not to thee
Now hearke friend, for thus it stant with me.

Loue, ayenst the which who so defendeth
Him seluen most,him alderlest auaileth,
With despaire so sorrowfully me offendeth
That straight vnto the death my hart faileth:
Thereto desire, so brenningly me assaileth,
That to been slaine,it were a greater ioy
To me, than king of Grece be and of Troy.

Suffiseth this, my full friend Pandare,
That I haue said,for now wotest thou my wo:
And for the loue of God my cold care
So hide it well, I told it neuer to mo:
For harmes mighten follown mo than two
If it were wist,but be thou in gladnesse,
And let me sterue vnknowne of my distresse.

How hast thou thus vnkindly and long
Hid this fro me,thou foole? (qd. Pandarus)
Perauenture thou mayst after such one long,
That mine auise anone may helpen vs:
This were a wonder thing (qd. Troilus)
Thou couldest neuer in loue thy selfen wisse,
How diuell maiest thou bringen me to blisse.

Ne Troilus, now hearken (qd. Pandare)
Though I be nice, it happeth often so,
That one that of axes doeth full euill fare,
By good counsaile can keep his frend therefro:
I haue my selfe seen a blinde man go
There as he fell, that could looken wide,
A foole may eke a wise man oft guide.

A whetstone is no caruing instrument,
But yet it maketh sharpe keruing tolis,
And after thou wost ỹ I haue aught miswent,
Eschue thou that, for such thing to schole is,
Thus often wise men bewaren by foolis:
If thou so doe,thy wit is well bewared,
By his contrarie is euerie thing declared.

For how might euer swetnesse haue be know
To him,that neuer tasted bitternesse?
No man wot what gladnesse is I trow,
That neuer was in sorrow, or some distresse:
Eke white by blacke,by shame eke worthines
Each set by other,more for other seemeth,
As men may seen, and so the wise it deemeth.

Sith thus of two contraries is o lore,
I that haue in Loue so oft assayed,
Greuaunces,ought connen well the more
Counsailen thee,of that thou art dismayed,
And eke thee ne ought not been euill apaied,
Though I desire with thee for to beare
Thine heauie charge, it shall thee lasse deare.

I wote well that it fared thus by me,
As to thy brother Paris,an hierdesse,
Which that icleped was Oenone,
Wrote in a complaint of her heauinesse:
Ne saw the letter that she wrote I gesse:
Nay neuer yet iwis (qd. Troilus)
Now (qd. Pandare) hearken eth it was thus.

Phebus, that first found art of medicine,
(Qd. she) and coud in euerie wightes care
Remedie and rede,by herbes he knew fine,
Yet to himselfe his cunning was full bare,
For loue had him so bounden in a snare,
All for the daughter of king Admete,
That all his craft ne coud his sorrow bete.

Right so fare I,vnhappie for me,
I loue one best,and that me smerteth sore:

And yet peraventure I can reden thee
And nat my selfe: repreue me no more,
I haue no cause I wote well for to sore,
As doeth an hauke, that listeth for to play,
But to thine helpe, yet somewhat can I say.

And of o thing, right liker mayest thou be,
That certaine, for to dyen in the paine
That I shall neuer mo discouer thee,
Ne by my trouth, I keepe nat to restraine
Thee fro thy loue, although it were Helleine,
That is thy brothers wife, if ithe it wist,
Be what she be, and loue her as thee list.

Therefore as friendfullich in me assure,
And tell me platte, what is thine encheson,
And finall cause of woe, that ye endure:
For doubteth nothing, mine entention
Nas not to you of reprehension
To speake, as now, for no wight may bereue
A man to loue, till that him list to leue.

And weeteth well, that both two been vices,
Mistrusten all, or else all beleue:
But well I wote, the meane of it no vice is,
As for to trusten some wight is a preue
Of trouth, and for thy, would I faine remeue
Thy wrong conceit, & do the some wight trust
Thy woe to tell: and tell me if thou lust.

The wise eke sayeth, woe him that is alone,
For and he fall, he hath none helpe to rise:
And sith thou hast a fellow, tell thy mone,
For this nis nought certaine the next wise
To winnen loue, as teachen vs the wise,
To wallow and weep, as Niobe the Queene,
Whose teares yet in marble been seene.

Let be thy weeping, and thy derinesse,
And let vs lessen woe, with other speech,
So may thy wofull time seeme the lesse,
Delight nought in woe, thy woe to seech,
As doen these fooles, that her sorrowes eche
With sorrowe, when they han misauenture,
And lusten nought to seechen other cure.

Wen saine, to wretch is consolation
To haue another fellow in his paine,
That ought well been our opinion,
For both thou and I of loue doe plaine,
So full of sorrow am I, sooth to saine,
That certainly, as now no more hard grace
May sit on me, for why there is no space.

If God woll, thou art nought agast of me,
Least I would of thy Ladie thee beguile:
Thou wost thy selfe, whom that I loue parde
As I best can, gone sithen long while,
And sithen thou wost, I doe it for no wile,
And sith I am he, that thou trusteth most,
Tell me somwhat, since all my woe thou wost.

Yet Troilus, for all this no word said,
But long he lay still, as he dead were,
And after this, with sikinge he abraid,
And to Pandarus voice he lent his care,
And vp his eyen cast he: and then in feare
Was Pandarus, least that in frenesye,
He should either fall or else soone dye.

And sayd awake, full wonderlich & sharpe,
What slumbrest thou, as in a litargie?
Or art thou like an Asse to the harpe,
That heareth sound, when men ỹ strings ply?
But in his minde, of that no melodie
May sinke him to gladen, for that he
So dull is, in his beastialite.

And with this, Pandare of his words stent:
But Troilus to him nothing answerde,
For why, to tell was nought his entent
Neuer to no man, for whome that he so ferde:
For it is sayd, men maken oft a yerde
With which the maker is himselfe ibeten
In sundrie manner, as these wise men treten.

And namelich in his counsaile telling,
That toucheth Loue, that ought been secre:
For of himselfe it woll inough out spring
But if that it the bet gouerned be,
Eke sometime it is craft to seeme flee
Fro thing which in effect men hunten fast:
All this gan Troilus in his heart cast.

But natheles, when he had heard him crie,
Awake he gan, and sike wonder sore:
And sayd my friend, though that I still lie,
I nam not deefe, now peace and crie no more:
For I haue heard thy wordes and thy lore,
But suffer me my Fortune to bewailen,
For thy prouerbs may nought me auailen.

Nor other cure canst thou none for me
Eke I nill not been cured, I woll die:
What know I of the Queene Niobe?
Let be thine old ensamples, I thee prey.
No friend (qd. Pandarus) therfore I ley,
Such is delight of fooles to beweepe
Her woe, but to seeken bote they ne keepe.

Now know I that reason in thee faileth:
But tell me, if I wist what she were
For whome that thee all misauenture aileth,
Durst thou that I told it in her eare
Thy woe, sith thou darst not thy selfe for feare,
And her besought, on thee to han some routhe?

Why

Nay nay (qd. he) by God and by my trouth.

What, not as busily (qd. Pandarus)
As though mine owne life lay in this need:
Why no parde sir (qd. this Troilus)
And why? for that thou shouldest neuer speed:
Wost thou that well? ye that is out of dreed,
(qd. Troilus) for all that euer ye conne,
She woll to no such wretch as I be wonne.

(qd. Pandarus) alas what may this be,
That thou dispaired art, thus causelesse,
What, liueth nat thy Ladie, benedicite?
How wost thou so, that thou art gracelesse,
Such euill is not alway botelesse:
Why put not impossible thus thy cure,
Sith thing to come is oft in auenture,

I graunt weil that thou endurest wo,
As sharpe as doth he Tityus in hell,
Whose stomacke foules tiren euermo,
That highten vultures, as bookes tell:
But I may not endure that thou dwell
In so vnskilfull an opinion,
That of thy woe nis no curation.

But ones nill thou, for thy coward heart,
And for thine ye, and foolish wilfulnesse,
For wantrust tellen of thy sorrowes smert,
Ne to thine owne helpe doe businesse,
As much as speake a word, yea more or lesse,
But lyest as he that of life nothing retch,
What woman liuing coud loue such a wretch?

What may she demen other of thy death,
If thou thus die, and she not why it is,
But that for feare, is polden vp thy breath,
For Greekes han besieged vs twis:
Lord which a thãk shalt thou haue thã of this
Thus woll she saine, and all the toune atones,
The wretch is deed, the diuell haue his bones.

Thou mayest alone here weep, cry, & knele,
And loue a woman that she wote it nought,
And she will quite it that thou shalt not feele:
Unknow vnkist, and lost that is vnsought.
What, many a man hath loue full dere thought
Twentie winter that his Ladie ne wist,
That neuer yet his Ladies mouth he kist.

What, should he therfore fallen in dispaire?
Or be recreaunt for his owne tene,
Or slaine himselfe, all be his Ladie faire?
Nay nay: but euer in one be fresh and greene,
To serue and loue his dere hearts queene,
And thinke it is a guerdone her to serue
A thousand part more than he can deserue.

And of that word tooke heede Troilus,
And thought anon, what folly he was in,
And how that sooth him sayd Pandarus,
That for to slaien himselfe, might he not win,
But both doen vnmanhood and a sinne,
And of his death his Ladie nought to wite,
For of his woe, God wote she knew full lite.

And with that thought, he gan full sore sike,
And sayd, alas, what is me best to doe?
To whome Pandare sayed, if thee it like,
The best is, that thou tell me thy woe,
And haue my trouth, but if thou finde it so
I be thy boote, or it been full long,
To peeces doe me drawe, and sithen hong.

Yea, so sayest thou (qd. Troilus) alas,
But God wote it is nought the rather so:
Full hard it were to helpen in this cas,
For well finde I, that fortune is my fo:
Me all the men that ride con or go,
May of her cruell whele the harme withstond
For as her list, she playeth with free and bond.

(Qd. Pandarus) then blamest thou Fortune,
For thou art wroth, ye now at earst I see
Wost thou not well that Fortune is commune
To euerie manner wight, in some degree?
And yet thou hast this comfort, lo parde,
That as her ioyes moten ouergone,
So mote her sorrowes passen euerichone.

For if her whele stint, any thing to tourne,
Then ceseth she fortune anone to be:
Now sith her whele by no way may soiourn,
What wost thou of her mutabilitie,
Whether as thy selfe lust she woll don by thee,
Or that she be nought ferre fro thine helping:
Peraventure thou hast cause for to sing.

And therefore wost thou what, I thee beseech,
Let be thy woe, and tourning to the ground:
For who so list haue healing of his leech,
To him behoueth first vnwrie his wound:
To Cerberus in hell aie be I bound,
Wer it for my luster all thy sorrow,
By my will she should be thine to morrow.

Looke vp I say, and tell me what she is
Anone, that I may gone about thy need:
Know ich her aught, for my loue tell me this,
Then would I hope rather for to speed:
Tho gan the veine of Troilus to bleed,
For he was hit, and wexe all redde for shame,
Aha (qd. Pandara) here beginneth game.

And with that word, he gan him for to shake,
And sayd him thus, thou shalt her name tell:

But tho gan sely Troilus for to quake,
As though men should han had hym into hell,
And sayed alas, of all my woe the well,
Than is my swete foe called Cresside,
And well nigh with ẏ word for feare he deide.

And when ẏ Pandare herd her name neuen
Lord he was glad, and saied, friend so deere,
Now fare a right, for Ioues name in heauen,
Loue hath beset thee well, be of good cheere,
For of good name, and wisedome, and manere
She hath inough, and eke of gentlenesse,
If she be faire, thou wost thy selfe, I gesse.

Ne neuer sei I a more bounteous
Of her estate, ne a gladder: ne of speech
A friendlyer, ne more gracious
For to doe well, ne lasse had ned to seech
What for to doen, and all this bet to ech
In honour, to as farre as she may stretch
☞ A kinges heart seemeth by hers a wretch.

And for thy, looke of good comfort thou be:
For certainely the first point is this
Of noble courage, and well ordaine the
A man to haue peace within himselfe iwis:
So oughtest thou, for nought but good it is,
☞ To louen well, and in a worthy place,
Thee ought not elepe it happe, but grace.

And also thinke, and therewith glad thee,
That sith the Ladie vertuous is all
So followeth it, that there is some pitee
Amonges all these other in generall,
And for they see that thou in speciall
Requere nought, that is ayen her name,
☞ For vertue stretcheth not himselfe to shame.

But well is me, that euer I was borne,
That thou beset art in so good a place:
For by my trouth in loue I durst haue swore,
Thee should neuer haue tidde so faire a grace,
And wost thou why? for thou wer wot to chace
At loue in scorne, and for dispite him call
☞ Saint Idiote, lord of these fooles all.

How often hast thou made thy nice japes,
And saied, that loues seruaunts ouerchone
☞ Of nicete, ben verie Goddes apes,
And some would monche her meat all alone,
Ligging a bed, and make hem for to grone,
And some thou saidest had a blaunch feuere,
And praidest God, they should neuer keuere.

And some of hem, tooke on hem for the cold,
More than inough, so saydest thou full oft:
And some han fained oft time and told,
How that they waken, when they sleepe soft,
And thus they would haue set hem selfe a loft,
And natheles were vnder at the last,
Thus saydest thou, and japedest full fast.

Yet saydest thou, that for the more part,
These Louers would speake in generall,
And thoughten it was a liker art,
For failing, for to assayen ouer all:
Now may I yape of thee, if that I shall.
But natheless, though that I should deie,
Thou art none of tho, I dare well seie.

Now bete thy brest, and say to God of loue,
Thy grace Lord, for now I me repent
If I misspake, for now my selfe, I loue:
Thus say with all thine heart, in good entent,
(Qd. Troilus) ah Lord, I me consent,
And pray to thee, my japes thou forgeue,
And I shall neuer more while I liue.

Thou sayst well (qd. Pandare) for now I hope
That thou the goddes wrath hast al apeased:
And sith thou hast wepten many a drop,
For said such thing wherwith thy God is pleased,
Now would neuer God, but thou were eased:
And thinke well she, of whome rest all thy wo,
Here after may thy comfort been also.

For thilke ground, ẏ beareth ẏ wedes wicke
Beareth eke these holsome herbes, as full oft:
Next the foule nettle, rough and thicke,
The Rose wexeth, soote, smooth, and soft,
And next the valey is the hill a loft,
And next the derke night the glad morowe,
And also ioy is next the fine of sorrow.

Now looke that attempre be thy bridell,
And for the best aie sufker to the tide,
Or else all our labour is on idell,
He hasteth well, that wisely can abide:
Be diligent and true, and aie well hide,
Be lustie, free, persteuer in thy seruise,
And all is well, if thou worke in this wise.

But he that departed is in cuerie place
Is no where hole, as writen Clerkes wise:
What wonder is, if such one haue no grace?
Eke wost thou how it fareth of some seruice,
As plant a tree or herbe, in sondrie wise,
And on the morrow pull it vp as bliue,
No wonder is, though it may neuer thriue.

And sith ẏ God of loue hath thee bestowed
In place digne vnto thy worthinesse,
Stonde fast, for to good port hast thou rowed,
And of thy selfe, for any heauinesse,
Hope alwaie well, for but if drerinesse,
Or ouer hast both our labour shend,

I hope of this to maken a good end.

And woſt thou why, I am the laſſe afered
Of this matter, with my nece to trete:
For this haue I heard ſay of wiſe lered,
Was neuer man or woman yet beyete,
That was vnapt to ſuffer loues hete
Celeſtiall, or elſe loue of kind:
For thy, ſome grace I hope in her to find.

And for to ſpeake of her in ſpeciall,
Her beautie to bethinken, and her youth,
It ſit her nought, to been celeſtiall
As yet, though that her liſt both and kouth:
And truely it ſit her well right nouth,
A worthy knight to louen and cherice,
And but ſhe doe, I hold it for a vice.

Wherefore I am, and woll be aye ready
To paine me to doe you this ſeruice:
For both you to pleaſe, this hope I
Here after, for that ye been both wiſe,
And con counſaile keepe in ſuch a wiſe,
That no man ſhall the wiſer of it bee,
And ſo we may ben gladded all three.

And by my trouth I haue right now of thee
A good conceit, in my wit as I geſſe:
And what it is, I woll now that thou ſee,
I thinke that ſith Loue of his goodneſſe,
Hath thee conuerted out of wickednesſe,
That thou ſhalt been the beſt poſt, I leue,
Of all his lay, and moſt his foes greue.

Enſample why, ſee now theſe great clerkes,
That erren aldermoſt ayen a law,
And ben conuerted from her wicked werkes
Through grace of god, ẏ leſt hem to withdraw:
Thè arne they folke that han god moſt in aw,
And ſtrengeſt faithed been I vnderſtond,
And con an errour alder beſt withſtond.

When Troilus had herd Pandare aſſented
To ben his helpe in louing of Creſeide,
He wext of his wo, as who ſaith vnturmented,
But hotter wext his loue, and then he ſaid
With ſober chere, as though his hart plaid:
Now blikfull Venus helpe, ere that I ſterue,
Of thee Pandare I mow ſome thank deſerue.

But dere friend, how ſhall my wo be leſſe,
Till this be done? and good eke tell me this,
How wilt thou faine of me and my diſtreſſe,
Leaſt ſhe be wroth, this drede I moſt twis,
Or woll not heren all, how it is,
All this drede I, and eke for the manere
Of the her Eme, ſhe nill no ſuch thing here.

(Qd. Pandarus) thou haſt a full great care,
Leſt the chorle may fall out of the moone:
Why lord? I hate of thee the nice fare.
Why, entremete of that thou haſt to doone
For Gods loue, I bid thee a boone:
So let me alone, and it ſhall be thy beſt.
Why frend (qd. he) then done right as thee leſt.

But herke Pandare o word, for I nolde,
That thou in me wendeſt ſo great follie,
That to my lady I deſiren ſhould,
That toucheth harme, or any villanie:
For dredeleſſe me were leuer to die,
Than ſhe of me aught elſe vnderſtood,
But that, that might ſownen into good.

Tho lough this Pandarus anon anſwerd:
And I thy borow, fie no wight doth but ſo,
I raught not though ſhe ſtood and herd,
How that thou ſaieſt, but farwell I woll go:
Adieu, be glad, God ſpeed vs both two,
Yeue me this labour and this buſineſſe,
And of my ſpeed be thine all the ſweetneſſe.

Tho Troilus gan doune on knees to fall,
And Pandare in his armes hent faſt,
And ſaid, now fie on the Greekes all:
Yet parde, God ſhall helpen at laſt,
And dredeleſſe, if that my life may laſt,
And God toforne, to ſome of hem ſhall smerte,
And yet me athinketh ẏ this auaunt maſterte.

And now Pandare, I can no more ſay,
Thou wiſe, thou woſt, thou maiſt, thou art all:
My life, my death, hole in thine hond I lay,
Help me now (qd. he.) Yes by my trouth I ſhal:
God yeeld thee friend, and this in ſpeciall
(Qd. Troilus) that thou me recommaund
To her that may me to the death commaund.

This Pandarus tho, deſirous to ſerue
His full friend, he ſaid in this manere:
Farwell, and think I wol thy thanke deſerue,
Haue here my trouth, and that thou ſhalt here,
And went his way, thinking on this matere,
And how he beſt might beſeechen her of grace,
And find a time thereto, and a place.

For euery wight that hath a houſe to found,
He renneth nat the werke for to begin,
With rakel hond, but he woll biden ſtound,
And ſend his hearts line out fro within,
Alderfirſt his purpoſe for to win:
All thus Pandare in his heart thought,
And caſt his werke full wiſely ere he wrought.

But Troilus lay tho no lenger doun,
But anone gat vpon his ſtede baie,

And in the field he played the Lioun,
Wo was ỹ Greek, that with him met ỹ daye:
And in the toune, his manner tho forth aye
So goodly was, and gat him ſo in grace,
That eche him loued that looked in his face.

For he became the friendlieſt wight,
The gentileſt, and eke the moſt free,
The thriftieſt, and one the beſt knight
That in his time was, or elſ might be:
Dead were his papes and his cruelte.
His high port and his manner ſtraunge,
And each of hem gan for a vertue chaunge.

Now let vs ſtint of Troilus a ſtound,
That fareth like a man that hurt is ſore,
And is ſomedele of aking of his wound
Plaſſed well, but healed no dele more:
And as an eaſie patient the lore
Abite of him that goeth about his cure,
And thus he driueth forth his auenture.

Explicit liber primus.

Out of theſe blacke wawes
let vs for to ſaile,
O wind, now the weather
ginneth clere:
For in the ſea the boate
hath ſuch trauaile
Of my conning, that vn=
neth I it ſtere:
This ſea clepe I the tempeſtous matere
Of deepe diſpaire, that Troilus was in:
But now of hope the kalends begin.

O lady mine, that called art Cleo,
Thou be my ſpede fro this forth, & my muſe
To rime well this booke till I haue do,
Me needeth here none other art to vſe:
For why, to euery louer I me excuſe,
That of no ſentement I this endite,
But out of latine in my tongue it write.

Wherefore I nil haue neither thank ne blame
Of all this worke, but pray you meekely,
Diſblameth me, if any word be lame,
For as mine authour ſaid, ſo ſay I:
Eke though I ſpeake of loue vnfeelingly,
No wonder is, for it nothing of new is,
A blind man cannot iudgen well in hewis.

I know, that in forme of ſpeech is chaunge
Within a thouſand yere, and words tho
That hadde prife, now wonder nice & ſtraunge
Thinketh hem, and yet they ſpake hem ſo,
And ſpedde as well in loue, as men now do:
Eke for to winnen loue, in ſundry ages,
In ſundry londs ſundry ben vſages.

And for thy, if it happe in any wiſe,
That here be any louer in this place,
That herkeneth, as the ſtory will deuiſe,
How Troilus came to his ladies grace,
And thinketh, ſo nolde I not loue purchaſe,
Or wondreth on his ſpeech or his doing,
I not, but it is to me no wondring:

For euery wight, which that to Rome went,
Halt nat o pathe, ne alway o manere:
Eke in ſome lond were all the gamen ſhent,
If that men karde in loue, as men done here,
As thus, in open doing or in chere,
In viſiting, in forme, or ſaid our lawes,
For thy men lain, ech country hath his lawes.

Eke ſcarſely ben there in this place three,
That haue in loue ſaid like, and done in all:
For to this purpoſe this may liken thee,
And thee right nought, yet all is done or ſhall:
Eke ſome men graue in tre, ſom in ſtone wall,
As it betide, but ſith I haue begonne,
Mine authour ſhall I follow, as I konne.

Explicit Prohemium.

In May, that mother is of
moneths glade,
That the freſh floures, both
blew, white, and rede
Ben quick ayen, that win=
ter dead made,
And full of baume is fleting
euery mede,
When Phebus doth her bright beams ſpred,
Right in the white Bole, it ſo betidde,
As I ſhall ſing, on Maies day the thridde,

That Pandarus for all his wiſe ſpeach,
Felt eke his part of loues ſhottes kene,
That coud he neuer ſo well of louing preach,
It made his hew a day full oft grene:
So ſhope it, that him till that day a tene
In loue, for which in wo to bed he went,
And made ere it were day full many a went.

The ſwallow Progne, with a ſorowfull lay
Whē morow come, gan make hir waimēting,
Why ſhe forſhapen was: and euer lay
Pandare a bed, halfe in a ſlombering,
Till ſhe so nigh him made her waimenting,
How Tereus gan forth her ſuſter take,
That with the noiſe of her he gan awake,

And to call, and dreſſe him vp to riſe,
Remembring him his arrand was to done

From

From Troilus, and eke his great empryse,
And cast, & knew in good plite was the moone
To done voiage, and tooke his way full soone
Unto his neces paleis there beside:
Now Janus God of entre, thou him guide.

When he was come vnto his neces place,
Where is my lady, to her folke (qd. he)
And they him told, and he forth in gan pace,
And found two other ladies sit and shee,
Within a paued parlour, and they three
Herden a maiden hem reden the geste
Of the siege of Thebes, while hem leste:

(Qd. Pandarus) madame God you see
With your booke, and all the companie:
Eigh vncle mine, welcome iwis (qd. shee)
And vp she rose, and by the hond in hie,
She tooke him fast, and said, this night thrie,
To good mote it turne, of you I met,
And with ỹ word, she downe on bench him set.

Ye a nece, ye shull faren well the bet,
If God woll, all this yeare (qd. Pandarus)
But I am sorry that I haue you let
To herken of your booke, ye prasen thus:
For Gods loue what saith it, tell it vs,
Is it of loue, or some good ye me lere?
Uncle (qd. she) your maistresse is nat here.

With that they gonnen laugh, & tho she seide,
This romaunce is of Thebes, that we rede,
And we haue heard how ỹ king Laius deide
Through Edippus his sonne, and al the dede:
And here we stinten, at these letters rede,
How the bishop, as the booke can tell,
Amphiorax, fell through the ground to hell.

(Qd. Pandarus) all this know I my selue,
And all thalliege of Thebes, and the care,
For herof ben there maked bookes twelue:
But let be this, and tell me how ye fare,
Do way your barbe, and shew your face bare,
Do way your book, rise vp and let vs daunce,
And let vs to done to May some obseruaunce.

Eighe, God forbid (qd. she) be ye mad?
Is that a widdowes life, so God you saue?
By God ye maken me right sore adrad,
Ye ben so wild, it seemeth as ye raue,
It sat me well bet aye in a caue
To bide, and rede on holy saints liues:
Let maidens gon to daunce, and yong wiues.

As euer thriue I (qd. this Pandarus)
Yet could I tell a thing, to done you play:
Now vncle dere (qd. she) tell it vs
For Gods loue, is then thalliege awey?
I am of Greekes ferde, so that I dey:
Nay, nay (qd. he) as euer mote I thriue,
It is a thing well bet than such fiue.

Ye holy God (qd. she) what thing is that,
What bet than such fiue? eighe nay iwis,
For all this world ne can I reden what
It should ben, some iape I trow it is,
And but your seluen tell vs what it is,
My wit is for to arede it all to leane:
As helpe me God, I not what that ye meane:

And I your borow, ne neuer shall (qd. he)
This thing be told to you, as mote I thriue:
And why vncle mine, why so (qd. she)
By God (qd. he) that woll I tell as bliue,
For prouder woman is there none on liue,
And ye it wist, in all the toune of Troy:
I iape nat, so euer haue I ioy.

Tho gan she wondren more than before,
A thousand fold, and downe her eyen cast:
For neuer sith the time that she was bore,
To knowen thing desired she so fast,
And with a sike, she said him at the last,
Now vncle mine, I nill you not displease,
Nor asken more, that may do you disease.

So after this, with many words glade,
And friendly tales, and with merry chere,
Of this & that they spake, and gonnen wade
In many an vnkouth glad and deepe matere,
As friends done, when they bethinken here,
Till she gan asken him how Hector ferde,
That was the tounes wall, & Grekes perde.

Full wel I thanke it God, said Pandarus,
Saue in his arme he hath a little wound,
And eke his fresh brother Troilus,
The wise worthy Hector the secound,
In whom that euery vertue list habound,
And flest all trouth, and all gentilesse,
Wisdome, honour, freedome, and worthinesse.

In good faith eme (qd. she) that liketh me,
They faren well, God saue hem both two:
For trewliche, I hold it great deintie,
A kinges sonne in armes well to do,
And be of good conditions thereto,
For great power, and morall vertue here
Is selde iseene in one persone ifere.

In good faith that is sooth (qd. Pandarus)
But by my trouth the king hath sonnes twey,
That is to meane, Hector and Troilus,
That certainly though that I should dey,
They ben as void of vices, dare I sey,
As any men that liuen vnder sonne,

Her

Her might is wide iknow, & what they conne.

Of Hector needeth it no more for to tell,
In all this world, there nis a better knight,
Than he that is of worthineſſe the well,
And he well more vertue hath than might,
This knoweth manya wiſe & worthy knight:
And the ſame prize of Troilus I ſey,
God helpe me ſo, I know not ſuch twey.

By God (qd. ſhe) of Hector that is ſooth,
And of Troilus the ſame thing trow I:
For dredeleſſe, men telleth that he dooth
In armes day by day, ſo worthely,
And beareth him here at home ſo gently
To euery wight, that all prize hath he,
Of hem that me were leueſt praiſed be.

Ye ſay right ſooth iwis (qd. Pandarus)
For yeſterday, who ſo had with him been,
Mighten haue wondred vpon Troilus,
For neuer yet ſo thicke a ſwarme of been,
Ne flew, as Greekes from him gan fleen,
And through the field in euery wights care,
There was no crie, but Troilus is there.

Now here, now there, he hunted hem ſo faſt,
There nas but Greekes blood, and Troilus,
Now him he hurt, and him all doun he caſt,
Aye where he went it was arraied thus:
He was her death, and ſhield and life for vs,
That as ỳ day ther durſt him none withſtond,
While ỳ he held his bloody ſwerd in hond:

Thereto he is the friendlieſt man
Of great eſtate, that euer I ſaw my liue:
And where him liſt, beſt fellowſhip can
To ſuch as him thinketh able for to thriue,
And with that word, tho Pandarus as blyue
He tooke his leaue, and ſaid I woll gon hen:
Nay, blame haue I uncle (qd. ſhe then.)

What eileth you to be weary thus ſoone,
And nameliche of women, woll ye ſo?
Nay ſitteth doune, by God I haue to done
With you, to ſpeake of wiſdome ere ye go,
And euery wight that was about hem tho,
That heard that, gan ferre away to ſtond,
While they two had all that hem liſt in hond.

When ỳ her tale all brought was to an end
Of her eſtate, and of her gouernaunce,
(Qd. Pandarus) now time is that I wend,
But yet I ſay, ariſeth let vs daunce,
And caſt your widdowes habit to miſchaunce:
What liſt you thus your ſelfe to diſfigure,
Sith you is tidde ſo glad an auenture:

But well bethought: for loue of God (qd. ſhe)
Shal I nat weten what ye meane of this?
No, this thing aſketh leaſer tho (qd. he)
And eke me would full much greue iwis,
If I it told, and ye it tooke amis:
Yet were it bette my tongue to hold ſtill,
Than ſay a ſooth, that were ayenſt your will.

For nece mine, by the goddeſſe Minerue,
And Jupiter, that maketh the thunderring,
And the blikfull Venus, that I ſerue,
Ye ben the woman in this world liuing
Withouten paramours, to my weting,
That I beſt loue, and lotheſt am to greue,
And that ye weten well your ſelfe, I leue.

I wis mine uncle (qd. ſhe) graunt mercy,
Your friendſhip haue I founden euer yet,
I am to no man beholden truely
So much as you, and haue ſo little quit:
And with the grace of God, emforth my wit
As in my guilt, I ſhall you neuer offend,
And if I haue ere this, I woll amend.

But for the loue of God I you beſeech
As ye be he that I loue moſt and triſt,
Let be to me your fremed manner ſpeech,
And ſay to me your nece what you liſt:
And with that word her uncle anon her kiſt,
And ſaid, gladly my leue nece ſo dere,
Take it for good that I ſhall ſay you here.

With that ſhe gan her eien doune to caſt,
And Pandarus to cough gan a lite,
And ſaid: Nece alway lo, to the laſt
How ſo it be, that ſome men hem delite
With ſubtle art her tales for tendite,
Yet for all that in her entention,
Her tale is all for ſome concluſion.

And ſith the end is euery tales ſtrength,
And this matter is ſo behouely,
What ſhould I paint it or drawen it on length
To you, that ben my friend ſo faithfully:
And with that word he gan right inwardly
Beholden her, and looken in her face,
And ſaid, on ſuch a mirrour much good grace.

Then thought he thus, if I my tale endite
Ought hard, or make a proceſſe any while,
She ſhall no ſauour haue therein but lite,
And trow I would her in my will beguile:
For tender wittes wenen all be wile,
Whereas they con nat plainliche vnderſtond:
For thy her wit to ſeruen woll I fond.

And looked on her in a buſie wiſe,
And ſhe was ware that he beheld her ſo:

Ah lord (qd.she) so fast ye me auise,
Saw ye me neuer ere now, what say ye no?
Yes, yes (qd.he) and bet woll ere I go:
But by my trouth I thought now, if ye
Be fortunate: for now men shall it see.

For euery wight some goodly auenture,
Sometime is shape, if he it can receiuen:
But if he nill take of it no cure
When that it cometh, but wilfully it weiuen:
Lo, neither case nor fortune him deceiuen,
But right his own slouth and wretchednesse:
And such a wight is for to blame, I gesse.

Good auenture, O belle neece, haue ye
Full lightly founden, and ye conne it take:
And for the loue of God, and eke of me
Catch it anone, least auenture slake:
What should I lenger processe of it make,
Reue me your hond, for in this world is none,
If that you list, a wight so well begon.

And sith I speake of good ententioun,
As I to you haue told well here before,
And loue as well your honour and renoun,
As any creature in all the world ibore:
By all the othes that I haue you swore,
And ye be wroth therefore or wene I lie,
Ne shall I neuer seene you eft with eie.

Beth nat agast, ne quaketh nat, whereto?
Ne chaunge nat for fere so your hew,
For hardely the worst of this is do:
And though my tale as now be to you new,
Yet trust alway, ye shall me find trew,
And were it thing that me thought vnsitting,
To you would I no such tales bring.

Now my good eme, for Gods loue I prey,
(Qd.she) come off and tell me what it is:
For both I am agast what ye woll say,
And eke me longeth it to wit iwis:
For whether it be well, or be amis,
Say on, let me not in this feare dwell.
So woll I done, now hearkeneth I shall tell:

Now neece mine, the kings own dere sonne,
The good, wise, worthy, fresh, and free,
Which alway for to done well is his wonne,
The noble Troilus so loueth thee,
That but ye helpe, it woll his bane bee,
Lo here is all, what should I more ley,
Doth what you list, to make him liue or dey.

But if ye let him die, I woll sterue,
Haue here my trouth, neece I nill not lien,
All should I with this knife my throte kerue:
With that the teares burst out of his eien,
And said, if that ye done vs both dien
Thus guiltlesse, then haue ye fished faire:
What mend ye, though ỹ we both apaire?

Alas, he which that is my lord so dere,
That trew man, that noble gentle knight,
That nought desireth, but your frendly chere,
I see him dien, there he goeth vpright:
And hasteth him with all his full might
For to ben slaine, if his fortune assent,
Alas that God you such a beautie sent.

If it be so that ye so cruell be,
That of his death you listeth nought to reche,
That is so trew and worthy as we see,
No more than of a paper or a wretch,
If ye be such, your beaute may nat stretch,
To make amends of so cruell a dede:
Auisement is good before the nede.

Wo worth the faire gemme vertuelesse,
Wo worth that herbe also that doth no bote,
Wo worth the beauty that is routhlesse,
Wo worth that wight ỹ trede eth vnder fote:
And ye that ben of beautie croppe and rote,
If therewithall in you ne be no routh,
Then is it harme ye liuen by my trouth.

And also thinke well, that this is no gaud,
For me were leuer, thou, I, and he
Were honged, than I should ben his baud,
As high as men might on vs all see:
I am thine Eme, the shame were to mee,
As well as thee, if that I should assent
Through mine abet, ỹ he thine honour shent.

Now vnderstond, for I you nought requere
To bind you to him, through no beheste,
Saue onely that ye make him better chere
Than ye han done ere this, and more feast,
So that his life be saued at the least:
This is all and some, and plainly our entent,
God helpe me so, I neuer other ment.

Lo, this request is nought but skill iwis,
Ne doubt of reason parde is there none:
I set the worst, that ye dreden this,
Men would wonder to seen him come & gone:
There agenst answere I thus anone,
That euery wight, but he be foole of kind,
Woll deeme it loue of friendship in his mind.

What, who wol demen though he see a man
To temple gone, that he the images eateth:
Thinke eke, how well and wisely that he can
Gouerne himselfe, that he nothing forgeteth,
ỹ wher he cometh, he pris & thonk him geteth,
And eke thereto he shall come here so seld,

What

what force were it, though all the toun beheld.

Such loue of frends reigneth thorow all this
And write you in that mantle euermo, (toun:
And God so wis be my saluatioun
As I haue said, your best is to do so:
But good nece, alway to stint his wo,
☞ So let your daunger sugred ben alite,
That of his death ye be not all to wite.

Creseide, which that herd him in this wise,
Thought, I shall seken what he meaneth wis:
Now Eme (qd. she) what would ye deuise?
What is your rede, I should done of this?
That is well said (qd. he) certaine best is,
That ye him loue ayen for his louing,
☞ As loue for loue is skilfull guerdoning.

Thinke eke how elde wasteth euery hour
In each of you a part of beaute,
And therefore, ere that age thee deuour,
Go loue, for old there woll no wight of thee:
Let this prouerbe, a lore vnto you bee,
☞ Too late ware (qd. beaute) when it past,
And elde daunteth daunger, at the last.

The kings foole is wont to crie aloud,
When ỹ he thinketh a woman bereth her hie,
☞ So long mote ye liuen, and all proud,
Till Crowes feet growen vnder your eie,
And send you then a mirrour in to prie,
In which that ye may see your face a morow,
Nece, I bid him wish you no more sorow.

With this he stint, and cast down the head,
And she began to brest and wepe anone,
And said, alas for wo, why nere I dead,
For of this world the faith is all agone:
Alas, what shoulden straunge vnto me done,
When he that for my best friend I wend,
Bate me to loue, and should it me defend.

Alas, I would haue trusted doubtles,
That if that I, through my disauenture
Had loued either him or Achilles,
Hector, or any other creature,
Ye nolde haue had mercy ne measure
On me, but alway had me in repreue:
This false world alas, who may it leue.

What, is this all the ioy and all the feast?
Is this your rede? is this my blisfull caas?
Is this the very mede of your behest?
Is all this painted proeme said (alas)
Right for this fine, O lady mine Pallas,
Thou in this dredefull case for me purucy,
For so astonied am I, that I dey.

With that she gan full sorowfully to sike,
Ne may it be no bet (qd. Pandarus)
By God I shall no more come here this weke,
And God toforne, that am mistrusted thus:
I see well now ye setten light of vs,
Or of our death alas, I wofull wretch,
Might he yet liue, of me were nought to retch.

O cruell God, O dispitous Marte,
O furies three of hell, on you I crie,
So let me neuer out of this house depart,
If that I meant harme or villanie:
But sith I see my Lord mote needs die,
And I with him, here I me shriue and sey,
That wickedly ye done vs both dey.

But sith it liketh you, that I be dead,
By Neptunus, that God is of the see,
Fro this forth shall I neuer eaten bread,
Till that I mine owne heart blood may see:
For certaine I woll die as soone as hee,
And vp he start, and on his way he raught,
Till she againe him by the lappe caught.

Creseide, which that well nigh starke for feare,
So as she was the fearfullest wight
That might be, and heard eke with her eare,
And saw the sorowfull earnest of the knight,
And in his praier saw eke none vnright,
And for the harme eke that might fall more,
She gan to rew and dread her wonder sore.

And thought thus, vnhaps do fallen thicke
Alday for Loue, and in such manner caas,
As men ben cruell in themselfe and wicke:
And if this man slee here himselfe, alas,
In my presence, it will be no solas,
What men would of it deme I can nat say,
It needeth me full slighly for to play.

And with a sorowfull sigh, she said thrie,
Ah lord, what me is tidde a sorry chaunce,
For mine estate lieth in a ieopardie,
And eke mine emes life lieth in ballaunce:
But nathelesse, with Gods gouernaunce
I shall so done, mine honour shall I keepe,
And eke his life, and stint for to weepe.

Of harmes two, the lesse is for to chese,
Yet had I leuer maken him good chere
In honour, than mine emes life to lese.
Ye saine, ye nothing els me requere.
No wis (qd. he) mine owne nece so dere.
Now well (qd. she) and I woll done my paine,
I shall mine heart ayen my lust constraine.

But that I nill nat holden him in hond,
Ne loue a man, that can I naught ne may

Ayenst

Ayenst my wil, but els wol I fonde,
Mine honour saue, plesen him fro day to day,
Therto nolde I not ones haue said nay,
But that I dredde, as in my fantasie:
But cesse cause, aie cesseth maladie.

But here I make a protestacion
That in this processe if ye deper go,
That certainly, for no saluacion
Of you, though that ye steruen both two,
Though al the world on o day be my fo,
Ne shal I neuer on him haue other routhe:
I graunt wel (qd. Pandare) by my trouthe.

But may I trust well to you (qd. he)
That of this thing that ye han hight me here
Ye woll it holde truely vnto me:
Ye doubtlesse (qd. she) mine vncle dere,
Ne that I shall haue cause in this matere,
(Qd. he) to plain, or ofter you to preach:
Why no parde, what nedeth more speach.

Tho fill they in other tales glade
Till at the last, O good eme (qd. she tho)
For loue of God which that vs both made,
Tell me how first ye wisten of his wo,
Wot none of it but ye? he saied no:
Can he well speake of loue (qd. she) I preie?
Tell me, for I the bet shall me purueie.

Tho Pandarus a litel gan to smile
And saied: By my trouth I shall now tell,
This other daie, nat gon full long while,
Within the paleis gardin by a well
Gan he and I, well halfe a day to dwell,
Right for to speaken of an ordinaunce,
How we the Grekes mighten disauaunce.

Sone after that we gone for to lepe,
And casten with our dartes to and fro:
Till at the last, he saied, he would slepe,
And on the grasse adoune he laied him tho,
And I after gan to romen, to and fro,
Till that I heard, as I walked alone,
How he began full wofully to grone.

Tho gan I stalke him softly behind,
And sikerly the sothe for to saine,
As I can clepe ayen now to my mind,
Right thus to loue he gan him for to plain,
He saied: Lorde, haue routh vpon my pain,
All haue I been rebell in mine entent,
Now (Mea culpa) Lord I me repent.

O God, that at thy disposicion
Ledest the fine, by iust puruciaunce
Of euery wight, my lowe confession
Accept in gree, and sende me soche penaunce
As liketh thee, put from me disperaunce,
That may my ghost departe alway fro the,
Thou be my shilde for thy benignite.

For certes lord, so sore hath she me wounded,
That stode in blacke, with loking of her eyen,
That to mine hartes botome it is sounded,
Through which I wot, ẏ I must nedes dien:
This is the worst, I dare me nouzt bewrien,
And well the hoter beene the gledes rede,
That men wrien, with ashen pale & dede.

With that he smote his hedde adoune anone,
And gan to muttre, I nat what truely:
And I with that gan still a waie to gone,
And lete thereof, as nothing wist had I,
And come again anon, and stode him by,
And saied awake, ye slepen all to long,
It semeth me nought ẏ loue doth you wrong,

That slepē so, that no mā may you wake:
Who seie euer er this so dull a man.
Ye frende (qd. he) doe ye your heddes ake
For loue, and let me liuen as I can:
But lorde that he for wo was pale and wan,
Yet made he tho as freshe a countenaunce,
As though he should haue led ẏ newe daunce.

This passed forth, till now this other daie,
It fell that I come roming all alone
Into his chambre, & found how that he laie
Vpon his bedde: but man so sore grone
Ne heard I neuer, and what was his mone
Ne wist I nought, for as I was comming
All sodainly, he left his complaining.

Of which I toke somwhat suspection
And nere I come, and found him wepe sore;
And God so wise be my saluacion,
As neuer of thing had I no routh more:
For neither with engine, ne with no lore,
Unnethes might I fro the death him kepe,
That yet fele I mine harte for him wepe.

And God wote neuer sith that I was borne
Was I so busie no man for to preach;
Ne neuer was to wight so depe sworne,
Er he me told who might be his leach:
But not to you rehearsen all his speach,
Or all his wofull wordes for to sowne,
Ne bid me nought, but ye woll se me swone.

But for to saue his life, and els nought,
And to non harme of you, thus am I driuen:
And for the loue of God that vs hath wrouzt,
Soche chere him doth, that he & I may liuen.
Now haue I plat to you mine hart shriuen,
And sith ye wote that mine entent is cleane

Take heede thereof, for none euill I meane.

And right good thrift, I pray to God haue ye,
That han soch one ycaught withouten net:
And be ye wise, as ye be faire to se,
Well in the ring then is the Rubie set,
There were neuer two so well imet,
Whan ye been his all hole, as he is your,
The mighty God yet grant vs se that hour.

Nay thereof spake I not: Aha (qd. she)
As helpe me God, ye shenden euery dele:
I mercy dere nece, anon (qd. he)
What so I spake, I ment nought but wele
By Mars the God, that helmed is of stele:
Now beth not wroth, my blood, my nece dere,
Now well (qd. she) forgeuen be it here.

With this he toke his leaue, & home he wēt,
Ye Lord how he was glad, and well bigon:
Creseide arose, no lenger she ne stent,
But streight into her closet went anon,
And set her doune, as still as any stone,
And euery worde gan vp and doune to wind,
That he had saied, as it came her to mind.

And wexe somedele astonied in her thought,
Right for the new case, but whan that she
Was full auised, tho found she right nought,
Of perill, why that she ought aferde be:
For man may loue of possibilite
A woman so, his harte may to brest,
And she nat loue ayen, but if her lest.

But as she sat alone, and thought thus,
Thalarie arose at skarmoch all without,
And men cried in the strete, se Troilus
Hath right now put to flight ỹ Grekes rout.
With that gonne all her meine for to shout:
A, go we se, cast vp the gates wide,
For through this strete he mote to paleis ride.

For other waie is fro the yates none,
Of Dardanus, there open is the cheine:
With that come he, and all his folke anone
An easie pace riding, in routes tweine,
Right as his happy day was for the to seine:
For which men saith, may not disturbed be
That shall betiden of necessite.

This Troilus sat on his baie stede
All armed saue his hedde, full richely,
And wounded was his horse, & gan to blede,
On which he rode a pace full softly:
But soch a knightly sight truely
As was on him, was nat withouten faile,
To loke on Mars, that God is of battaile.

So like a man of armes, and a knight
He was to seen, fulfilled of high prowesse,
For both he had a body, and might
To doen that thing, as well as hardinesse,
And eke to seen him in his geare dresse
So freshe, so yong, so weldy semed he,
It was an heauen vpon him for to se.

His helme to hewen was in twenty places,
That by a tissue hong, his backe behind, (ces,
His shelde to dashed with swerds & with ma-
In which men might many an arowe find,
That thirled had both horne, nerfe, and rinde:
And aie the people cried, here cometh our ioie,
And next his brother, holder vp of Troie.

For which he wext a little redde for shame
When he so heard the people vpon him crien,
That to behold it was noble game,
How soberliche he cast adoune his yen:
Creseide anon gan all his chere espien,
And let it so soft in her hart sinke,
That to her self she said, who yaue me drinke?

For of her own thought, she woxe all redde,
Remembring her right thus, Lo this is he,
which ỹ mine vncle sweareth he mote be dedde,
But I on him haue mercy and pite:
And with that thought, for pure ashamed she
Gan in her hedde to pull, and that as fast,
While he and all the people forth by past.

And gan to cast, and rollen vp and doun
Within her thought his excellent prowesse,
And his estate, and also his renoun,
His witte, his shape, and eke his gentilnesse,
But most her fauour was: for his distresse
Was all for her, and thought it were a routh,
To slaen soch one, if that he ment trouth.

Now might some enuious, iangle thus,
This was a sodain loue, how might it be,
That she so lightly loued Troilus?
Right for the first sight: ye parde?
Now who so saied so, mote he neuer thee:
For euery thing a ginning hath it nede
Er all be wrought, withouten any drede.

For I saie nat that she so sodainly
Yaf him her loue, but that she gan encline
To liken him tho, and I haue told you why:
And after that, his manhode and his pine,
Made that loue within her gan to mine:
For which by processe, and by good seruice
He wanne her loue, and in no sodain wise.

And all so blisfull Venus wele araied
Satte in her seuenth house of heuen tho,

Disposed

Disposed wele, and with aspectes payed,
To helpe sely Troilus of his wo:
And sothe to sayne, she nas nat all a foe
To Troilus, in his natiuite,
God wote, that wele the sooner sped he.

Now let vs stente of Troilus a throw,
That rideth forth, and let vs tourne fast
Unto Creseide, that heng her hedde full low,
There as she satte alone, and gan to cast
Whereon she would appoinct her at the last,
If it so were her Eme ne would cesse,
For Troilus vpon her for to presse.

And lorde so she gan in her thought argue
In this matter, of which I haue you told,
And what to doen best were, & what eschue,
That plited she full oft in many fold:
Now was her hart warme, now was it cold,
And what she thought, somwhat shal I write,
As mine aucthour listeth for tendite.

She thought first, that Troilus person
She knewe by sight, and eke his gentelnesse:
And thus she said, all were it nought to doen
To graunt him loue, yet for his worthinesse,
It were honor with plate, and with gladnesse,
In honeste with soch a Lorde to deale,
For mine estate, and also for his heale.

Eke well wote I, my kinges sonne is he,
And sith he hath to see me soch delite,
If I would vtterliche his sight flie,
Paraventure he might haue me in dispite,
Through which I might stond in worse plite:
Now, were I wise, me hate to purchase
Without nede, there I may stande in grace?

In euery thing, I wot there lieth measure:
For though a man forbid dronkennesse,
He nought forbiddeth that euery creature
Be drinkelesse for alway as I gesse:
Eke, sithe I wot for me is his distresse,
I ne ought not for that thing him dispise,
Sith it is so, he meaneth in good wise.

And eke I know, of long time agone
His thewes good, and that he nis not nice,
No vauntour saine men, certain he is none,
To wise is he to doen so great a vice:
Ne als I nill him nener so cherice,
That he shall make auaunt by iust cause:
He shall me neuer binde in soche a clause.

Now set I case, the hardest is iwis,
Men might demen that he loueth me:
What dishonour were it vnto me this?
Wate iche him let of that? why nay parde:
I know also, and alway heare and se,
Men louen women all this toune about,
Be they ỹ wers? Why nay without en dout?

I thinke eke how, he worthie is to haue
Of all this noble toune the thriftiest,
That woman is, if she her honour saue:
For out and out he is the worthiest,
Saue onely Hector, which that is the best,
And yet his life lieth all now in my cure,
But soche is loue, and eke mine auenture.

Ne me to loue, a wonder is it nought:
For well wote I my self, so God me spede,
All woll I that no man wist of this thought,
I am one the fairest out of drede
And goodliest, who so that taketh hede:
And so men saine in all the toune of Troie,
What wonder is though he of me haue ioie?

I am mine owne woman well at ease,
I thanke it God, as after mine estate,
Right yong, and stond vntied in lustic lease,
Withouten ielousie, and such debate:
Shall no husbonde saine to me checke mate,
For either they be full of ielousie,
Or maisterfull, or louen nouelrie.

What shal I doen? to what fine liue I thus?
Shall I not loue, in case if that me lest?
What pardieux? I am not religious:
And though that I mine harte set at rest
Upon this knight, that is the worthiest,
And kepe alway mine honor, and my name,
By all right it may doe me no shame.

But right as whā the sunne shineth bright
In March, that chaungeth oft time his face,
And that a cloud is put with winde to flight,
Which ouerspreat the Sunne, as for a space,
A cloudy thought gan through her soul pace,
That ouerspradde her bright thoughts all,
So that for feare almost she gan to fall.

That thought was this: alas sith I am free,
Should I now loue, and put in iopardie
My liberneste, and thrallen libertie?
Alas, how durst I thinken that folie?
May I not well in other folke aspie
Her dredfull ioie, her constreint, and her pain:
Ther loueth non, ỹ she ne hath why to plain.

For loue is yet the moste stormie life,
Right of himself, that euer was begonne:
For euer some mistrust, or nice strife,
There is in loue, some cloud ouer the Sunne:
Thereto we wretched women nothing conne
Whan vs is wo, but wepe and sit and thinke,

☞ Our wretche is this, our owne wo to drinke.

Also wicked tongues been ay so prest
To speake vs harme: eke men ben so vntrue,
That right anon as ceased is her lest,
So ceaseth leue, and forth to loue a newe:
But harme idoe is doen, who so it rue:
For thouz these men for loue hem first to rēde,
☞ Full sharpe beginning breaketh oft at ende.

How oft time maie men both rede and seen,
The treason, that to women hath be doe
To what fine is soche loue, I can not seen
Or where becometh it, whan it is go?
There is no wight that wote, I trowe so,
Wher it becometh, lo, no wight on it spurneth
☞ That erst was nothing, into naught turneth.

How busie (if I loue) eke must I be
To pleasen hem, that iangle of loue, & demen,
And coyen hem, that thei saie no harm of me:
For though there be no cause, yet hem semen
All be for harme, that folke her frēdes quemen
☞ And who maie stoppen euery wicked tong?
Or soune of belles, while that they been rong?

And after that her thought gan for to clere
And saied, he which that nothing vndertaketh
Nothing acheueth, be him loth or dere
And with an other thought her hart quaketh
Then stepeth hope, and after drede awaketh,
Now hote, now cold, but thus betwixen twey
She rist her vp, and went her for to pley.

Adoune the staire anon right tho she went
Into her gardine, with her neces three,
And vp and doun, they maden many a went
Flexippe and she, Tarbe, and Antigone,
To plaien, that it ioie was to see
And other of her women a great rout
Her folowed in the gardine all about.

This yerde was large, & railed al the alies
And shadowed wel, with blosomy bowes grene
And benched newe, and sonded all the waies
In which she walketh arme in arme betwene,
Till at the last Antigone the shene
Gan on an Troian song to singen clere,
That it an heuen was, her voice to here.

She saied, O loue, to whom I haue, & shall
Been humble subiect, true in mine entent
As I best can, to you Lorde yeue iche all
For euermore mine hartes lust to rent:
For neuer yet thy grace to no wight sent
So blissfull cause as me, my life to lede
In all ioie and surtie, out of drede.

The blissfull God, hath me so well beset
In loue twis, that all that beareth life
Imaginen ne could how to be bet,
For Lorde without en ielousie or strife
I loue one, whiche that moste is ententife
To seruen well, vnwerily or vnfained
That euer was, & lest with harme distained.

As he that is the well of worthinesse,
Of trouth ground, mirrour of goodlihedde,
Of wit Apollo, stone of sikernesse,
Of vertue roote, of lust finder and hedde,
Through whiche is all sorrowe fro me dedde:
Iwis I loue him best, so doeth he me,
Now good thrift haue he, where so euer he be.

Whom should I thāken but you God of loue,
Of all this blisse, in which to bathe I ginne,
And thanked be ye Lorde, for that I loue,
This is the right life that I am inne,
To flemen all maner vice and sinne:
This doeth me so to vertue for to entende
That daie by daie I in my will amende.

And who that saieth that for to loue is vice,
Or thraldome, though he fele in it distresse,
He either is enuious, or right nice,
Or is vnmightie for his shrewednesse,
To louen, for soch maner folke I gesse
Diffamen loue, as nothing of him know,
They speaken, but they bent neuer his bowe. ☞

What is ỹ Sunne worse of his kind right?
Though that a man, for feblenesse of his yen
Maie not endure on it to se for bright,
Or loue the worse, that wretches on it crien:
No wele is worth, that may no sorowe drien: ☞
And for thy, who that hath an hedde of verre
Fro cast of stones ware him in the werre.

But I with all mine harte & all my might;
As I haue saied, woll loue vnto my last
My owne dere harte, & all mine owne knight,
In whiche mine harte growen is so fast
And is in me, that it shal euer last:
All dredde I first loue him to begin,
Now wote I well there is no perill in.

And of her song right with ỹ word she stent,
And therewithall, now nece (qd. Creseide)
Who made this song now with so good entēt
Antigone answerde anon and saide,
Madame iwis the goodliest maide
Of great estate in all the toune of Troie
And led her life in moste honour and ioie.

Forsothe so semeth it by her song
Qd. tho Creseide, and gan therewith to sike,

And

And ſaied: Lorde, is there ſoche blisse emong
These louers, as they can faire endite:
Ye wisse qd. freshe Antigone the white,
For all the folke that haue or been on liue
Ne con well the blisse of loue diserue.

But wene ye that euery wretche wote
The parfite blisse of loue, why naie iwis
They wenen all be loue, if one be hote,
Do waie do waie, they wote nothing of this.
Men mote aske of sainctes, if it is
Ought faire in heuen, & why: for they can tell,
And aske fendes, if it be foule in hell.

Creseide vnto ỹ purpose naught answerde,
But saied, iwis it woll be night as fast,
But euery worde, which that she of her herde,
She gan to printen in her harte fast,
And aie gan loue her lasse for to agast
Than it did erst, and sinken in her harte,
That she waxe somewhat able to conuarte.

The daies honour, and the heauens ye,
The nights foe, all this clepe I thee sonne,
Gan westren fast, and dounward for to wrie,
As he that had his daies course ironne,
And white things woxen al dimme and donne
For lacke of light, and sterres for to apere,
That she and all her folke in went ifere.

So when it liked her to gon to rest,
And voided weren they that voiden ought,
She saied, that to slepen well her leste:
Her women sone till her bedde her brought,
When al was hust, then laie she still & thought
Of all this thing the maner and the wise,
Rehearce it needeth not, for ye been wise.

A Nightingale vpon a Cedre grene
Under the chamber wall, there as she laie,
Full loude song ayen the Mone shene
Paraunenture in his birdes wise a laie,
Of loue, that made her harte freshe and gaie,
That herkened she so long in good entent,
Till at the last the dedde slepe her hent.

And as she slept, anon right tho her met,
How that an Egle fethered white as bone,
Under her brest his long clawes set,
And out her harte he rent, and that anon,
And did his harte into her brest to gon,
Of which she nought agrose, ne nothing smart,
And forth he flieth, with hart left for hart.

Now let her slepe, and we our tales holde
Of Troilus, that is to Paleis ridden,
Fro the scarmishe of which I of tolde,
And in his chamber sate, and hath abidden,
Till two or thre of his messengers yeden
For Pandarus, and soughten him full fast,
Til they him found, & brought him at the last.

This Pandarus came leaping in at ones,
And saied thus, who hath been well ibete
To day with swerdes, and slong stones,
But Troilus, that hath caught him an hete,
And gan to pape, and saied, Lorde ye swete,
But rise and let vs soupe, and go to reste,
And he answerde him, doe we as thee leste.

With all the hast goodly as they might,
They sped hem fro the souper, and to bedde,
And euery wight out at the doore him dight,
And whider him list, vpon his waie him sped:
But Troilus thought that his harte bledde
For wo, till that he heard some tiding,
And saied frende, shall I now wepe or sing.

(Qd. Pandarus) be still and let me slepe,
And doe on thy hoode, thine nedes spedde be,
And chose if thou wolt sing, daunce, or lepe,
At shorte wordes thou shalt trowe all by me,
Sir, my nece woll doen well by thee,
And loue thee best, by God and by trothe,
But lacke of pursute marre it in thy slothe.

For thus ferforth I haue thy werke begon,
Fro daie to daie, till this daie by the morowe,
Her loue of frendship haue I to thee won,
And therefore hath she laid her faith to borow,
Algate a foote is hamled of thy sorow:
What should I longer sermon of it holde,
As ye haue heard before, all he him tolde.

But right as flowres thrugh ỹ cold of night
Iclosed, stoupen in her stalkes lowe,
Redressen hem ayen the Sunne bright,
And spreden in her kinde course by rowe,
Right so gan tho his yen vp to throwe
This Troilus, and saied: O Venus dere,
Thy might, thy grace, iheried be it here.

And to Pandarus he held vp both his hõds,
And saied, Lorde all thine be that I haue,
For I am hole, and broken been my bonds,
A thousande Troies, who so that me yaue
Eche after other, God so wis me saue,
Ne might me so gladen, lo mine harte
It spredeth so for ioie it woll to starte.

But lord how shal I doen: how shal I liue,
When shall I next my dere harte se:
How shall this long time away be driuen:
Till that thou be ayen at her fro me,
Thou maiest answere, abide abide: but he
That hangeth by the necke, sothe to saine,

In great disease abideth for the paine.

All easily now, for the loue of Marte
(Qd. Pandarus) for euery thing hath time,
So long abide, till that the night departe,
For also siker as thou liest here by me,
And God toforne, I woll be there at prime,
And for thy werke somewhat, as I shall say,
Or on some other wight this charge lay.

For parde, God wot, I haue euer yet
Ben ready thee to serue, and this night
Haue I not fained, but emforthe my wit
Doen all thy lust, and shal with all my might:
Doe now as I shall saine, and fare aright:
And if thou nilte, wite all thy selfe the care,
On me is nought along thine euill fare.

I wote well, that thou wiser art than I
A thousand fold: but if I were as thou,
God helpe me so, as I would vtterly
Right of mine owne hond write her now
A letter, in which I would her tellen how
I farde amisse, and her beseech of routh:
Now helpe thy selfe, and leaue it for no slouth.

And I my selfe shall therewith to her gone,
And when thou wost that I am with her there
Worthe thou vpon a courser right anone,
Ye hardely, and that right in thy best gere,
And ride forth by ẏ place, as naught ne were,
And thou shalt find vs (if I may) sitting
At some window, into the street looking.

And if thee list, then mayest thou vs salue,
And vpon me make thou thy countenaunce,
But by thy life beware, and fast eschue
To tarien ought, God shild vs fro mischaunce
Ride forth thy way, ⁊ hold thy gouernaunce,
And we shall speake of thee somewhat I trow
When thou art gone, to doe thine eares glow.

Touching thy letter, thou art wise inough,
I wot thou nilte it deigneliche endite,
As make it with these arguments tough,
Ne scriuenishe or craftely thou it write,
Beblotte it with thy teares eke alite,
And if thou write a goodly word all soft,
Though it be good, rehearse it not too oft.

For though the best Harpour vpon liue
Would on the best sounded iolly Harpe
That euer was, with all his fingers fiue
Touch aye o strong, or aye o warble Harpe,
Were his nailes pointed neuer so sharpe,
It should make euery wight to dull,
To heare his glee, and of his strokes full.

Ne iombre eke no discordaunt thing ifere,
As thus, to vsen tearmes of Phisicke,
In loues tearmes hold of thy matere
The forme alway, and doe that it be like,
For if a painter would paint a pike
With Asses feet, and headed as an Ape,
It cordeth not, so were it but a yape.

This counsaile liked well vnto Troilus,
But as a dredefull louer he saied this:
Alas my dere brother Pandarus,
I am ashamed for to write amis,
Least of mine innocence I saied amis,
Or that she nolde it for dispite receiue,
Thē wer I dead, ther might it nothing weiue.

To that Pandare answerde, if thee lest,
Do that I say, and let me therewith gone,
For by that Lord that formed East and West,
I hope of it to bring answere anone
Right of her hond, and if that thou nilte none,
Let be, and sorrie mote he been his liue,
Ayenst thy lust, that helpeth thee to thriue.

(Qd. Troilus) depardieux iche assent,
Sith that thee list, I woll arise and write,
And blisfull God pray iche with good entent
The voiage and the letter I shall endite,
So speed it, and thou Minerua the white,
Yeue thou me witte, my letter to deuise:
And set him doun, ⁊ wrote right in this wise.

First he gan her his right Ladie call,
His hearts life, his lust, his sorowes leche,
His blisse, and eche these other tearmes all,
That in such case ye louers all seche,
And in full humble wise, as in his speche,
He gan him recommaund vnto her grace,
To tell all how, it asketh mokell space.

And after this full lowly he her praied
To be nought wroth, though he of his follie
So hardie was to her to write, and saied
That loue it made, or els must he die,
And pitously gan mercie for to crie:
And after that he saied, and lied full loud,
Himselfe was little worth, and lasse he coud.

And that she would haue his conning excused,
That little was, and eke he dradde her so,
And his vnworthinesse aye he accused:
And after that then gan he tell his wo,
But that was endlesse withouten ho:
And said, he would in trouth alway him hold,
And redde it ouer, and gan the letter fold.

And with his salt teares gan he bathe
The rubie in his signet, and it sette

Vpon

Upon the were deliuerliche and rathe,
Therewith a thousand times, er he lette
He kist tho the letter that he shette,
And sayd, letter a blisfull destine
Thee shapen is, my Ladie shall thee see.

This Pandare tooke the letter, and betime
A morrow to his neecis pallaice stert,
And fast he swore, that it was passed prime:
And gan to rape, and sayd twis my hert
So freth it is, although it sore smert,
I may not sleepe neuer a Mayes morrow,
I haue a iollie woe, a lustie sorrow.

Creseide when that she her Uncle heard,
With dreadfull heart, and desirous to heare
The cause of his comming, thus answeard,
Now by your faith mine vncle (qd. she) deare,
What manner winds guideth you now here?
Tell vs your iolly woe, and your penaunce,
How farre forth be ye put in loues daunce.

By God (qd. he) I hop alway behinde,
And to laugh, it thought her heart brest,
(Qd. Pandarus) Looke alway that ye finde
Game in mine hood: but herkeneth if you lest,
There is right now come into the toun a gest,
A Greeke espie, and telleth new thinges,
For which I come to tell you new tidinges.

Into the garden go we, and ye shall heare
All priuily of this a long sermoun:
With that they went en arme in arme ifere,
Into the gardin fro the chamber doun.
And when he was so farre, that the soun
Of that he spake, no man heren might,
He sayd her thus, and out the letter plight.

Lo, he that is all holly yours free,
Him recommaundeth lowly to your grace,
And sent you this letter here by me,
Auiseth you on it, when ye han space,
And of some goodly answeare you purchace,
Or helpe me God so, plainely for to saine,
He may not long liuen for his paine.

Full dredefully tho gan she stonde still,
And tooke it not, but all her humble chere
Gan for to chaunge, and sayd, scripe nor bill
For loue of God, that toucheth such matere
Ne bring me none: and also vncle dere
To mine estate haue more regard I pray
Than to his lust, what should I more say.

And looketh now if this be reasonable,
And letteth not for fauour ne for slouth
To sain a sooth, now is it conenable
To mine estate, by God and by my trouth
To take it, or to haue of him routh,
In harming of my selfe or in repreue:
Beare it ayen, for him that ye on leue.

This Pandarus gan on her for to stare,
And sayd, now is this the greatest wonder
That euer I saw, let be this nice fare,
To death mote I smiten be with thunder,
If for the Citie which that stondeth ponder,
Would I a letter vnto you bring or take,
To harme of you: what list you thus it make.

But thus ye faren well nigh all and some,
That he that most desireth you to serue,
Of him ye reech least where he become,
And whether that he liue, or else sterue:
But for all that, that euer I may deserue,
Refuse it not (qd. he) and hent her fast,
And in her bosome the letter doune he thrast.

And said her, now cast it away anon
That folke may seen and gauren on vs twey,
(qd. she) I can abide till they be gon
And gan to smile, and said him, eme I pray
Such answere as you list your selfe puruey:
For truely I woll no letter write:
No, then woll I (qd. he) so ye endite.

Therewith she lough, and said goe we dine,
And he gan at himselfe yapen fast,
And sayd Nece, I haue so great a pine
For loue, that euerich other day I fast,
And gan his best papes forth to cast,
And made her so to laugh at his follie,
That she for laughter weent for to die.

And when that she was comen into the hall,
Now eme (qd. she) we woll go dine anon.
And gan some of her women to her call,
And streight into her chamber gan she gone,
But of her businesse this was one,
Amongs other things, out of drede,
Full priuely this letter for to rede.

Auised word by word in euery line,
And found no lacke, she thoght he could his good,
And vp it put, and went her in to dine,
And Pandarus, that in a studie stood,
Ere he was ware, she tooke him by the hood,
And said ye were caught ere that ye wist,
I vouchsafe (qd. he) do what you list.

Tho wesshen they, and set hem doun and ete,
And after noone full slighly Pandarus
Gan draw him to the window nye the strete,
And said, nece, who hath araied thus
The yonder house, that stant afor ey ene vs?
Which house (qd. she) and gan for to behold,

And knew it well, and whose it was him told.

And fellen forth in speech of things smale,
And saten in the window both twey:
When Pandarus saw time vnto his tale,
And saw well that her folke were all awey:
Now nece mine, tell on (qd. he) I prey,
How liketh you the letter that ye wot,
Can he thereon, for by my trouth I not.

Therewith all rosy hewed tho wore she,
And gan to hum, and said, so I trow,
Iquite him well for Gods loue (qd. he)
My selfe to medes woll the letter sow,
And held his hondes vp, and sat on know,
Now good nece, be it neuer so lite,
Leue me the labour, it to sow and plite.

Ye, for I can so writen (qd. she) tho,
And eke I not what I should to him say:
Nay nece (qd. Pandare) say not so,
Yet at the least, thonketh him I prey
Of his good will: O, doth him not to dey,
Now for the loue of me my nece dere,
Refuseth not at this time my praiere.

Depardieux (qd. she) God leue all be wele,
God helpe me so, this is the first letter
That euer I wrote, ye all or any dele,
And into a closet for to auise her better,
She went alone, and gan her heart vnfetter
Out of disdaines prison, but a lite,
And set her doune, and gan a letter write.

Of which to tell in short is mine entent
The effect, as ferre as I can vnderstond:
She thonked him, of all that he well ment
Towards her, but holden him in hond
She nolde not, ne make her seluen bond
In loue, but as his suster him to please,
She would aye faine to done his hart an ease.

She shette it, and to Pandare into gone
There as he sat, and looked into strete,
And doune she set her by him on a stone
Of iasper, vpon a quisshen of gold ibete,
And said, as wisely helpe me God the grete,
I neuer did a thing with more paine,
Than write this, to which ye me constraine,

And tooke it him: he thonked her, and seide,
God wot of thing full often lothe begonne,
Commeth end good: and nece mine Creseide,
That ye to him of hard now ben iwonne,
Ought he be glad, by God and ponder sonne:
For why, men saith impressions light
Full lightly ben aye readie to the slight.

But ye han plaied the tirannt all too long,
And hard was it your hart for to graue,
Now stint, that ye no lenger on it hong,
All woulden ye the forme of daunger saue,
But hasteth you to done him ioy haue:
For trusteth well, too long idone hardnesse
Causeth dispite full often for distresse.

And right as they declared this matere,
Lo Troilus, right at the stretes end
Came riding with his tenth somme ifere
All softely, and thiderward gan bend
There as they sate, as was his way to wend
To paleis ward, and Pandare him aspide,
And said, nece, isee who commeth here ride.

O flie not in, he seeth vs I suppose,
Least he may thinken that ye him eschue.
Nay nay (qd. she) and wore as red as rose,
With that he gan her humbly salue
With dredefull chere, and oft his hewes mue,
And vp his looke debonairely he cast,
And becked on Pandare, and forth by past.

God wot if he sat on his horse aright,
Or goodly was beseene that ilke day,
God wot where he were like a manly knight,
What should I dretche, or tell of his aray:
Creseide, which that all these things sey,
To tell in short, her liked all ifere
His person, his aray, his looke, his chere,

His goodly manner, and his gentillesse,
So well, that neuer sith that she was borne,
Ne had she such routh of his distresse,
And how so, she hath hard ben here beforne,
To God hope I she hath now caught a thorn,
She shall nat pull it out this next wike,
God send her mo such thornes on to pike.

Pandare, which that stood her fast by,
Felt iron hot, and he began to smite,
And said, nece, I pray you heartely,
Tell me that I shall asken you alite,
A woman that were of his death to wite
Withouten his gilt, but for her lacke of routh,
Were it well done (qd. she) nay by my trouth

God helpe me so (qd. he) ye say me sooth,
Me seemen well your selfe that I nought lie,
Lo, ponde he rideth (qd. she) ye so he dooth:
Well (qd. Pandare) as I haue told you thrie,
Let be your nice shame, and your follie,
And speake with him in easing of his hert,
Let nicete nat do you both smert.

But theron was to heauen and to done,
Considering all thing, it may nat be,

And

And why? for ſhame, and it were eke too ſoone
To graunten him ſo great a liberte:
For plainly her entent, as (ſaid ſhe)
Was for to loue him vnwiſt, if ſhe might,
& guerdon him with nothing but with light.

But Pandare thought, it ſhall nat be ſo
If that I may, this nice opinion
Shall nat ben holden fully yeares two.
What ſhould I make of this a long ſermon?
He muſt aſſent on that concluſion,
As for the time, and when that it was eue,
And all was well, he roſe and tooke his leue.

And on his way faſt homeward he ſpedde,
And right for ioy he felt his heart daunce,
And Troilus he found alone abedde,
That lay, as done theſe louers in a traunce,
Betwixen hope and derke diſeſperaunce,
But Pandare, right at his in comming,
He ſong, as who ſaith, lo, ſomewhat I bring.

And ſaid, who is in his bedde ſo ſoone
Yburied thus? it am I friend (qd. he)
Who, Troilus? nay, helpe me ſo the moone
(Qd. Pandarus) thou ſhalt vp riſe and ſee
A charme that was ſent right now to thee,
The which can healen thee of thine acceſſe,
If thou do forthwith all thy buſineſſe.

Yet through the might of God (qd. Troilus)
And Pandarus gan him the letter take,
And ſaid, parde God hath holpen vs,
Haue here a light, and look on all theſe blake,
But often gan the heart glad and quake
Of Troilus, while he it gan to rede,
So as the wordes yaue him hope or drede.

But finally he tooke all for the beſt
That ſhe him wrote, for ſomewhat he beheld,
On which he thought he might his heart reſt,
All couered ſhe the wordes vnder ſheld,
Thus to the more worthy part he held,
That what for hope, and Pandarus beheſt,
His great woe foryede he at the leſt.

But as we may all day our ſelues ſee,
Through wood or cole kindleth the more fire,
Right ſo encreaſe of hope, of what it be,
Therewith full oft encreaſeth eke deſire,
Or as an oke commeth of a little ſpire,
So through this letter, which ỹ ſhe him ſent,
Encreaſen gan deſire of which he brent.

Wherfore I ſay alway, that day and night
This Troilus gan to deſiren more
Thã he did erſt through hope, & did his might
To preſſen on, as by Pandarus lore,
And writen to her of his ſorowes ſore
Fro day to day, he let it nought refreide,
That by Pandare he ſomewhat wrot or ſeide.

And did alſo his other obſeruaunces,
That till a louer longeth in this caas,
And after as his dice turned on chaunces,
So was he either glad, or ſaid alas,
And held after his geſtes aye his paas,
And after ſuch anſwers as he had,
So were his daies ſorry either glad.

But to Pandare alway was his recours,
And pitouſly gan aye on him to plaine,
And him beſought of rede, and ſome ſocours,
And Pandarus, that ſaw his wood paine,
Wert well nigh dead for routh ſooth to ſaine,
And buſily with all his heart caſt,
Some of his wo to ſleen, and that as faſt.

And ſaid, Lord and friend, and brother dere,
God wot that thy diſeaſe doth me wo,
But wolt thou ſtinten all this wofull chere,
And by my trouth, ere it be daies two,
And God toforne, yet ſhall I ſhape it ſo,
That thou ſhalt come into a certaine place,
There as thou maiſt thy ſelf praien her of grace.

And certainly I not if thou it woſt,
But they that ben expert in loue, it ſay,
It is one of theſe things forthereth moſt,
A man to haue a leiſer for to pray,
And liker place his wo for to bewray,
For in good heart it mote ſome routh impreſſe
To heare and ſee the guiltleſſe in diſtreſſe.

Peraunture thinkeſt thou, though it be ſo,
That kind would her done for to begin,
To haue a manner routh vpon my wo,
Saith daunger nay, thou ſhalt me neuer win,
So ruleth her heart's ghoſt within,
That though ſhe bend, yet ſhe ſtont on rote,
What in effect is this vnto my bote.

Thinke here ayen, when that the ſturdy oke,
On which men hacketh oft for the nones,
Receiued hath the happy falling ſtroke,
The great ſweight doth it come all at ones,
As done theſe great rocks or theſe mine ſtones
For ſwifter courſe cometh thing ỹ is of wight
When it diſcendeth, than done things light.

But rede that boweth doune for euery blaſt
Full lightly ceſſe wind, it woll ariſe,
But ſo will not an oke, when it is caſt,
It needeth me nought long thee forwiſe,
Men ſhall reioyſen of a great empriſe,
Atchieued well, and ſtant withouten dout,

All

All haue men ben the lenger thereabout.

But Troilus, now tell me if thee lest
A thing, which that I shall asken thee,
Which is thy brother, that thou louest best?
As in thy very hearts priuite?
Iwis my brother Deiphebus tho (qd. he.)
Now (qd. Pandare) ere houres twise twelue,
Ye shall the case, vnwist of it himselue.

Now let me alone, and worken as I may
(Qd. he) and to Deiphebus went he tho,
Which had his lord, and great friend ben aye,
Saue Troilus no man he loued so,
To tell in short withouten wordes mo
(Qd. Pandarus) I pray you that ye be
Friend to a cause, which that toucheth me.

Yes parde (qd. Deiphebus) well thou wotest
All that euer I may, and God toforе,
All nere it but for the man I loue most,
My brother Troilus, but say wherefore
It is, for lith the day that I was bore,
I nas, ne neuer mo to ben I thinke,
Ayenst a thing that might thee forthinke.

Pandare gan him thank, and to him seide,
Lo sir, I haue a lady in this toun
That is my nece, and called is Creseide,
Which some men would done oppressioun,
And wrongfully haue her possessioun,
Wherefore I of your lordship you beseech
To ben our friend, withouten more speech.

Deiphebus him answerd: O, is nat this
That thou speakest of to me thus straungely,
Creseide my friend? He said him yes.
Then needeth (qd. Deiphebus) hardely
No more of this to speke, for trusteth well ỳ I
Will be her Champion with spore and perde,
I ne raught nat though all her foes it herde.

But tel me how, for thou wost this matere,
I might best auailen, now lette see?
(Qd. Pandarus) if ye my lord so dere
Woulden as now do this honour to me,
To praien her to morrow, lo that she
Came vnto you, her plaints to deuise,
Her aduersaries would of it agrise.

And if I more durst praien as now,
And chargen you to haue so great trauaile,
To haue some of your brethren here with you,
That mighten to her cause bet auaile,
Then wote I well she might neuer faile
For to ben holpen, what at your instaunce,
What with her other friends gouernaunce.

Deiphebus, which that comen was of kind
To all honour and bountie to consent,
Answerd, it shall be done: and I can find
Yet greater helpe to this mine entent,
What woldest thou saine, if for Heleine I sent
To speake of this, I trow it be the best,
For she may leden Paris as her lest.

Of Hector, which ỳ is my Lord my brother,
It needeth nat to praien him friend to be,
For I haue heard him o time and eke other
Speaken of Creseide such honour, that he
May saine no bet such hap to him hath she,
It needeth nat his helpes more to craue,
He shall be such, right as we woll him haue.

Speake thou thy selfe also to Troilus
On my behalfe, and pray him with vs dine.
Sir, all this shall be done (qd. Pandarus)
And tooke his leaue, and neuer gan to fine,
But to his neces house as streight as line
He came, and found her fro the meat arise,
And set him doun, & spake right in this wise:

He said, O dere God, so haue I ronne,
Lo nece mine, see ye nat how I swete,
I not where ye the more thanke me conne,
Be ye not ware how false Poliphete
Is now about eftsoones for to plete,
And bring on you aduocacies new?
I, no (qd. she) and chaunged all her hew.

What, is he more about me to dretche
And done me wrong, what shall I done, alas,
Yet of hunselfe nothing would I retche,
Nere it for Antenor and Eneas,
That ben his friends in such manner caas:
But for the loue of God mine vncle dere,
No force of that, let him haue all ifere,

Withouten that, I haue ynough for vs.
Nay (qd. Pandare) it shall nothing be so,
For I haue ben right now at Deiphebus,
At Hector, and mine other lords mo,
And shortly maked each of hem his so,
That by my thrift he shall it neuer win,
For aught he can, when so that he begin.

And as they casten what was best to done,
Deiphebus of his owne courtesie
Came her to pray, in his proper persone,
To hold him on the morrow companie
At dinner, which she nolde not denie,
But goodly gan to his prayer obey,
He thonked her, and went vpon his wey.

When this was done, this Pandare anone
To tell in short forth he gan to wend

To

To Troilus, as ſtill as any ſtone,
And all this thing he told him word and end,
And how that he Deiphebus gan to blend,
And ſaid him, now is time of that ye conne
To bere thee well to morow, and all is wonne

Now ſpeke, now pray, now pitouſly cõplaine,
Let nat for nice ſhame, for drede or slouth,
Sometime a man mote tell his owne paine,
Beleeue it, and ſhe woll haue on thee routh,
Thou ſhalt ben ſaued by thy faith in trouth,
But well wot I, thou now art in a drede,
And what it is, I lay that I can arede.

Thou thinkeſt now, how ſhould I don al this,
For by my cheres moſten folke eſpie,
That for her loue is that I fare amis,
Yet had I leuer vnwiſt for ſorrow die:
Now thinke nat ſo, for thou doſt great follie,
For I right now haue founden a manere
Of ſleight, for to couceren all thy chere.

Thou ſhalt gone ouernight, and that bliue,
Vnto Deiphebus houſe, as thee to play,
Thy maladie away the bet to driue,
For which thou ſeemeth ſicke, ſooth to ſay,
Soone after that, in thy bed thee lay,
And ſay thou maiſt no lenger vp endure,
And lie right there, and bide thine auenture.

Say that thy feuer is wont thee for to take
The ſame time, and laſt till a morow,
And let ſee now how well thou canſt it make:
For parde ſicke is he that is in ſorrow.
Go now farwell, and Venus here to borow,
I hope and thou this purpoſe hold ferme,
Thy grace ſhe ſhall fully there conferme.

(Qd. Troilus) iwis thou all needleſſe
Counſaileſt me, that ſickeliche I me faine,
For I am ſicke in earneſt doubteleſſe,
So that well nigh I ſterue for the paine:
(Qd. Pandarus) thou ſhalt the better plaine,
And haſt the leſſe need to counterfete,
For him demeth men hote, ỹ ſeeth him ſwete.

Lo, hold thee at thy triſte cloſe, and I
Shall well the deere vnto the bow driue:
Therewith he tooke his leaue all ſoftly,
And Troilus to his paleis went bliue,
So glad ne was he neuer in all his liue,
And to Pandarus rede gan all aſſent,
And to Deiphebus houſe at night he went.

What nedeth it you to tellen all the chere
That Deiphebus vnto his brother made,
Or his aris, or his ſickeliche manere,
How men gone him with clothes for to lade,
Whē he was laid, & how mē would him glade:
But all for nought, he held forth aye the wiſe,
That ye han heard Pandare ere this deuiſe.

But certaine is, ere Troilus him leide,
Deiphebus had praied him ouer night
To ben a friend, and helping to Creſeide:
God wot that he graunted anon right,
To ben her full friend with all his might:
But ſuch a need was it to praien him thenne,
As for to bidden a wood man to renne.

The morow came, and nigher gan the time
Of mealtide, that the faire queene Helene
Shope her to ben an houre after the prime
With Deiphebus, to whom ſhe nolde faine,
But as his ſuſter, homely ſooth to ſaine
She came to dinner in her plaine entent,
But God & Pandare wiſt all what this ment.

Came eke Creſeide all innocent of this,
Antigone her nece, and Tarbe alſo,
But flie we now prolixitie beſt is,
For loue of God, and let vs faſt go
Right to theffect, withouten tales mo,
Why all this folke aſſembled in this place,
And let vs of all her ſaluings pace.

Great honour did hem Deiphebus certaine,
And fedde hem well, with all that might like,
But euermo alas, was his refraine:
My good brother Troilus the ſike
Lithe yet, and therewithall he gan to ſike,
And after that he pained him to glade
Hem as he might, and chere good he made.

Complained eke Helene of his ſickneſſe
So faithfully, that it pitie was to here,
And euery wight gan weyen for axes
A leche anon, and ſaid in this manere
Men cure folke, this charme I wol thee lere,
But there ſate one, all liſt her nat to teche,
That thought, yet beſt could I ben his leche.

After complaint him gonnen they to preiſe,
As folke don yet when ſome wight hath begon
To preiſe a man, and with preiſe him reiſe
A thouſand fold yet higher than the ſonne,
He is, he can, that few other Lords conne,
And Pandarus of that they would afferme,
He nought forgate her praiſing to conferme.

Herd all this thing faire Creſeid well inough,
And euery word gan for to notiſie,
For which with ſober chere her heart lough,
For who is that ne would her gloriſie,
To mowen ſuch a knight done liue or die,
But all paſſe I, leaſt ye too long idwell,

But

But for o fine is all that euer I tell.

The time came, fro dinner for to rise,
And as hem ought, arisen euerychone,
And gane a while of this and that deuise,
But Pandarus brake all this speech anone,
And said to Deiphebus, woll ye gone,
If your will be, as erst I you preide,
To speaken of the nedes of Creseide.

Heleine, which that by the hond her held,
Tooke first the tale, and said, go we bliue,
And goodly on Creseide she beheld,
And said, Ioues let him neuer thriue
That doth you harm, a reue him sone of liue,
And yeue me sorrow, but he shall it rue,
If that I may, and all folke be true.

Tell thou thy nices case (qd. Deiphebus
To Pandarus) for thou canst best it tell.
My Lords and my Ladies, it stant thus,
What should I longer (qd. he) do you dwell,
☞ He rong hem out a proces like a bell
Upon her foe, that hight Poliphete,
So hainous, that men might on it spete.

Answerd of this ech worse of hem than other,
And Poliphete they gonnen thus to warien,
And hanged be such one, were he my brother,
And so he shall, for it ne may nought varien,
What should I longer in this tale tarien,
Plainelich all at ones they her highten
To ben her freend in all that euer they mighten

Spake then Heleine, and said Pandarus,
Wot aught my lord my brother of this mater,
I meane Hector, or wote it Troilus.
He said ye, but woll ye me now here,
Me thinketh thus, sith that Troilus is here,
It were good, if that ye would assent,
She told him her selfe all this ere she went.

For he wol haue the more her greke at hart,
Because lo, that she a Lady is,
And by your will, I woll but in right start,
And do you wete, and that anone I wis,
If that he sleepe, or woll aught here of this,
And in he lept, and said him in his ere,
☞ God haue thy soule, for broght haue I thy here.

To smilen of this gan tho Troilus,
And Pandarus without reckoning,
Out went anon to Heleine and Deiphebus,
And said hem, so there be no tarying
Me more preale, he woll well that ye bring
Creseide my Lady, that is now here,
And as he may enduren, he woll her here.

But well ye wote, the chamber is but lite,
And few folke may lightly make it warme,
Now looketh ye, for I woll haue no wite
To bring in prease, ŷ might done him harme,
Or him diseasen, for my better arme:
Yet were it beste she bid tell oft soonis,
Now looke ye that knowen what to don is.

I say for me best is, as I can know,
That no wight in ne wend, but ye twey,
But it were I, for I cannot in a throw
Rehearse her case, unlike that she can sey,
And after this she may him ones prey
To ben good Lord in short, and take her leue,
This may not mokell of his case him reue.

And eke for she is straunge, he well forbere
His case, which that him dare nat for you,
Eke other thing that toucheth nat to her,
He will it tell, I wote it well right now,
That secret is, and for the townes prow,
And they that knew nothing of his entent,
Without more, to Troilus in they went.

Heleine in all her goodly soft wise
Gan him salue, and womanly to play,
And saied twis, ye more algate arise:
Now faire brother be all hole I pray,
And gan her arme right ouer his shoulder lay,
And him with all her wit to recomfort,
As she best could, she gan him to disport.

So after this (qd. she) we you beseke
My dere brother Deiphebus and I,
For loue of God, and so doth Pandare eke,
To ben good lord and friend right hartely
Unto Creseide, which that certainly
Receiued wrong, as wot well here Pandare,
That can her case well bet than I declare.

This Pandarus gan new his tong affile,
And all her case rehearse, and that anone,
When it was saied, loone after in a while,
(Qd. Troilus) as soone as I may gone,
I wol right faine with all my might ben one,
Haue God my trouth, her cause to sustene.
Now good thrift haue ye (qd. Heleine ŷ queene.)

(Qd. Pandarus) and it your will be,
That she may take her leaue ere that she go.
O, nis God forbid it tho (qd. he)
If that she vouchsafe for to doe so:
And with that word (qd. Troilus) ye two
Deiphebus, and my lister leefe and dere,
To you haue I to speake of a matere.

To ben auised by your rede the better,
And found (as hap was) at his beds hedde

The

The copie of a treatise, and a letter
That Hector had him sent, to aske rede
If such a man was worthy to ben dede,
Wote I naught who, but in a grisly wise
He praied hem anone on it auise.

Deiphebus gan this letter for to vnfold
In earnest great, so did Heleine the queene,
And roming outward, fast it gonne behold
Downward a steire, into an herber greene:
This ilke thing they redden hem betweene,
And largely the mountenaunce of an houre
They gonne on it to reden and to poure.

Now let hem rede, and tourne we anone
To Pandarus, that gan full soft prie,
That all was well, and out he gan to gone
Into the great chamber, and that in hie,
And saied, God saue all this companie:
Come nece mine, my lady Queene Heleine
Abideth you, and eke my Lordes tweine.

Rise, take with you your nece Antigone,
Or whom you list, or no force hardely,
The lasse preasse the bet, come forth with me,
And looke that ye thonken humbly
Hem all three, and when ye may goodly
Your time isee, taketh of hem your leaue,
Least we too long his restes him bireaue.

All innocent of Pandarus entent
(Od, tho Ercleide) go we vncle dere,
And arme in arme, inward with him she went,
Iuising well her wordes and her chere,
And Pandarus in carnestfull maniere,
Saied, all folke for Gods loue I pray,
Stinteth right here, and softly you play.

Auiseth you what folke ben here within,
And in what plite one is, God him amend,
And inward thus full softely begin,
Nece I coniure, and highly you defend
On his halfe, which that soule vs all send,
And in the vertue of corounes twaine
Dlea nat this man, ỹ hath for you this paine.

Fie on the deuill, thinke which one he is,
And in what plite he lieth, come off anone,
Thinke all such taried tide but lost it nis,
That woll ye both saine, when ye been one:
Secondly, there yet deuineth none
Upon you two, come off now if ye conne,
While folke is blent, lo, all the time is wonne.

In tittering and pursute, and delaies
The folke diuine, at wegging of a stre,
And though ye would han after merry daies,
Then dare ye nat, and why? For she and she
Spake such a word, thus looked he and he:
Least time be lost, I dare nat with you deale,
Come off therfore, and bringeth him to heale.

But now to you, ye louers that ben here,
Was Troilus nat in a cankedort,
That lay, and might the wispring of hem here
And thoght O lord, right now renneth my sort
Fully to die, or haue anone comfort,
And was the first time he should her pray
Of loue, O mightie God, what shall he say.

Explicit liber secundus.

O Blisfull light, of which the bemes clere
Adorneth all the third heauen faire,
O sonnes leke, O Ioues doughter dere,
Pleasaunce of loue, O goodly debonaire,
In gentle hearts aye ready to repaire,
O very cause of heale and of gladnesse,
Iheried be thy might and thy goodnesse.

In heauen and hell, in earth, and salt see,
Is felt thy might, if that I well discerne,
As man, and beast, fish, herbe, and grene tree,
They fele in times with vapour eterne,
God loueth, and to loue wol naught werne,
And in this world no liues creature,
Withouten loue is worth, or may endure.

Ye Ioues first, to thilke affects glade,
Through which that things liuen all and be,
Commenden, and amorous hem made
On mortall thing, and as you list aye ye
Yeue hem in loue, ease, or aduersite:
And in a thousand formes doune hem sent
For loue in yearth, and whom you list he hent.

Ye fiers Mars appeasen of his ire,
And as you list, ye maken hearts digne:
Algates hem that ye woll set a fire,
They dreden shame, and vices they resigne,
Ye doen hem curteis be, fresh, and benigne,
And high or low, after a wight entendeth
The ioies that he hath, your might it sendeth.

Ye holden reigne and house in vnitie,
Ye soothfast cause of friendship ben also,
Ye knowen all thilke couered qualitie
Of things, which that folke wondren at so,
When they can nat construe how it may go,
Why he loueth him, or why he loueth here,
As why this fish, and nat that commeth to were.

Ye folke a law haue set in vniuerse,

And this know I by hem that louers be,
That who so striueth with you hath ỹ werse:
Now Ladie bright, for thy benignite,
At reuerence of hem that seruen thee,
Whose clerke I am, so teacheth me deuise,
Some ioy of that is felt in thy seruise.

Yea, in my naked heart sentement
In hilde, and do me shew of thy sweetnesse
Caliope, thy voice be now present,
For now is need, seest thou nat my distresse,
How I mote tell anon right the gladnesse
Of Troilus, to Venus herying,
To the which who nede hath, God him bring.

Incipit liber tertius.

IN all this meane while this Troilus
Recording his lesson in this manere,
Makey thought he, thus woll I say, and thus,
Thus woll I plaine vnto my Lady dere,
That word is good, and this shall be my chere
This nill I nat forfeten in no wise,
God leue him werken as he can deuise.

And Lord so that his hart gan to quappe,
Hearing her come, and short for to sike,
And Pandarus that ledde her by the lappe,
Came nere, and gan in at the curtein pike,
And saied, God doe bote on all that are sike,
See who is here you comen to visite,
Lo, here is she that is your death to wite.

Therewith it seemed as he wept almost,
A, a (qd. Troilus) so routhfully,
Whether me be wo, O mighty god thou wost,
Who is all there, I see nat truely:
Sir (qd. Creseide) it is Pandare and I,
Ye sweet hart alas, I may nat rise
To kneele, and do you honour in some wise.

And dressed him vpward, and she right tho
Gan both her hondes soft vpon him ley,
O for the loue of God doe ye not so
To me (qd. she) eye what is this to sey
Sir, comen am I to you for causes twey,
First you to thonke, and of your Lordship eke
Continuaunce I would you beseke.

This Troilus that heard his Ladie pray
Of Lordship, him wor neither quick ne dedde,
Ne might o word for shame to it say,
Although men shoulden smiten off his hedde,
But Lord so he wor sodainelich redde:
And sir, his lesson that he wend conne
To praien her, is through his wit ronne.

Creseide all this aspied well ynough,
For she was wise, & loued him neuer the lasse,
All nere he in all apert, or made it tough,
Or was too bold to sing a foole a Masse,
But when his shame gan somwhat to passe
His reasons, as I may my rimes hold,
I woll you tell, as teachen bookes old.

In chaunged voice right for his very drede,
Which voice eke quoke, & thereto his manere
Goodly abasht, and now his hewes rede,
Now pale, vnto Creseide his ladie dere,
With looke doun cast, & humble ipolden chere,
Lo, the alderfirst word that him astart,
Was twice, mercy, mercy, O my sweet hart.

And stint a while, & when he might out bring,
The next word was, God wote for I haue
As faithfully as I haue had konning,
Ben yours all, God so my soule do saue,
And shall, till that I wofull wight be graue,
And though I dare ne can vnto you plaine,
Iwis I suffer not the lasse paine.

Thus much as now, ah, womanliche wife
I may out bring, and if this you displease,
That shall I weke vpon mine owne life
Right soone I trow, and do your hart an ease,
If with my death your heart may appease:
But seng that ye han heard me somewhat sey,
Now reich I neuer how soone that I dey.

Therewith his manly sorrow to behold,
It might haue made an hart of stone to rew,
And Pandare wept as he to water would,
And poked euer his nece new and new,
And saied, wo begon been hearts true,
For loue of God, make of this thing an end,
Or slea vs both at ones, ere that ye wend.

I, what (qd. she) by God and by my trouth
I not nat what ye wilne that I sey:
Eye, what (qd. he) that ye haue on him routh
For Gods sone, and doeth him nat to dey:
Now then thus (qd. she) I woll him prey,
To tell me the fine of his entent,
Yet wist I neuer well what that he ment.

What that I meane, O my sweet hart dere
(Qd. Troilus) O goodly fresh and free,
That with the streames of your eyen so clere
Ye shoulden sometime friendly on me see,
And then agreen that I may ben hee
Without en braunch of vice, on any wise,
In trouth alway to do you my seruise.

As to my ladie right, and cheefe reſort,
With all my witte and all my diligence,
And to haue right as you liſt comfort,
Vnder your yerde egall to mine offence,
As death, if that I breake your defence,
And that ye digne me ſo much honour,
Ye to commaunden aught in any hour.

And I to ben your very humble, true,
Secret, and in my paines patient,
And euer to deſiren freſhly new
To ſeruen, and to ben aye like diligent,
And with good heart all holly your talent
Receiuen well, how ſore that me ſmart,
Lo this meane I, O mine owne ſweet hart.

(Qd. Pandarus) lo here an hard requeſt,
And reaſonable, a Ladie for to werne:
Now nece mine, by Natall Ioues feeſt,
Were I a god, ye ſhould ſterue as yerne,
That heren wel this man wol nothing yerne,
But your honour, and ſeene him almoſt ſterue,
And ben ſo loth to ſuffer him you to ſeruc.

With that ſhe gan her eyen on him caſt
Full eaſily, and full debonairely
Auiſing her, and hied not too faſt,
With neuer a word, but ſaied him ſoftely,
Mine honour ſake, I woll well truely,
And in ſuch forme, as I can now deuiſe,
Receiuen him fully to my ſeruiſe.

Beſeeching him for Gods loue, that he
Would in honour of trouth and gentilleſſe,
As I well meane, eke meanen well to me:
And mine honour with wit and buſineſſe
Aye kepe, and if I may doen him gladneſſe
From henceforth twis I nill not faine:
Now beth all hole, no lenger pene plaine.

But nathelleſſe, this warne I you (qd. ſhe)
Al kings ſonne although ye be twis,
Ye ſhall no more haue ſouraintе
Of me in loue, than right in that caſe is,
Ne nill forbeare, if that ye doen amis
To wrath you, and while that ye me ſerue,
Therthen you, right after that ye deſerue.

And ſhortly, dere hart and all my knight,
Beth glad, and drawеth you to luſtineſſe,
And I ſhall truely, with all my full might
Your bitter tournen all to ſweetneſſe,
If I be ſhe that may doe you gladneſſe,
For euery wo ye ſhall recouer a bliſſe,
And him in armes tooke, and gan him kiſſe.

Fell Pandarus on knees, and vp his eyen
To heauen threw, and held his hondes hie:
Immortall God (qd. he) that maieſt not dien,
Cupide I meane, of this maieſt glorifie,
And Venus, thou maieſt maken melodie
Withouten hond, me ſeemeth that in toune,
For this miracle iche here echo bell ſoune.

But ho, no more now of this mattere,
For why? This folke woll comen vp anone,
That haue the letter redde, lo I hem here,
But I coniure thee Creſeide, and one
And two, thou Troilus when thou maiſt gone
That at mine houſe ye ben at my warning,
For I full well ſhall ſhapen your comming.

And caſeth there your harts right ynough,
And let ſee which of you ſhall beare the bell
To ſpeak of loue aright, & therwith he lough;
For there haue I a leſſer for to tell:
(Qd. Troilus) how long ſhall I here dwell
Ere this be doen? qd. he when thou maieſt riſe
This thing ſhall be right as you liſt deuiſe.

With that Helene and alſo Deiphebus
Tho comen vpward right at the ſtaires end,
And Lord ſo tho gan grouen Troilus,
His brother and his ſuſter for to blend:
(Qd. Pandarus) it time is that we wend,
Take nece mine your leaue at hem all three,
And let hem ſpeak, & commeth forth with me.

She tooke her leaue at hem full thriftely,
As ſhe well could, and they her reuerence
Vnto the full diddon hartely,
And wonder well ſpeaken in her abſence
Of her, in praiſing of her excellence,
Her gouernaunce, her wit, and her manere
Commendeden, that it ioy was to here.

Now let her wend vnto her owne place,
And tourne we vnto Troilus againe,
That gan full lightly of the letter pace,
That Deiphebus had in the gardine feine,
And of Helene and him he would feine
Deliuered ben, and ſaied, that him leſt
To ſlepe, and after tales haue a reſt.

Helene him kiſſ, and tooke her leaue bliue,
Deiphebus eke, and home went euery wight,
And Pandarus as faſt as he may driue
To Troilus tho came, as any line right,
And on a paillet, all that glad night
By Troilus he lay, with merry chere
To tale, and well was hem they were ifere.

When euery wight was voided but they two,
And all the doores weren faſt ishet,
To tell in ſhort, withouten words mo,
This Pandarus, without any let

Up roſe, and on his beddes ſide him ſet,
And gan to ſpeaken in a ſober wiſe
To Troilus, as I ſhall you deuiſe.

Myne alderleueſt Lord, and brother dere,
God wot, and thou, that it late me ſo ſore,
When I thee ſaw ſo languiſhing to here,
For loue of which thy wo wore alway more,
That I with all my might, and all my lore,
Haue euer ſithen doen my buſineſſe
To bring thee to ioy out of diſtreſſe.

And haue it brought to ſuch plite as thou woſt
So ỹ through me thou ſtondeſt now in way
To faren well, I ſay it for no boſt,
And woſt thou why, but ſhame it is to ſay,
For thee haue I begon a gamen play,
Which that I neuer doen ſhall eft for other,
All tho he were a thouſand fold my brother.

That is to ſay, for thee am I becomen,
Betwixen game and earneſt ſuch a meane,
As maken women vnto men to comen,
All ſay I nat, thou woſt well what I meane,
For thee haue I my nece, of vices cleane,
So fully made thy gentileſſe triſt,
That all ſhall ben right as thy ſelfe liſt.

But God, that all woteth, take I to witneſſe,
That neuer I this for couetiſe wrought,
But only for to abredge that diſtreſſe,
For which welnie thou dideſt, as me thought:
But good brother do now as thee ought,
For Gods loue, and kepe her out of blame,
Sins thou art wiſe, & ſaue alway her name.

For well thou woſt, the name as yet of her
Emongs ỹ people, as (who ſaith) halowed is,
For that man is vnbore I dare well ſwere,
That euer wiſt that ſhe did amis,
But wo is me, that I that cauſe all this,
May thinken that ſhe is my nece dere,
And I her eme, and traitour eke i fere.

And wer it wiſt, that I through mine engine
Had in mine nece iput this fantaſie
To doen thy luſt, and holly to be thine:
Why all the world would vpon it crie,
And ſay, that I the worſt trecherie
Did in this caſe, that euer was begon,
And ſhe forlone, and thou right nought iwon.

Wherfore ere I woll further gone or paas,
Yet eft I thee beſeech, and fully ſay,
That priuete go with vs in this caas,
That is to ſaine, that thou vs neuer wray,
And be not wroth, though I thee oft pray
To holden ſecre ſuch an high mattere,
For ſkilfull is, thou woſt well my praiere.

And thinke what wo there hath betid ere this
For making of auaunts, as men rede,
And what miſchaunce in this world yet is
Fro day to day, right for that wicked dede,
For which theſe wiſe clerkes hit ben dede
Haue euer this prouerbed to vs young,
That the firſt vertue is to kepe the toung.

And nere it that I wilne as now abredge
Diffuſion of ſpeech, I could almoſt
A thouſand old ſtories thee alledge
Of women loſt, through falſe and fooles boſt,
Prouerbes eanſt thy ſelfe inow, and woſt
Againſt that vice for to been a blabbe,
All fated men ſooth, as often as they gabbe.

O tongue alas, ſo often here before
Haſt thou made many a lady bright of hew,
Saied welaway the day that I was bore,
And many a maidens ſorrow for to new,
And for the more part all is vntrew
That men of yelpe, & it were brought to preue,
Of kind, none auauntour is to leue.

Auauntour and a lier, all is one,
As thus: I poſe a woman graunt me
Her loue, and ſaieth that other woll ſhe none,
And I am ſworne to holden it ſecree,
And after I tell it two or three,
Iwis I am a vauntour at the leſt,
And lier eke, for I breake my beheſt.

Now looke then if they be not to blame,
Such maner folk, what ſhal I clepe hē, what,
That hem auaunt of women, and by name,
That yet behight hem neuer this ne that,
Ne know hem no more than mine old hat,
No wonder is, ſo God me ſend hele,
Though women dreden with vs men to dele.

I ſay not this for no miſtruſt of you,
Ne for no wiſe men, but for fooles nice,
And for the harme that in the world is now,
As well for follie oft, as for malice,
For well wote I, in wiſe folke that vice
No woman dreadeth, if ſhe be well auiſed,
For wiſe been by fooles harme chaſtiſed.

But now to purpoſe leue brother dere
Haue all this thing that I haue ſaied in mind,
And kepe thee cloſe, and be now of good chere
For all thy daies thou ſhalt me true find,
I ſhall thy proceſſe ſet in ſuch a kind,
And God toforne, that it ſhall thee ſuffiſe,
For it ſhall be right as thou wolt deuiſe.

For well I wote, thou meanest well parde,
Therefore I dare this fully vndertake,
Thou wost eke what thy lady graunted thee,
And day is set the charters to make,
Haue now good night, I may no lenger wake
And bid for me, sith thou art now in blisse,
That God me send death, or some lisse.

Who might tellen halfe the ioy or feste
Which that the soule of Troilus tho felt,
Hearing the effect of Pandarus behestе:
His old wo, that made his heart to swelt,
Gan tho for ioy wasten, and to melt,
And all the richesse of his sighes sore
At ones fled, he felt of hem no more.

But right so as these holts and these haieis
That han in Winter dead ben and drie,
Reuesten hem in grene, when that May is,
When euery lustie listeth to ply,
Right in that selfe wise, sooth for to sey,
Wore suddainly his heart full of ioy,
That gladder was there neuer man in Troy.

And gan his looke on Pandarus vp cast
Full soberly, and friendly on to see,
And saied, friend, in Aprill the last,
As well thou wost, if it remember thee,
How nigh the death for wo thou found me,
And how thou diddest all thy businesse
To know of me the cause of my distresse.

Thou wost how long I it forbare to say
To thee, that art the man that I best trist,
And peril none was it to thee to bewray,
That wast I well: but tell me if thee list,
Sith I so loth was that thy selfe it wist,
How durst I me to tellen of this matere,
That quake now, and no wight may vs here.

But natheless, by that God I thee swere,
That as him list may all the world gouerne,
And if I lie, Achilles with his spere
Mine heart cleaue, all were my life eterne,
As I am mortall, if I late or yerne
Would it bewray or durst or should conne,
For all the good that God made vnder sonne.

That rather die I would, and determine
As thinketh me now, stocked in prison,
In wretchednesse, in filth, and in vermine,
Captiue to cruell king Agamemnon,
And this in all the temples of this toun,
Vpon the gods all, I woll thee swere
To morow day, if that thee liketh here.

And that thou hast so much idoen for me,
That I ne may it neuermore deserue,
This know I well, all might I now for thee
A thousand times on a morow serue,
I can no more, but that I woll thee serue
Right as thy slaue, whether so thou wend,
For euermore, vnto my liues end.

But here with all mine hart I thee beseech,
That neuer in me thou deme such folly
As I shall saine: me thought by thy speech,
That this which thou me doest for companie,
I should wenen it were a baudrie,
I am not wood, all if I lewd be,
It is not so, that wote I well parde.

But he that goeth for gold, or for richesse,
On such messages, call him what ye list,
And this that thou doest, call it gentlenesse,
Compassion, and fellowship, and trist,
Depart it so, For wide where is wist
How that there is diuersitie required
Betwixen things like, as I haue lered.

And that thou know I thinke not ne wene,
That this seruice a shame be or vape,
I haue my faire sister Polexene,
Cassandre, Heleine, or any of the frape,
Be she neuer so faire, or well ishape,
Tell me which thou wilt of euerychone
To haue for thine, and let me then alone.

But sith that thou hast doen me this seruice,
My life to saue, and for none hope of mede:
So for the loue of God, this great empzise
Performe it out, now is the most nede.
For high and low, without en any drede,
I woll alway thine hestes all kepe,
Haue now good night, and let vs both slepe.

Thus held hem ech of other well apaied,
That all the world ne might it bet amend,
And on the morrow when they were araied,
Eche to his owne needs gan to entend:
But Troilus, though as the fire he brend
For sharpe desire of hope, and of pleasaunce,
He not forgate his good gouernaunce.

But in himselfe, with manhood gan restrain
Eche rakell deed, and eche vnbridled chere,
That all that liuen sooth for to saine,
Ne should haue wist by word or by manere
What that he ment, as touching this matere,
From euery wight, as ferre as is the cloud,
He was so wise, and well dissimulen coud.

And all the while which that I now deuise,
This was his life, with all his full might:
By day he was in Martes high seruise,
That is to saine, in armes as a knight,

And graunt it gladly with a frendes chere,
And haue a thonke,as grutch and then abide,
For home to go it may nat well betide.

I wol(qd.she)mine vncle liefe and dere,
Sens that you list,it skill is to be so,
I am right glad with you to dwellen here,
I said but agame that I would go,
Iwis graunt mercy nece(qd.he)tho:
Were it agame or no,sothe to tell,
Now am I glad,sens that you list to dwel.

Thus al is wel,but tho began aright
The new ioy, and al the fest againe,
But Pandarus,if goodly had he might,
He would haue hied her to bedde full faine,
And said,O Lord this is an huge raine,
This were a wether for to sleepen in,
And that I rede vs soone to begin.

And nece, wote ye where I woll you lay,
For that we shul not liggen ferre a sonder,
And for ye neither shullen,dare I say,
Here noise of raine,ne yet of thonder,
By God right in my closet yonder,
And I wol in that vtter house alone,
Ben wardain of your women euerichone.

And in this middle chambre that ye se,
Shal your women slepen,wel and soft,
And there I said,shal your selven be:
And if ye liggen wel to night, come oft,
And careth not what wether is aloft.
The wine anone,and when so you lest,
Go we to slepe,I trowe it be the best.

There nis no more, but hereafter sone
They voide,dronke,& trauers draw anone,
Gan euery wight that hath nought to done
More in the place,out of the chambre gone,
And euer more so sterelyche it rone,
And blewe therwith so wonderliche loude,
That wel nigh no man heren other coude.

Tho Pãdarus her eme,right as him ought
With women,such as were her most about,
Ful glad vnto her beddes side her brought,
And toke his leaue,and gan ful lowe lout,
And said,here at this closet dore without,
Right ouerthwart,your women liggen all,
That whom ye list of hem,ye may sone call.

Lo when that she was in the closet laid,
And al her women forth by ordinaunce,
A bedde weren, there as I haue said,
There nas no more to skippen nor to praunce,
But boden go to bedde with mischaunce,
If any wight stering were any where,
And let him slepen,that a bedde were.

But Pandarus, that wel couth eche adele,
The old daunce,and euery point therin,
When that he saw that all thing was wele,
He thought he wold vpon his werke begin:
And gan the fewe doze al soft vnpin,
As still as a stone,without longer let,
By Troilus adoun right he him set.

And shortly to the point right for to gone,
Of al this werke he told him worde and end,
And said,make thee redy right anone,
For thou shalt into heuen blisse wend.
Now blisful Venus,thou me grace send
(Qd.Troilus)for neuer yet no dede,
Had I er now,ne halfendele the drede.

(Qd.Pandarus)ne drede thee neuer a dele,
For it shal be right as thou wolt desire,
So thriue I,this night shall I make it wele,
Or casten al the gruel in the fire,
Yet blisful Venus this night thou me enspire
(Qd.Troilus)as wis as I the serue,
And euer bet and bet shall till I sterue.

And if I had,O Venus ful of mirth,
Aspectes badde of Mars,or of Saturne,
Or thou combuste,or let were in my birth,
Thy father pray, al thilke harme disturne,
Of grace,and that I glad ayen may turne:
For loue of him thou louedst in the shawe,
I mean Adon, that with the bore was slawe.

Joue eke,for the loue of faire Europe,
The which in forme of a bulle away thou fet,
now help O Mars, thou with thy blody cope
For loue of Cipria,thou me naught ne let,
O Phebus,think whē Daphne her selue shet
Under the barke,and Laurer wore for drede,
Yet for her loue,O help now at this nede.

Mercurie,for the loue of her eke, (wroth
For which Pallas was with Aglauros
Now helpe, and eke Diane I the beseke,
That this viage be nat to the loth:
O fatall sustren,which or any cloth
Me shapen was,my destine me sponne,
So helpeth to this werke that is begonne.

(qd.Pãdarus)thou wretched mouses hert,
Art thou agast so that she will the bite,
Why do on this furred cloke on thy skerte,
And folow me for I wol haue the wite:
But bide,and let me gon before alite,
And with that he gan vndone a trappe,
And Troilus he drought in by the lappe.

The

The sterne winde so loude gan for to rout
That no wight other noise might here,
And they that laien at the doze without,
Ful sikerly they slepten al ifere:
And Pandarus, with ful sobre chere,
Goth to the doze anon withouten lette,
There as they lay, and softly it shette.

And as he came ayen priuely
His nece awoke, & axeth, who goeth there?
Myowne dere nece (qd. he) it am I,
Ne wondreth not, ne haue of it no fere,
And nere he came, and said her in her eere:
No worde for loue of God I you beseech,
Let no wight arise, and here of our speech.

What, which way be ye comen? benedicite,
(Qd. she) and how vnwiste of hem all.
Here at this secrete trap doze (qd. he)
(Qd. tho Creseide) let me some wight call:
Eigh, God forbid that it should so fall,
(Qd. Pandarus) that ye such foly wrought,
They might demen thig they neuer er thought.

It is nat good a sleping hound to wake,
Ne neue a wight a cause for to deuine,
Your women slepen al, I vndertake,
So that for hem the house men might mine,
And slepen wollen till the sunne shine,
And when my tale is brought to an ende,
Unwist right as I came, so wol I wende.

Now nece mine, ye shul well vnderstonde,
(Qd. he) so as ye women demen all,
That for to hold in loue a man in honde,
And him her lefe and dere hart to call,
And maken him an howne aboue a call:
I mene, as loue an other in this mene while,
She doth her selfe a shame, and him a gile.

Now wherby that I tel you al this,
Ye wote your selfe, as wel as any wight,
How that your loue al fully graunted is
To Troilus, the worthiest wight
One of the world, and therto trouth ipight,
That but it were on him alone, ye nold
Him neuer failen, while ye liuen should.

Now stonte it thus, that sith I fro you wēt
This Troilus, right platly for to seine
Is through a gutter by a priuy went,
Into my chambre come in al this reine:
Unwist of euery maner wight certaine,
Saue of my selfe, as wisely haue I ioy,
And by the faith I owe to Priam of Troy.

And he is come in such paine and distresse,
That but he be al fully wood by this,
He sodainly mote fal into woodnesse,
But if God helpe: and, cause why is this,
He saith him tolde is of a frende of his,
How ỳ ye should louen one, that hight Horast,
For sorow of which this night shalbe his last.

Creseide, which that al this wonder herde,
Gan sodainly about her hart colde,
And with a sighe she sorowfully answerd,
Alas, I wende who so euer tales told,
My dere hart woulden me nat haue hold
So lightly faulse, alas conceites wrong,
What harme they done, for now liue I to lōg.

Horaste alas, and faisen Troilus,
I know him not, God helpe me so (qd. she)
Alas, what wicked spirite told him thus,
Now certes eme, to morow and I him se,
I shal therof as full excusen me,
As euer did woman, if him like,
And with that word she gan ful sore sike.

O God (qd. she) so worldly selinesse,
Which clerkes callen false felicite,
Ymedled is with many a bitternesse,
Ful anguishous, then is God wote (qd. she)
Condition of veine prosperite,
For either ioyes comen nat ifere,
Or els no wight hath hem alway here.

O brotil wele of mannes ioy vnstable,
with what wight so thou be, or thou who play
Either he wote, that thou ioy art mutable,
Or wote it nat, it mote ben one of tway:
Now if he wote it nat, how may he say,
That he hath very ioy and silinesse,
That is of ignorance ate in derkenesse.

Now if he wote that ioy is transitory,
As euery ioy of worldly thing mote flee,
Then euery time he that hath in memory,
The drede of leesing, maketh him that he
May in no parfite sikernesse be:
And if to lese his ioy, he set a mite,
Then semeth it, that ioy is worthy ful lite.

Wherfore I wol desine in this matere,
That truely for aught I can espie,
There is no very wele in this world here.
But O thou wicked serpent Ialousie,
Thou misbeleued, and enuious folie,
Why hast thou Troilus made to me vntrist,
That neuer yet agilte, that I wist?

(Qd. Pandarus) thus fallen is this caas,
Why vncle mine (qd. she) who told him this,
And why doth my dere herte thus, alas?
Ye wote, ye nece mine (qd. he) what it is,

I hope

I hope al shal be wel, that is amis,
For ye may quenche al this, if that you lest,
And doeth right so, I hold it for the best.

So shal I do to morow, iwis (qd. she)
And God toforne, so that it shall suffice:
To morow alas, that were faire (qd. he)
Nay nay, it may nat stonden in this wise:
For nece mine, this writen clerkes wise,
That peril is with dretching in drawe,
Nay, loche abodes ben nat worth an hawe.

Nece, al thing hath time I dare auow,
For when a chambre a fire is, or an hall,
Well more nede is, it sodainly rescow,
Then to disputen and aske amongs all,
How the candle in the strawe is fall:
Ah benedicite, for al among that fare,
The harme is done, and farwel feldefare.

And nece mine, ne take it nat a greke,
If that ye suffre him al night in this wo,
God helpe me so, ye had him neuer leke,
That dare I sain, now there is but we two,
But wel I wote that ye wol nat so do,
Ye ben to wise to done so great folie,
To put his life al night in ieopardie.

Had I him neuer leke? By God I wene,
Ye had neuer thing so leke, (qd. she)
Now by my thrifte (qd. he) that shall be sene,
For sith ye make this ensample of me,
If iche al night would him in sorow se,
For al the treasour in the toune of Troie,
I bidde God, I neuer mote haue ioie,

Now loke then, if ye that ben his loue,
Sould put his life al night in ieopardie,
For thing of nought, now by that God aboue
Nat onely this delay cometh of folie,
But of malice, if that I should nat lie,
What, platly and ye suffre him in distresse,
Ye neither bounte done ne gentilnesse.

(Qd. tho Creseide) wol ye done o thing,
And ye therwith shal stinte al his disease,
Haue here and bere to him this blew ring,
For there is nothing might him better plese,
Saue I my selfe, ne more his hart apese,
And say my dere harte, that his sorow,
Is causeleste, that shal be sene to morow.

A ring (qd. he) ye hasel wodes shaken,
Ye nece mine, that ring must haue a stone,
That might deed men a liue all maken,
And such a ring trowe I that yee haue none:
Discrecion out of your heed is gone,
That fele I now (qd. he) and that is routh,
O time ilost, wel maist thou curse slouth.

Wote ye not wel that noble and hie corage,
Ne soroweth nat, ne stinteth eke for lite,
But if a foole were in a ialous rage,
I nolde setten at his sorow a mite,
But felle him with a fewe wordes all white,
Another day, when that I might him find,
But this thing stant al in another kind.

This is so gentle and so tender of hart,
that with his death he wol his sorows wreke
For trust it well, how sore that him smart,
He wol to you no ialous wordes speke,
And for thy nece, er that his hart breke,
So speke your selfe to him of this matere,
For with a worde ye may his hart stere.

Now haue I told what peril he is in,
And his coming vnwist is to euery wight,
Ne parde harme may there be none, ne sin,
I wol my self be with you all this night,
Ye know eke how it is your owne knight,
And that by right, ye must vpon him trust,
And I al prest to fetch him when you list.

This accident so pitous was to here,
And eke so like a sothe, at prime face,
And Troilus her knight, to her so dere,
His prime comming, and the liker place,
That though she did him as then a grace,
Considred all things as they now stood,
No wonder is, sens he did al for good.

Creseide answerde, as wisely God at rest
My soule bring, as me is for him wo,
And eme iwis, faine would I don the best,
If that I grace had for to do so,
But whether that ye dwell, or for him go,
I am, till God me better minde send,
At Dulcarnon, right at my wittes end.

(Qd. Pandarus) ye nece wol ye here,
Dulcarnon is called fleming of wretches,
It semeth herd, for wretches wol nought lere,
For very slouth, or other wilfull teches,
This is said by hem ỹ be not worth two fet-
But ye ben wise, & that ye han on hōd, (ches,
Nis neither harde, ne skilful to withstond.

Then eme (qd. she) doeth here as you list,
But ere he come, I wol vp first arise,
And for the loue of God, sens al my trist
Is on you two, and ye beth bothe wise,
So werketh now, in so discrete a wise,
That I honour may haue, and he plesaunce,
For I am here, al in your gouernaunce.

That

That is wel said (qd.he) my nece dere,
There good thrifte on that wise gentill hart,
But liggeth still, and taketh him right here,
It nedeth nat no ferther for him start,
And eche of you easeth other sorowes smart,
For loue of God, and Uenus I the herie,
For sone hope I, that we shall ben merie.

This Troilus full sone on knees him sette,
Ful sobrely, right by her beddes heed,
And in his beste wise his Lady grette,
But Lord so she wore sodainliche reed:
Ne though men should smiten of her heed,
She could not o word a right out bring,
So sodainly for his sodaine coming.

But Pandarus, that so wel could fele
In euery thing, to play anon began,
And said, nece, se how this Lord gan knele:
Now for your trouth, se this gentil man,
And with that worde, he for a quisshen ran,
And said kneleth now while that thou lest,
There as God your hartes bring sone at rest.

Can I naught sain, for she bad him nat rise,
Isorow it put out of her remembraunce,
Or els that she toke it in the wise:
Of duetie, as for his obseruaunce,
But well find I, she did him this pleasaunce,
That she him kist, although she siked sore,
And bad him sit adoun withouten more.

(Qd. Pandarus) now wol ye well begin,
Now doth him litte downe, good nece dere
Upon your beddes side, al there within,
That eche of you the bet may other here,
And with that worde he drew him to the fiere,
And toke a light, I founde his countenaunce,
As for to loke upon an old romaunce.

Creseide that was Troilus lady right,
And cleere stode in a ground of sikernesse,
All thought she her seruaunt and her knight,
Ne should none untrouth in her gesse:
That natheles, considred his distresse,
And that loue is in cause of such folie,
Thus to him spake she of his ialousie.

O hert mine, as would the excellence,
Of loue, ayenst the which that no man may,
Ne ought eke goodly maken resistence,
And eke bicause I felte wel and say,
Your great trouth, and seruice euery day:
And that your hart al min was, soth to saine,
This droue me for to rewe upon your paine.

And your goodnes haue I fouden alway yet,
Of which my dere hert, and al my knight,
I thanke it you, as ferre as I haue wit,
Al can I nat as much as it were right,
And I emforthy my conning and my might
Haue, and aie shal, how sore that me smert,
Ben to you trew and hole with all mine hert.

And dredelesse that shal be fouden at preue,
But hert mine, what al this is to saine,
Shall well be told, so that ye nought you greue
Though I to you right on your self cõplaine,
For there with meane I finally the paine,
That halte your hart and mine in heauinesse,
Fully to slaine, and euery wrong redresse.

Hy good mine, not I, for why ne how
That ielousie alas, that wicked wiuere,
Thus causeleslie is cropen into you:
The harme of which I would faine deliuere,
Alas, that he all hole or of him some sliuere,
Should haue his refute in so digne a place,
That Ioue, him sone out of your hart race.

But O thou, O auctour of nature,
Is this an honour to thy dignite,
That folke vngilty suffren here iniure,
And who that gilty is, al quite goeth he:
O were it lefull for to plaine of the,
That vndeserued sufferest ialousie,
O, that I would vpon thee plaine and crie.

Eke al my wo is this, that folke now vsen
To saine right thus: ye, ialousie is loue,
And would a bushel of venim al excusen,
For that a grane of loue is on it shoue,
But that wote high Ioue that sit aboue,
If it be liker loue, hate, or grame,
And after that it ought beare his name.

But certaine is, some manet ialousie
Is excusable, more than some twis,
As when cause is, and some such fantasie
With pite so well expressed is,
That it vnneth doeth or saith amis,
But goodly drinketh vp al his distresse,
And that excuse I for the gentilnesse.

And some so full of fury is, and despite,
That it surmounteth his repression,
But hart mine, ye be not in that plite,
That thonke I God, for which your passion,
I will nat call it but illusion
Of haboundance of loue, and bele cure,
That doth your hart this disease endure.

Of which I am sory, but not wrothe,
But for my deuoir and your harts rest,
When so you list, by ordal or by othe,
By sorte, or in what wise so you lest,

For

For loue of God, let preue it for the best,
And if that I be gilty, do me die,
Alas, what might I more done or seie.

With that a few bright teeres new,
Out of her eien fel, and thus she seid, (trew,
Now God thou wost, in thought ne dede vn=
To Troilus was neuer yet Creseid,
With that her heed doun in the bed she leid,
And with the shete it wrigh, and sighed sore,
And held her pece, nat a word spake she more.

But now help God, to quēch al this sorow,
So hope I that he shall, for he best may,
For I haue sene of a ful misty morow,
Folowen ful oft a mery somers day,
And after winter foloweth grene May,
Men sene all day, and reden eke in stories,
That after sharpe shoures ben victories.

This Troilus, when he her wordes herde,
Haue ye no care, him list nat to slepe,
For it thought him no strokes of a yerde
To here or see Creseide his lady wepe,
But wel he felt about his harte crepe,
For euery teare which that Creseide astert,
The crāpe of death, to straine him by the hert,

And in his minde he gan the time accurse
That he came there, and that he was borne,
For now is wicke tourned into worse,
And all that labour he hath doen beforne,
He wende it lost, he thought he nas but lorne,
O Pandarus thought he, alas thy wile,
Serueth of nought, so wel away the while.

And therwithal he hing adoun his hedde,
And fell on knees, and sorowfully he sight,
What might he sain? he felt he nas but dedde,
For wroth was she ẏ should his sorows light:
But nathelesse, when that he speaken might,
Then said he thus, God wote ẏ of this game,
When all is wist, then am I not to blame.

Therwith the sorow of his hart shet,
That from his iyen fell there nat a tere,
And euery spirite his vigour in knet,
So they astonied or oppressed were:
The feling of sorow, or of his fere,
Or of aught els, fledde were out of toune,
A doune he fell all sodainly in swoune.

This was no little sorow for to se,
But all was husht, and Pandare vp as fast,
O nece peace, or we be lost (qd. he)
Bethe nat agast, but certain at last,
For this or that, he into bedde him cast,
And saied, O thefe, is this a mans herte?
And off he rent all to his bare sherte.

And saied nece, but and ye helpe vs now,
Alas, your owne Troilus is forlorne.
I wis so would I, and I wist how
Full fain (qd. she) alas that I was borne.
Ye nece, woll ye pullen out the thorne
That sticketh in his hart (qd. Pandare)
Saie all forgeue, and stint is all this fare.

Ye that to me (qd. she) full leuer were
Than all the good the Sunne about goeth,
And therwithall she swore him in his eare,
I wis my dere hart I am not wrothe,
Haue here my trouth, & many an other othe,
Now speake to me, for it am I Creseide,
But all for naught, yet might he nat abreide.

Therwith his poulce, & paumes of his hondes
They gan to frote, & wete his temples twain,
And to deliuer him fro bitter bondes,
She oft him kist, and shortly for to sain,
Him to rewaken she did all her pain,
And at the last he gan his breath to drawe,
And of his swough sone after that adawe.

And gan bet minde, and reason to him take,
But wonder sore he was abashed iwis,
And with a sigh when he gan bet awake
He saied, O mercie God, what thing is this?
Why doe ye with your seluen thus amis?
(qd. tho Creseide) is this a mans game,
What Troilus, woll ye doe thus for shame?

And therwithal her arme ouer him she laied,
And all forgaue, and oft time him kest,
He thonked her, and to her spake and saied
As fill to purpose, for his hartes rest,
And she to that answerde him as her lest,
And with her goodly wordes him disport
She gan, and oft his sorowes to comfort.

(Qd. Pandarus) for ought I can aspies,
This light nor I ne seruen here of naught,
Light is nat good for sike folkes iyes,
But for the loue of God, sens ye been brought
In this good plite, let now non heuy thought
Been hanged in the hartes of you twey,
And bare the candle to the chimney.

Soone after this, though it no nede were,
When she soche othes as her list deuise
Had of hem take, her thought tho no fere,
Ne cause eke none, to bid him thens rise:
Yet lesse thing than othes may suffice,
In many a case, for euery wight I gesse,
That loueth well, meaneth but gentilnesse.

But

But in effect she would wete anon,
Of what man, and eke where, and also why
He ialous was, sens there was cause non:
And eke the signe that he toke it by,
She bade him that to tell her busily,
Or els certain she bare him on honde,
That this was doen of malice her to fonde.

Withouten more, shortly for to sain
He must obey vnto his ladies hest,
And for the lasse harme he must somwhat fain,
He saied her, whan she was at soche a fest,
She might on him haue loked at the lest,
Not I nat what, all dere inough a rishe,
As he that nedes must a cause out fish.

And she answerde, swete, all were it so
What harme was ꝑ, sens I non euill meane,
For by that God that bought vs both two,
In all maner thing is mine entent cleane:
Soch arguments ne be nat worth a beane,
Woll ye the childish ialous counterfete,
Now were it worthy that ye were ibete.

Tho Troilus gan sorowfully to sike
Lest she be wroth, him thought his hart deide,
And saied, alas, vpon my sorowes sike,
Haue mercy, O swete hart mine Creseide:
And if that in the wordes that I seide,
Be any wrong, I woll no more trespace,
Doeth what you list, I am all in your grace.

And she answerde, of gilt misericorde
That is to saine, that I forgeue all this,
And euermore on this night you recorde,
And bethe well ware ye do no more amis:
Nay dere harte mine no more (qd. he) wis,
And now (qd. she) that I haue you doe smart,
Forgeue it to me, mine owne swete hart.

This Troilus with blisse of that supprised,
Put all in Goddes hand, as he that ment
Nothing but well, and sodainly auised
He her in his armes fast to him hent:
And Pandarus, with a full good entent,
Laied him to slepe, and saied, if ye be wise,
Swoueneth not now, lest more folke arise.

What might or may the sely Larke say,
Whē that the sparhauke hath him in his fote,
I can no more, but of these like tway,
(To whom this tale sugre be or sote)
Though I tary a yeere, sometime I mote,
After mine auctour tellen her gladnesse,
As well as I haue tolde her heuinesse.

Creseide, which that felt her thus itake,
(As writen clerkes in her bokes old)
Right as an aspen lefe she gan to quake,
Whan she him felt her in his armes fold:
But Troilus all hole of cares cold,
Gan thanken tho the blisfull Goddes seuen,
Through sondry paines to bring folk to heuē.

This Troilus in armes gan her straine,
And saied swete, as euer mote I gone,
Now be ye caught, here is but we twaine,
Now yeldeth you, for other boote is none:
To that Creseide answerde thus anone,
Ne had I er now, my swete harte dere,
Been yolde iwis, I were now not here.

O soth is saied, that healed for to be
As of a feuer, or other great sickenesse,
Men must drinken, as we often se,
Full bitter drinke: and for to haue gladnesse,
Men drinken oft pain, and great distresse,
I meane it here by, as for this auenture,
That through a pain hath foūdē al his cure.

And now swetenesse semeth far more swete,
That bitternesse assaied was bifore,
For out of wo in blisse now they flete,
Non soth they felten sens they were borne:
Now is this bet, than bothe two be lorne,
For loue of God, take euery woman hede,
To werken thus, if it come to the nede.

Creseide all quite from euery drede & tene,
As she that iust cause had him to trist,
Made him soche feast, it ioy was to sene,
When she his trouth and cleane entent wist:
And as about a tree with many a twist,
Bitrent and writhe the swete Wodbinde,
Can eche of hem in armes other winde.

And as the newe abashed Nightingale,
That stinteth first, whan she beginneth sing,
When that she heareth any heerdes tale,
Or in the hedges any wight stearing,
And after siker doeth her voice out ring:
Right so Creseide, whan that her drede stent,
Opened her hart, and told him her entent.

And right as he ꝑ seeth his death ishapen,
And dien mote, in aught that he may gesse,
And sodainly rescous doeth hem escapen,
And from his death is brought in sikernesse:
For all this world, in soche present gladnesse,
Was Troilus, and hath his lady swete:
With worse hap God let vs neuer mete.

Her armes smal, her streight backe and soft,
Her sides long, fleshy, smooth, and white,
He gan to stroke, and good thrift bad full oft,
Her snowisse throte, her brests round and lite:

Thus in this heauen he gan him to delite,
And therwithall a thousand times her kist,
That what to doen for ioy vnneth he wist.

Then saied he thus, O Loue, O Charite,
Thy mother eke, Citheria the swete,
That after thy selfe, next heried be she
Venus I meane, the well willy planete:
And next that, Imenеus I thee grete,
For neuer man was to you Goddes hold,
As I, which ye haue brought fro cares cold.

Benigne Loue, thou holy bond of thingen,
Who so woll grace, & list thee honouren,
Lo, his desire woll flie withouten wingen,
For noldest thou of bounte hem socouren
That seruen best, and most alway labouren,
Yet were all lost, that dare I well sain certes,
But if thy grace passed our desertes.

And for thou me, that lest thōke could deserue
Of them that nombred been vnto thy grace,
Hast holpen, there I likely was to sterue,
And me bestowed in so high a place,
That thilke bounds may no blisse surpace,
I can no more, but laude and reuerence
Be to thy bounte and thine excellence.

And therwithall Creseide anon he kist,
Of which certain she felt no disease,
And thus saied he, now would God I wist,
Mine hart swete, how I you best might please:
What man (qd. he) was euer thus at ease,
As I? On which the fairest, and the best
That euer I see, deineth her to rest.

Here may men seen ỹ mercie passeth right,
The experience of that is felt in me,
That am vnworthy to so swete a wight,
But herte mine, of your benignite
So thinke, that though I vnworthy be,
Yet mote I nede amenden in some wise,
Right through the vertue of your hie seruice.

And for the loue of God my lady dere,
Sith he hath wrought me for I shal you serue,
As thus I meane: woll ye be my fere,
To doe me liue, if that you list or sterue:
So teacheth me, how that I may deserue
Your thonke, so ỹ I through min ignorаunce,
Ne doe nothing that you be displeasaunce.

For certes fresbe and womanliche wife,
This dare I sate, that trouth and diligence,
That shall ye finden in me all my life,
Ne I woll not certain breaken your defence,
And if I doe, present or in absence,
For loue of God, let slea me with the dede,
If that it like vnto your womanhede.

I wis (qd. she) mine owne hartes lust,
My ground of ease, and al mine harte dere,
Graunt mercie, for on that is all my trust:
But let vs fall away fro this mattere,
For it sufficeth, this that said is here,
And at o worde, without repentaunce,
Welcome my knight, my peace, my sufficaunce.

Of her delite or toles, one of the least,
Were impossible to my wit to say,
But iudgeth ye that haue been at the feast,
Of soche gladnesse, if that him list play:
I can no more, but thus these ilke tway,
That night, betwixen drede and sikernesse,
Felten in loue the great worthinesse.

O blisful night, of hem so long isought
How blithe vnto hem bothe two thou were?
Why ne had I soch feast with my soule ibought?
Ye, or but the least ioy that was there,
Away thou foule daunger and thou fere,
And let him in this heauen blisse dwell,
That is so high, that all ne can I tell.

But sothe is, though I can not tellen all,
As can mine aucthour of his excellence,
Yet haue I saied, and God to forne shall,
In euery thing all holly his sentence:
And if that I, at loues reuerence,
Haue any worde in eched for the best,
Doeth therwithall right as your selfen lest.

For my wordes here, and euery part,
I speake hem all vnder correction,
Of you that feling haue in loues art,
And put it all in your discretion,
To encrease or make diminicion
Of my language, and that I you beseech.
But now to purpose of my rather speech.

These ilke two that been in armes laft,
So lothe to hem a sonder gon it were,
That eche from other wenden been biraft,
Or els lo, this was her most fere,
That all this thing but nice dreames were,
For which ful oft eth of hem said, O swete,
Clippe I you thus, or els doe I it mete.

And Lord so he gan goodly on her se,
That neuer his loke ne blent from her face,
And saied, O my dere harte may it be
That it be soth, that ye beene in this place:
Ye harte mine, God thanke I of his grace,
(qd. tho Creseide) and therwithall him kist,
That where her spirite was, for ioy she nist,

This Troilus full often her iyen two
Gan for to kisse, and saied: O iyen clere,
It weren ye that wrought me soche wo,
Ye humble nettes of my lady dere:
Though there be mercy writtē in your chere,
God wote the text full harde is for to find,
How coud ye, withouten bonde me bind?

Therwith he gan her fast in armes take,
And well an hundred times gan he sike,
Not such sorowfull sighes as men make
For wo, or els when that folke be sike:
But easie sighes, soche as been to like,
That shewed his affection within,
Of soche maner sighes could he not blin.

Sone after this, they spake of sōdrie things
As fill to purpose of this auenture,
And plaiyng enterchaungeden her ringes,
Of which I can not tellen no scripture,
But well I wot, a broche of gold and azure,
In which a Rubbie set was like an herte,
Creseide him yaue, and stacke it on his sherte.

Lord trowe ye that a coueitous wretch,
That blameth loue, and halte of it dispite,
Of tho pens that he can muckre & ketch
Euer yet yaue to him soche delite,
As in loue, in o poinct in some plite:
Nay doubtlesse, for al so God me saue
So parfite ioy may no nigard haue.

They woll saie yes, but Lord so they lie,
Tho busie wretches full of wo and drede,
That callen loue a woodnesse of folie,
But it shall fall hem, as I shall you rede:
They shal forgon the white and eke the rede,
And liue in wo, there God yeue hē mischaunce,
And euery louer in his trouth auaunce.

As would God tho wretches, that dispise
Seruice of loue, had eares also long
As had Mida, full of couetise,
And therto dronken had as hotte and strong
As Cresus did, for his affectes wrong
To teachen hem, that they been in the vice,
And louers not, although they hold hem nice.

These ilke two, of whom that I you say,
Whan that her hartes well assured were,
Tho gonnen they to speake and to play,
And eke rehearten how, when, and where
They knew first, and euery wo or fere
That passed was, but all such heauinesse,
I thonke it God, was tourned to gladnesse.

And euermore, whē that hem fell to speake,
Of any thing of soche a time agone,
With kissing all that tale should breake,
And fallen into a new ioy anone,
And didden all her might, sens they were one
For to recoueren blisse and been at ease,
And paised wo with ioyes counterpaise.

Reason woll not that I speake of slepe,
For it accordeth not to my mattere,
God wote they toke of it full little kepe,
But lest this night that was to hem so dere
Ne should in vaine escape in no manere,
It was biset in ioy and businesse,
Of al that souneth vnto gentilnesse.

But when the cocke, commune Astrologer,
Gan on his brest to beate, and after crowe,
And Lucifer, the daies messanger,
Gan to rise, and out her beames throwe,
And Estward rose, to him that could it know,
Fortuna maior, that anone Creseide
With harte sore, to Troilus thus seide:

Mine harts life, my trust, all my pleasaunce
That I was borne alas, that me is wo,
That day of vs mote make disceueraunce,
For time it is to rise, and hence go,
Or els I am lost for euer mo:
O night alas, why nilt thou ouer vs houe,
As long as when Alcmena lay by Ioue.

O blacke night, as folke in boke rede,
That shapen art by God, this world to hide
At certain times, with thy derke wede,
That vnder that men might in rest abide,
Wel oughten beastes to plain, & folke to chide
That there as day with labor would vs brest
That thou thus fliest, and deinest vs not rest.

Thou doest alas, to shortly thine office,
Tho rakle night, there God maker of kinde,
Thee for thine hast, and thine vnkind vice,
So fast aie to our hemisperie binde,
That neuermore vnder ẏ ground thou wind.
For now for thou so highest out of Troie,
Haue I forgone thus hastely my ioie.

This Troilus, that with tho wordes felt
As thought him tho, for pitous distresse,
The bloodie teares from his harte melt,
As he that yet neuer soche heuinesse,
Assaied had, out of so great gladnesse:
Gan therewithall Creseide his lady dere,
In armes strain, and hold in louely manere.

O cruell day, accuser of the ioy
That night and loue haue stole, & fast iwrien,
Accursed be thy comming into Troie,
For euery bowre hath one of thy bright iyen:

Enuious day, what list thee so to spiē, (place?
What hast thou lost, why seekest thou this
There God thy light so quench for his grace.

Alas, what haue these louers thee agilt?
Dispitous day, thine be the paine of hell,
For many a louer hast thou slain, and wilt,
Thy poring in woll no where let hem dwell:
What profrest thou thy light here for to sell?
Go sell it hem that smale seales graue,
We woll thee not, vs nedeth no day haue.

And eke the sonne Titan gan he chide,
And said, O foole, well may men thee dispise,
That hast all night the dauning by thy side,
And suffrest her so sone vp fro thee rise:
For to disease vs louers in this wise,
What hold your bed, there thou & thy morow,
I bid God so yeue you both sorow.

Therwith ful sore he sighed, & thus he seide
My lady right, and of my weale or wo
The well and roote, O goodly mine Creseide,
And shall I rise alas, and shall I so?
Now fele I that mine harte mote a two,
And how should I my life an houre saue,
Sens that with you is all the life I haue?

What shall I doen? For certes I not how
Ne when alas, I shall the time see
That in this plite I may been eft with you,
And of my life God wote how shall that be,
Sens that desire right now so biteth me,
That I am dedde anon, but I retourne,
How should I long alas, fro you soiourne?

But nathelesse, mine owne lady bright,
Were it so that I wist vtterly,
That your humble seruaunt, and your knight
Were in your harte iset so fermely,
As ye in mine: the which truely
Me leauer were than these worlds twaine,
Yet should I bet enduren all my paine.

To that Creseide answerde right anon,
And with a sigh she saied, O harte dere,
The game iwis so ferforth now is gon,
That first shal Phebus fallen from the sphere,
And euer the Egle been the Douues fere,
And euery rocke out of his place sterte,
Er Troilus go out of Creseides herte.

Ye been so depe within mine hart graue,
That tho I would it turne out of my thought,
As wisely very God my soule saue,
To dien in the pain, I rould nought:
And for the loue of God, ẏ vs hath wrought,
Let in your brain none other fantasie
So crepen, that it cause me to die.

And that ye me would haue as fast in mind,
As I haue you, that would I you beseche:
And if I wist sothly that to find
God might not apoinct my ioies to ech,
But harte mine, withouten more speech,
Bethe to me true, or els were it routh,
For I am thine, by God and by my trouth.

Bethe glad for thy, and liue in sikernesse,
Thus saied I neuer er this, ne shall to mo,
And if to you it were a great gladnesse,
To tourne ayen sone after that ye go,
As faine would I as ye, it were so,
As wisely God mine harte bring to reste,
And him in armes toke, and oft keste.

Ayenst his will sithe it mote nedes bee,
This Troilus vp rose and fast him cled,
And in his armes toke his ladie free,
An hundred times, and on his way him sped,
And with soche wordes, as his harte bled,
He saied: fare well my dere harte swete,
That God vs graunt sound and sone to mete.

To which no word for sorow she answerd,
So sore gan his parting her distrain,
And Troilus vnto his Paleis ferd,
As wo bigon as she was, sothe to sain,
So hard him wrong of sharpe desire the pain,
For to been efte there he was in pleasaunce,
That it may neuer out of his remembraunce.

Retourned to his roiall paleis sone,
He soft vnto his bedde gan for to sinke,
To slepe long, as he was wont to doen,
But all for nauzt, he may well ligge & winke,
But slepe may there none in his harte sinke,
Thinking how she, for whō desire him brend,
A M. folde was worth more than he wend.

And in his thought, gan vp & down to wind
Her wordes all, and euery countenaunce,
And fermely impressen in his mind
The lest poincte that to him was pleasaunce,
And verely of thilke remembraunce,
Desire al newe him brende, and lust to brede,
Gan more than erst, and yet toke he non hede.

Creseide also, right in the same wise,
Of Troilus gan in her harte shet
His worthinesse, his lust, his dedes wise,
His gentilnesse, and how she with him met:
Thonking loue, he so well her beset,
Desiring oft to haue her harte dere,
In soche a place as she durst make him chere.

Pandare

Pandare a morow, which that cõmen was
Unto his nece, gan her faire to grete,
And saied, all this night so rained it alas,
That all my drede is, that ye nece swete,
Haue little leiser had to slepe and mete,
Al this night (qd. he) hath rain so do me wake,
That some of vs I trowe her heddes ake.

And nere he came & said, how stant it now
This merie morow, nece how can ye fare?
Creseide answerde, neuer the bet for you,
Fore that ye been, God yeue your hart care,
God helpe me so, ye caused all this fare,
Trowe I (qd. she) for all your wordes white,
O who so seeth you, knoweth you full lite.

With that she gan her face for to wrie,
With the shete and wore for shame all redde,
And Pandarus gan vnder for to prie,
And saied nece, if that I shall been dedde,
Haue here a sword, and smiteth of my hedde,
With that his arme, all sodainly he thrist,
Under her necke, and at the last her kist.

I passe all ý, which chargeth naught to say,
What, God forgaue his death, and she also
Forgaue: and with her vncle gan to play,
For other cause was there none than so.
But of this thing right to theffect to go,
When time was, home to her house she went,
And Pandarus hath fully his entent.

Now tourne we ayen to Troilus,
That restlesse full long a bedde lay,
And priuely sent after Pandarus,
To him to come in all the hast he may,
He come anon, not ones saied he nay,
And Troilus full soberly he grete,
And doune vpon the beddes sides him sete.

This Troilus with all thaffectioun
Of friendly loue, that harte may deuise,
To Pandarus on knees fill adoun:
And er that he would of the place arise,
He gan him thanken on his best wise,
An hundred time he gan the time blesse,
That he was borne, to bring him fro distresse.

He said, O frend of frendes, the alderbest
That euer was, the sothe for to tell,
Thou hast in heauē ibrought my soule at rest,
Fro Phlegeton the firie flood of hell,
That though I might a thousand times sell
Upon a day my life in thy seruice,
It might not a mote in that suffice.

The sonne, which that all the world may se
Sawe neuer yet, my life that dare I leie,
So ioily, faire, and goodly, as is she
Whose I am all, and shall till that I deie,
And that I thus am hers, dare I seie,
That thanked be the high worthinesse
Of loue, and eke thy kinde busines.

Thus hast thou me no little thing ireue,
For why to thee obliged be for aie,
My life, & why? for through thine help I liue,
Or elis dedde had I been ago many a day,
And with that worde doun in his bed he lay,
And Pandarus full soberly him herde,
Till all was said, and then he him answerde.

My dere frende, if I haue doen for thee,
In any case, God wote it is me leke,
And am as glad as man may of it be,
God helpe me so, but take now not agrike,
That I shall saine, beware of this mischiefe,
ý there as now thou brought art to thy blisse,
That thou thy selfe ne cause it not to misse.

For of fortunes sharpe aduersite,
The worst kind of infortune is this,
A man that hath been in prosperite,
And it remember, when it passed is.
Thou art wise inough, for thy, doe not amis,
Be not to rakell, though thou sit warme,
For if thou be, certain it woll thee harme.

Thou art at ease, and hold thee well therin,
For al so sure as redde is euery fire,
As great a crafte is to kepe well as win,
Bridle alway well thy speach and thy desire,
For worldly ioy holdeth not by a wire,
That preueth well, it brest alday so ofte,
For thy neede is to werken with it softe.

(Qd. Troilus) I hope, and God to forne,
My dere frende, that I shall so me bere,
That in my gilt ther shall nothing been lorne,
Ne I nill not rakle, as for to greuen here,
It nedeth not this matter often tere,
For wistest thou mine harte wel Pandare,
God wote of this thou wouldest lite care.

Tho gan he tell him of his glad night,
And whereof first his hart dradde, and how,
And saied frende, as I am true knight,
And by that faith I owe to God and you,
I had it neuer halfe so hote as now,
And aie the more that desire me biteth
To loue her best, the more it me deliteth.

I not my selfe not wisely, what it is,
But now I feele a newe qualite,
Ye all an other than I did er this:
Pandare answered and saied thus, that he

That ones may in heauen blisse be,
He feeleth other waies dare I lay,
Than thilke time he first heard of it say.

This is a worde for all, that Troilus
Was neuer ful to speke of this matere,
And for to praisen vnto Pandarus,
The bounte of his right lady dere,
And Pandarus to thanke, and maken chere,
This tale was aie span newe to begin,
Til that the night departed hem atwinne.

Soone after this, for that fortune it would,
Icomen was the blisfull time swete,
That Troilus was warned, that he should
There he was erst, Creseide his lady mete:
For which he felt his herte in ioy flete,
And fainthully gan all the goddes hery,
And let see now, if that he can be mery.

And holden was the forme, and al the gise
Of her comming, and of his also,
As it was erst, which nedeth nought deuise,
But plainly to theffect right for to go:
In ioy and sorete Pandarus hem two
A bedde brought, when hem both lest,
And thus they ben in quiet and in rest.

Naught nedeth it to you sith they ben met
To aske at me, if that they blithe were,
For if it erst was well, tho was it bet
A thousand folde, this nedeth not enquere:
Ago was euery sorow and euery fere,
And both twis they had, and so they wend,
As much ioy as harte may comprehend.

This nis no litel thing of for to sey,
This passeth euery wit for to deuise,
For eche of hem gan others lust obey,
Felicite, which that these clerkes wise
Commenden so, ne may not here suffise,
This ioy ne may not written be with inke,
This passeth al that hart may bethinke.

But cruel day, so welaway the stound,
Gan for to approche, as they by signes knew,
For which hem thought felen dethes wound,
So wo was hem, that changen gan her hew
And day they gonnen to dispise al new,
Calling it traitour, enuious and worse,
And bitterly the daies light they corse.

(Md. Troilus) alas, now am I ware
That Titous, and thy swift stedes thre,
Which that drawen forth the sunnes chare,
Han gon some by path in dispite of me,
And maketh it so sone day to be,
And for the sunne him hasten thus to rise,
Ne shall I neuer don him sacrifice.

But nedes day depart hem must sone,
And whan her speech done was, and her chere,
They twin anon, as they were wont to done,
And setten time of meting eft ifere:
And many a nigt they wrought in this manere:
And thus fortune a time ladde in ioie,
Creseide, and eke this kings sonne of Troie.

In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in singings,
This Troilus gan all his life to lede,
He spendeth, iusteth, and maketh feestings,
He geueth freely oft, and chaungeth wede,
He held about him alway out of drede,
A world of folke, as come him well of kind,
The freshest and the best he could find.

That such a voice was of him, and a steuen,
Throughout the world, of honour & largesse,
That it vp ronge vnto the place of heuen,
And as in loue he was in such gladnesse,
That in his hart he demed, as I gesse,
That there nis louer in this world at ease,
So wel as he, and thus gan loue him plese.

The goodlihede or beaute, which þ kind
In any other lady had isette,
Can not the mountenaunce of a gnat vnbind,
About his hert of al Creseides nette,
He was so narowe imasked, and iknette:
That is vndon in any maner side,
That nil nat ben, for aught that may betide.

And by the honde ful ofte he would take
This Pandarus, and into gardin lede,
And such a feest, and such a proces make
Him of Creseide, and of her womanhede,
And of her beaute, that withouten drede,
It was an heuen his wordes for to here,
And then he would sing in this manere:

Loue, that of erth & sea hath gouernaunce,
Loue, that his heestes hath in heuen hie,
Loue, that with an holsome aliaunce
Halt people ioyned, as him list hem gie,
Loue, that knitteth lawe and companie,
And couples doth in vertue for to dwell,
Binde this accord, that I haue told and tell.

That, þ the world with faith, which þ is stable
Diuerseth so his stoundes according,
That elements that bethe discordable,
Holden a bonde, perpetually during,
That Phebus mote his rosy day forth bring,
And þ the mone hath lordship ouer þ nights,
Al this doeth loue, aie heried be his mights.

That

That, that the sea, that greedy is to flowen,
Constraineth to a certaine end so
His floods, that so fiercely they ne growen
To drenchen earth and all for euermo,
And if that loue aught let his bridle go,
All that now loueth asunder should lepe,
And lost were all, that loue halt now to hepe.

So would to God, that authour is of kind,
That with his bond, loue of his vertue list
To searchen hearts all, and fast bind,
That frō his bond no wight the wey out wist,
And hearts cold hem, would I that hem twist,
To maken hem loue, and that list hem ate rew
On hearts sore, and keepe hem that ben trew.

In all needs for the townes werre
He was, and aye the first in armes dight:
And certainely, but if that bookes erre,
Saue Hector, most ydradde of any wight,
And this encrease of hardinesse and might
Come him of loue, his ladies thanke to win,
That altered his spirit so within.

In time of truce on hawking would he ride,
Or els hunt Bore, Beare, or Lioun,
The smale beasts let he gon beside,
And when that he come riding into the toun,
Full oft his lady from her window doun,
As fresh as faucon, comen out of mue,
Full redely was him goodly to salue.

And most of loue and vertue was his speech,
And in dispite had all wrecchednesse,
And doubtlesse no need was him beseech
To honouren hem, that had worthinesse,
And casen hem that weren in distresse,
And glad was he, if any wight well ferde
That louer was, when he it wist or herde.

For sooth to saine, he lost held euery wight,
But if he were in loues high seruise,
I meane folke that aught it ben of right,
And ouer all this so well could he deuise
Of sentement, and in so vncouth wise
All his array, that euery louer thought,
That al was wel, what so he said or wrought.

And though that he be come of blood royall,
Him list of pride at no wight for to chace,
Benigne he was to ech in generall,
For which he gate him thanke in euery place:
Thus would loue, ythried by his grace,
That Pride, and Ire, Enuie, and Auarice,
He gan to flie, and euery other vice.

Thou lady bright, the doughter of Diane,
Thy blind and winged sonne eke dan Cupide,
Ne lustren nine eke, that by Helicone
In hill Pernaso listen for to abide,
That ye thus ferre han deined me to gide,
I can no more, but seng that ye wol wend,
Ye heried ben for aye withouten end.

Through you haue I said fully in my song
The effect and ioy of Troilus seruise,
All be that there was some disease among,
As mine authour listeth to deuise,
My third booke now end I in this wise,
And Troilus in lust and in quiete,
Is with Creseide his owne heart swete.

Explicit liber tercius.

But all too little, welaway the while
Lasteth such ioy, ythonked be fortune,
That seemeth trust, when she will begile,
And can to fooles her song entune,
That she hem hent, ẏ blent traitour commune
And when a wight is from her wele ythrow,
Then laugheth she, & maketh him the mowe.

From Troilus she gan her bright face
Away to writhe, and tooke of him none hede,
And cast him clene out of his ladies grace,
And on her whele she set vp Diomede,
For which min hert right now gynneth blede,
And now my pen alas, with which I write,
Quaketh for drede of that I must endite.

For how Creseide Troilus forsooke,
Or at the least, how that she was vnkind,
Mote neuerforth ben matter of my booke,
As writen folke, through which it is in mind,
Alas, that they should euer cause find
To speake her harme, and if they on her lie,
I wis hemselfe should haue the villanie.

O ye Herines nightes doughters three,
That endelesse complaine euer in paine,
Megera, Alecto, and eke Tesiphonee,
Thou cruell Mars eke, father of Quirine,
This ilke fourth booke helpe me to fine,
So that the loos, and loue, and life ifere
Of Troilus be fully shewed here.

Incipit liber quartus.

Iegging in host, as I haue said ere this,
The Grekes strong, about Troy toun,
Befell, that when that Phebus shining is

Upon the breast of Hercules Lion,
That Hector, with many a bold Baron
Cast on a day with Grekes for to fight,
As he was wont, to greue hem what he mizt.

Not I how long or short it was bitwene
This purpose, and that day they fighten ment,
But on a day well armed bright and shene,
Hector and many a worthy knight out went
With speare in hond, and big bowes bent,
And in the verde withouten lenger lette,
Her somen in the field anone hem mette.

The long day with speares sharpe iground
With arrowes, darts, swerds, and maces fell,
They fight, & bringen horse & man to ground,
And with her axes out the braines quell.
But in the last shoure, sooth to tell,
The folke of Troy hem selven so misleden,
That with ỳ worse at night home they fleden.

At which day was taken Anthenor,
Maugre Polimidas, or Monesteo,
Xantippe, Sarpedon, Palestinor,
Polite, or eke the Troyan dan Rupheo,
And other lasse folke, as Phebuseo,
So that for harme that day the folke of Troy
Dreden to lese a great part of her ioy.

Of Priamus was yeue at Grekes request
A time of truce, and tho they gonnen trete
Her prisoners to chaungen most and lest,
And for the surplus yeuen sommes grete,
This thing anon was couth in euery strete,
Both in thassiege, in toune, and euery where,
And with the first it came to Calcas ere.

When Calcas knew this tretise should hold
In consistorie among the Grekes soone
He gan in thringe, forth with lords old,
And set him there as he was wont to done,
And with a chaunged face hem bade a boone
For loue of God, to done that reuerence,
To stinten noise, and yeue him audience.

Then said he thus, lo lords mine I was
Troyan, as it is knowen out of drede,
And if that you remember, I am Calcas,
That alderfirst yaue comfort to your nede,
And told well how that you should spede,
For dredelesse thrugh you shall in a stound
Ben Troy ibrent, and beaten doun to ground.

And in what forme, or in what manner wise
This toun to shend, and all your lust atcheue,
Ye haue ere this well heard me deuise:
This know ye my lords, as I leue,
And for the Grekes weren me so leue,
I came my selfe in my proper persone
To teach in this how you was best to done.

Hauing vnto my treasour, ne my rent,
Right no regard in respect of your ease,
Thus all my good I left, and to you went,
Wening in this you lords for to please.
But all that losse ne doth me no disease,
I vouchsafe, as wisely haue I ioy,
For you to lese all that I haue in Troy.

Saue of a doughter that I left, alas,
Sleeping at home, when out of Troy I stert,
O sterne, O cruell father that I was,
How might I haue in that so hard an hert?
Alas that I ne had brought her in my shert,
For sorow of which I wol nat liue to morow,
But if ye lords rew vpon my sorow.

For because that I saw no time ere now
Her to deliuer, iche holden haue my pees,
But now or neuer, if that it like you,
I may her haue right now doubtlees
O helpe and grace, among all this prees
Rew on this old caitife in distresse,
Sith I thrugh you haue all this heuinesse.

Ye haue now caught, and fettred in prison
Troyans inow, and if your wils be,
My child with one may haue redemption,
Now for the loue of God, and of bounte,
One of so fele alas, so yeke him me,
What need were it this prayer for to werne,
Sith ye shull haue both folke & toun as yerne.

On perill of my life I shall nat lie,
Apollo hath me told full faithfully,
I haue eke found by astronomie,
By sort, and by auguric truely,
And dare well say the time is fast by,
That fire & flambe on all the toun shall spredе,
And thus shall Troy turne to ashen dede.

For certaine, Phebus and Neptunus both
That makeden the wals of the toun,
Ben with the folke of Troy alway so wroth,
That they woll bring it to confusioun
Right in despite of king Laomedoun,
Because he nolde paien hem her hire,
The toune of Troy shall ben set on fire.

Telling his tale alway this old grey,
Humble in his speech and looking eke,
The salt teares from his eyen twey
Full fast ronnen doune by either cheke,
So long he gan of succour hem beseke,
That for to heale him of his sorowes sore,
They gaue him Antenor withouten more.

But

But who was glad inough, but Calcas tho,
And of this thing full soone his nedes leide
On hem that shoulden for the treatise go,
And hem for Antenor full oft preide,
To bringen home king Thoas and Creseide,
And when Priam his safegard sent,
Thembassadours to Troy streight they went.

The cause ptold of her comming, the old
Priam the king, full soone in generall,
Let here vpon his parliment hold,
Of which theffect rehearsen you I shall,
Thembassadours ben answerde for finall,
The eschaunge of prisoners, and all this nede
Hem liketh well, and forth in they procede.

This Troilus was present in the place,
When asked was for Antenor Creseide,
For which full sone chaungen gan his face,
As he that with tho wordes well nigh deide,
But nathelesse he no word to it seide,
Least men should his affection espie,
With mans heart he gan his sorowes drie.

And full of anguish and of grisly dredc,
Abode what other lords would to it sey,
And if they would graunt, as God forbede,
Theschãge of her, thẽ thoght he thinges twey:
First, how to saue her honour, and what wey
He might best theschaunge of her withstond,
Full fast he cast how all this might stond.

Loue him made all prest to done her bide,
And rather dien than she should go,
But Reason said him on that other side,
Withouten assent of her do nat so,
Least for thy werke she would be thy fo,
And saine, that through thy medling is yblow
Your brother foue, there it was not erst know.

For which he gan deliberen for the best,
And though the lords would that she went,
He wouldiet hem graunt what hem lest,
And tell his lady first what that they ment,
And when that she had said him her entent,
Thereafter would he worken also bliue,
Tho all the world ayen it would striue.

Hector which that well the Grekes herd,
For Antenor how they would haue Creseide,
Gan is withstond, and soberly answerd:
Sirs, she nis no prisoner (he seide)
I not on you who that this charge leide,
But on my part, ye may eftsoones hem tell,
We vsen here no women for to sell.

The noise of people vp stert then atones,
As brimme as blase of straw iset on fire,
For infortune it would for the nones,
They shoulden her confusion desire:
Hector (qd. they) what ghost may you enspire
This woman thus to hold, and done vs lese
Dan Antenor, a wrong way now ye chese.

That is so wise, and eke so bold baroun,
And we haue need of folke, as men may see,
He is one the greatest of this toun:
O Hector, lette thy fantasies bee,
O king Priam (qd. they) thus lygge we,
That all our voice is to forgone Creseide,
And to deliuer Antenor thy preide.

O Iuuenall lord, trew is thy sentence,
That little wenen folke what is to yerne,
That they ne finden in her desire offence,
For cloud of errour ne lette hem discerne
What best is, and lo, here ensample as yerne:
These folke desiren now deliueraunce
Of Antenor, that brought hem to mischaunce.

For he was after traitour to the toun
Of Troy alas, they quitte him out to rathe,
O nice world, lo thy discretioun,
Creseide, which that neuer did hem scathe,
Shall now no lenger in her blisse bathe,
But Antenor he shall come home to toun,
And she shall out, thus said heere and houne.

For which delibered was by parliment,
For Antenor to yeelden out Creseide,
And it pronounced by the president,
Though that Hector nay full oft praid,
And finally, what wight that it withsaid,
It was for naught, it must ben, and should,
For substaunce of the Parliment it would.

Departed out of the parliment echone,
This Troilus, without wordes mo,
Unto his chamber spedde him fast alone,
But if it were a man of his or two,
The which he bad out fast for to go,
Because he would slepen, as he said,
And hastely vpon his bedde him laid,

And as in Winter, leaues ben biraft
Ech after other till trees be bare,
So that there nis but barke and branch ilaft,
Lith Troilus, biraft of eche welfare,
Ibounden in the blacke barke of care,
Disposed wood out of his witte to breide,
So sore him sate the chaunging of Creseide.

He rist him vp, and euery doze he shette,
And window eke, and tho this sorowfull man
Upon his beddes side doune him sette
Full like a dead image, pale and wan,

And in his breast the heaped wo began
Out brust, and he to worken in this wise
In his woodnesse, as I shall you deuise.

Right as the wild Bull beginneth spring
Now here, now there, idarted to the hert,
And of his death roreth, in complaining,
Right so gan he about the chamber stert,
Smiting his breast aye with his fistes smert,
His head to the wall, his body to the ground,
Full oft he swapt, himseluen to confound.

His eyen two for pitie of his hert,
Out stremeden as swift as wels twey,
The high sobs of his sorrowes smert
His speech him reft, vnnethes might he sey,
O death alas, why nilt thou do me dey?
Accursed by that day which that nature
Shope me to ben a liues creature.

But after when the furie and all the rage
Which that his heart twist, and fast threst,
By length of time somewhat gan assuage,
Vpon his bed he laid him doun to rest,
But tho begon his teares more out to brest,
That wonder is the body may suffise
To halfe this wo, which that I you deuise.

Then said he thus: Fortune alas the while
What haue I done? what haue I thee agilt?
How mightest thou for routh me begile?
Is there no grace? and shall I thus be spilt?
Shall thus Creseid away for that thou wilt?
Alas, how mightest thou in thine hart find,
To ben to me thus cruell and vnkind?

Haue I thee nat honoured all my liue,
As thou well wotest, aboue the gods all?
Why wilt thou me fro ioy thus depriue?
O Troilus, what may men now thee call,
But wretch of wretches, out of honour fall
Into miserie, in which I woll bewaile
Creseide alas, till that the breath me faile.

Alas Fortune, if that my life in ioy
Displeased had vnto thy foule Enuie,
Why ne haddest thou my father king of Troy
Biraft the life, or done my brethren die,
Or slaine my selfe, ẏ thus complaine and crie,
I combre world, that may of nothing serue,
But euer die, and neuer fully sterue.

If that Creseide alone were me laft,
Nauzt raught I whider thou woldst me stere,
And her alas, then hast thou me biraft:
But euermore, lo this is thy manere,
To reue a wight that most is to him dere,
To preue in that thy gierfull violence,
Thus am I lost, there helpeth no defence.

O very lord, O loue, O God alas,
That knowest best mine hert & al my thought,
What shal my sorowfull life done in this caas,
If I forgo that I so dere haue bought,
Sens ye Creseide and me haue fully brought
Into your grace, and both our hearts sealed,
How may ye suffer alas it be repealed.

What I may done, I shal while I may dure
On liue, in turment and in cruell paine,
This infortune, or this disauenture,
Alone as I was borne I woll complaine,
Ne neuer woll I seene it shine or raine,
But end I woll as Edippe in derkenesse
My sorrowfull life, and dien in distresse.

O wery ghost, that errest to and fro,
Why nilt thou flien out of the wofullest
Body, that euer might on ground go?
O soule, working in this wofull neste,
Flie forthout mine hart, and let it breste,
And follow alway Creseide thy lady dere,
Thy right place is now no lenger here.

O wofull eien two, sens your disport
Was all to seene Creseides eyen bright,
What shall ye done, but for my discomfort
Stoden for naught, & wepen out your sight,
Sens she is queint, ẏ wont was you to light,
In veine from this forth haue I eyen twey
Iformed, sens your vertue is awey.

O my Creseide, O lady soueraine,
Of this wofull soule that thus crieth,
Who shall now yeuen comfort to thy paine,
Alas, no wight, but when mine hert dieth,
My spirit, which that so vnto you hieth,
Receiue in gree, for that shall aye you serue,
For thy no force is, though the body sterue.

O ye louers, that high vpon the whele
Ben sette of Fortune in good auenture,
God lene that ye finden aye loue of stele,
And long mote your life in ioy endure,
But when ye comen by my sepulture,
Remembreth that your fellow resteth there,
For I loued eke, though I vnworthy were.

O old vnholsome and misliued man,
Calcas I meane, alas what eiled thee
To ben a Greek, sens thou art borne Troian?
O Calcas, which that wolt my bane be,
In cursed time was thou borne for me,
As would blisfull Ioue for his ioy,
That I thee had where I would in Troy.

A thousand sighes hotter than the glede,
Out of his brest,each after other went,
Medled with plaint new,his wo to fede,
For which his wofull teares neuer stent,
And shortly so his sorowes him to rent,
And worse so mate,that ioy or pennaunce
He feeleth none,but lieth in a traunce.

Pandare,which that in the parliment
Had heard what euery Lord and burgeis seid,
And how full graunted was by one assent,
For Antenor to yelden out Creseid:
Gan well nigh wood out of his wit to breid,
So that for wo he nist what he ment,
But in a rage to Troilus he went.

A certaine knight,that for the time kept
The chamber dore,vndid it him anone,
And Pandare,that full tendely wept,
Into the derke chamber as still as stone,
Toward the bedde gan softly to gone,
So confuse,that he nist what to say,
For very wo,his wit was nigh away.

And with chere and looking all toforne,
For sorow of this,and with his armes folden,
He stood this wofull Troilus beforne,
And on his pitous face he gan beholden,
But so oft gan his heart colden,
Seeing his friend in wo,whose heauinesse
His heart slough,as thought him for distresse.

This wofull wight, this Troilus that felt
His friend Pandare comen him to see,
Gan as the snow ayenst the sunne melt,
For which this wofull Pandare of pite
Gan for to weepe as tenderly as he:
And speechlesse thus ben these ilke twey,
That neither might for sorow o word sey.

But at the last,this wofull Troilus,
Nigh dead for smert,gan bresten out to rore,
And with a sorowfull noise he said thus
Among his sobs and his sighes sore,
Lo Pandare I am dead withouten more,
Hast thou nat heard at parliment he seide,
For Antenor how lost is my Creseide.

This Pandare full dead and pale of hew,
Full pitously answerde,and said yes,
As wisely were it false as it is trew,
That I haue heard, and wote all how it is,
O mercy God,who would haue trowed this,
Who would haue wend, ỹ in so little a throw
Fortune our ioy would haue ouerthrow.

For in this world there is no creature,
As to my dome,that euer saw ruine
Stranger thā this,through case or aunenture,
But who may all eschue or all deuine,
Such is this world,for thy I thus define:
Ne trust no wight to find in Fortune
Aye property,her pets ben commune.

But tell me this,why thou art now so mad
To sorrowen thus,why list thou in this wise,
Sens thy desire all holly hast thou had,
So that by right it ought inough suffise,
But I that neuer felt in my seruise
A friendly chere or looking of an eie,
Let me thus wepe and waillen till I die.

And ouer al this, as thou wel wost thy selue,
This toune is full of ladies all about,
And to my dome,fairer than such twelue
As euer she was,shal I finden in some rout,
Ye one or twey,withouten any dout:
For thy be glade mine owne dere brother,
If she be lost,we shall recouer another.

What God forbid alway that eth pleasaunce
In o thing were,and in none other wight,
If one can sing,another can well daunce,
If this be goodly,she is glad and light,
And this is faire,and that can good aright,
Eth for his vertue holden is for dere,
Both heroner and laucon for riuere.

And eke as writ Zanis,that was full wise,
The new loue out chaseth oft the old:
And vpon new case lieth new auise,
Thinke eke thy selfe to sauen art thou hold,
Such fire by processe shall of kind cold,
For sens it is but casuell pleasaunce,
Some case shall put it out of remembraunce.

For al so sure as day commeth after night,
The new loue,labour or other wo,
Or els selde seeing of a wight,
Dorn old affections all ouergo,
And for thy part,thou shalt haue one of tho
To abredge with thy bitter pains smart,
Absence of her shall driue her out of hart.

These words saied he for the nones all
To helpe his friend,least he for sorow deide,
For doubtlesse to doen his wo to fall,
He raught nat what vnthrift that he seide:
But Troilus that nigh for sorow deide,
Tooke little hede of all that euer he ment,
One eare it heard,at the other out it went.

But at the last he answerd, and said friend,
This lechcraft,or healed thus to be,
Were well sitting,if that I were a fiend,
To traien a wight,that true is vnto me,

I pray God let this counsaile neuer ithee,
But doe me rather sterue anon right here,
Ere I thus doen, as thou me wouldest lere.

She that I serue iwis, what so thou sey,
To whom mine hart enhabite is by right,
Shall haue me holly hers, till that I dey.
For Pandarus, sens I haue trouth her hight,
I woll nat ben vntrue for no wight,
But as her man I woll aye liue and sterue,
And neuer none other creature serue.

And there thou saiest thou shalt as fair find
As she, let be, make no comparison
To creature iformed here by kind,
O leue Pandare, in conclusion,
I woll nat been of thine opinion
Touching all this, for which I thee beseech,
So hold thy peace, thou slaest me with thy (speech.

Thou biddest me I should loue another
All freshly new, and let Creseide go,
It lithe nat in my power leue brother,
And though I might, yet would I nat do so,
But canst thou plaien raket to and fro,
Nettle in deck out, now this, now ỳ, Pãdare,
Now foule fall her for thy wo that care.

Thou farest eke by me Pandarus,
As he, that when a wight is wo bigon,
He commeth to him apace, & saith right thus,
Thinke not on smart, & thou shalt feele none,
Thou maiest me first transmewen in a stone,
And reue me my passions all,
Or thou so lightly doe my wo to fall.

The death may well out of my brest depart
The life, so long may this sorow mine:
But fro my soule shall Creseides dart
Out neuermore, but doune with Proserpine
When I am dead, I woll won in pine,
And there I woll eternally complain
My wo, and how that twinned be we twain.

Thou hast here made an argument full fine,
How that it should lasse paine be
Creseide to forgone, for she was mine,
And liued in ease and in felicite:
Why gabbest thou, that saidest vnto me,
That him is worse that is fro wele ithrow,
Than he had erst none of that wele know.

But tel me now, sens ỳ thee thinketh so light
To chaungen so in loue aye to and fro,
Why hast thou nat doen busily thy might
To chaungen her, that doeth thee all thy wo?
Why nilt thou let her fro thine heart go?
Why nilt thou loue another lady swete,
That may thine heart setten in quiete?

If thou hast had in loue aye yet mischaunce,
And canst it not out of thine hart driue,
I that loued in lust and in pleasaunce
With her, as much as creature on liue,
How should I that forget, and that so liue,
O where hast thou ben hid so long in mew,
Thou canst so well and formeliche argew.

Nay God wot, naught worth is al thy rede,
For which, for what that euer may befall,
Withouten words mo I woll ben dede,
O death, that ender art of sorrowes all,
Come now, sens I so oft after thee call,
For sely is that death, sooth for to saine,
That oft icleped, commeth and endeth paine.

Well wote I, while my life was in quiete,
Ere thou me slue, I would haue peuen hire,
But now thy comming is to me so swete,
That in this world I nothing so desire,
O death, sens with this sorow I am a fire,
Thou either do me anon in teares drench,
Or with thy cold stroke mine heart quench.

Sens that thou slaest so fele in sundry wise
Ayenst her will, vnpraied day and night,
Doe me at my request this seruise,
Deliuer now the world, so doest thou right,
Of me that am the wofullest wight
That euer was, for time is that I sterue,
Sens in this world of right nauȝt do I serue.

This Troilus in teares gan distill
As licour out of Alambike full fast,
And Pandarus gan hold his tongue still,
And to the ground his eyen downe he cast,
But natheles, thus thought he at last,
What parde, rather than my fellow dey,
Yet shall I somewhat more vnto him sey.

And said friend, sens thou hast such distresse,
And sens thee list mine arguments blame,
Why nilt thy seluen helpe doen redresse,
And with thy manhood letten all this game,
Go ramish her, ne canst thou not for shame?
And either let her out of toune fare,
Or hold her still, and leaue thy nice fare.

Art thou in Troy, and hast non hardiment
To take a wight, which that loueth thee,
And would her seluen been of thine assent,
Now is nat this a nice vanite,
Rise vp anon, and let this weping be,
And sith thou art a man, for in this hour
I woll been dead, or she shall ben our,

To

To this answerde him Troilus full soft,
And saied, iwis my leue brother dere,
All this haue I my selfe yet thought full oft,
And more thing than thou deuisest here,
But why this thing is laft, thou shalt wel here
And when thou hast me yeuen audience,
Thereafter maiest thou tell all thy sentence.

First, sin thou wost this toun hath al this werre
For rauishing of women so by might,
It should not been suffred me to erre,
As it stont now, ne doen so great vnright,
I should haue also blame of euery wight,
My fathers graunt if that I so withstood,
Sens she is chaunged for the tounes good.

I haue eke thought, so it were her assent,
To aske her of my father of his grace,
Then thinke I, this were her accusement,
Sens well I wot I may her nat purchace,
For sens my father in so high place
As Parliment, hath her eschaunge ensealed,
He nill for me his letter be repealed.

Yet drede I most her heart to perturbe
With violence, if I doe such a game,
For if I would it openly disturbe,
It must be disclaunder to her name,
And me were leuer die than her diffame,
As nolde God, but I should haue
Her honour, leuer than my life to saue.

Thus am I lost, for aught that I can see,
For certaine is that I am her knight,
I must her honour leuer haue than me
In euery case, as louer ought of right,
Thus am I with desire and reason twight:
Desire, for to distourben her me redeth,
And Reason nill not, so mine heart dredeth.

Thus weeping, that he could neuer cease,
He saied alas, how shall I wretch fare,
For well fele I alway my loue encrease,
And hope is lasse and lasse Pandare,
Encreasen eke the causes of my care,
So welaway, why nill mine hart brest,
For as in loue there is but little rest.

Pandare answerd, friend thou maiest for me
Doen as thee list, but had I it so hote,
And thine estate, she should go with me,
Tho all this toun cried on this thing by note,
I nolde set at all that noise a grote,
For whē men haue cried, then wol they roun,
Eke wonder last but ix. daies neuer in toun.

Deuine not in reason aye so deepe,
Ne curtesly, but helpe thy selfe anone,
Bet is that other than thy seluen wepe,
And namely, sens yt two ben al one:
Rise vp, for by mine head she shall not gone,
And rather ben in blame a little ifound,
Thā sterue here as a gnat withouten wound.

It is no shame vnto you, ne no vice,
Her to withholden, that ye loueth best,
Perauenture she might hold thee vernice,
To letten her go thus vnto the Greeks hoste,
Thinke eke fortune, as well thy seluen woste,
Helpeth hardie man vnto his emprise,
And weiueth wretches for her cowardise.

And though thy lady would alite her greue,
Thou shalt thy selfe thy peace hereafter make,
But as to me certaine I cannot leue,
That she would it as now for euill take,
Why should then for feare thine hart quake,
Thinke how Paris hath, that is thy brother,
A loue, and why shal thou not haue another?

And Troilus, o thing I dare thee swere,
That if Creseide, which that is thy lefe,
Now loueth thee, as well as thou doest here,
God helpe me so, she nill not take a grefe,
Though thou do bote anon in this mischeefe,
And if she wilneth fro thee for to passe,
Then is she false, so loue her well the lasse.

For thy, take hart, & think right as a knight,
Through loue is broken alday euery law,
Kith now somwhat thy courage & thy might,
Haue mercie on thy selfe for any awe,
Let not this wretched wo thine hart gnawe,
But manly set the world on sixe and seuen,
And if thou die a martir, go to heauen.

I woll my selfe ben with thee at this dede,
Though I and all my kin vpon a stound,
Should in a strete, as dogs, liggen dede,
Through girt with many a bloodie wound,
In euery case I woll a friend be found,
And if thee listeth here steruen as a wretch,
Adieu, the deuill speed him that retch.

This Troilus gan with tho words quicken,
And saied, friend, graunt mercie, I assent,
But certainly, thou maiest nat so me pricken,
Ne paine none ne may me so torment,
That for no case it is not mine entent,
At short words, though I dien should,
To rauishen her, but if her selfe it would.

Why, so mean I (qd. Pandarus) al this day,
But tell me then, hast thou her well assaied,
That sorowest thus? & he answerde him nay.
Wherof art thou (qd. Pandare) then dismaied,

That noste not that she woll ben euill apaied
To ravilben her, sens thou hast not ben there.
But if that Ioue told it in thyne eare.

For thy, rise vp as naught ne were, anone,
And wash thy face, and to the king thou wend,
Or he may wondren whider thou art gone,
Thou must with wisdome him a other blend,
Or vpon case he may after thee send,
Or thou be ware, and shortly vtterly dere
Be glad, and let me werke in this matere.

For I shall shape it so, that sikerly
Thou shalt this nist somtime in some manere
Come speaken with thy Ladie priuely,
And by her words eke, as by her chere,
Thou shalt full soone aperceiue and well here
Of her entent, and in this case the best,
And fare now well, for in this point I rest.

The swift fame, which that fals things
Equall reporteth, like the things true,
Was throughout Troy iflied, with prest wings,
Fro man to man, and made his tale all new,
How Calcas doughter with her bright hew,
At Parliment without words more,
Igraunted was in chaunge of Antenore.

The which tale anon right as Creseide
Had heard, she which ỹ of her father rought
(As in this case) right naught, ne whē he desde
Full busily to Iupiter besought
Yeue him mischance, that this tretis brought:
But shortly, least these tales sooth were,
She durst at no wight asken it for fere.

As she that had her hart and all her mind
On Troylus yset so wonder fast,
That al this world ne might her loue vnbind,
Ne Troylus out of her heart cast,
She would been his while ỹ her life may last,
And she thus brenneth both in loue and drede,
So that she nist what was best to rede.

But as men seene in toune, and all about,
That women vsen her friends to visite,
So to Creseide of women came a rout,
For pitous ioy, and wenden her delite,
And with her tales dere ynough a mite,
These women, which that in the citie dwell,
They set hem doune, and saied as I shall tell.

(Od, first that one) I am glad truely,
Because of you, that shall your father see,
Another saied, iwis, so am not I,
For all too little hath she with vs be:
(Od. tho the third) I hope iwis that she
Shall bringen vs the peace on euery side,
That when she goth, almighty God her gide.

Tho words and tho woinannish things
She herd hem right as though she thens were
For God it wote, her hart on other thing is,
Although the body sat emong hem there,
Her aduertence is alway els where,
For Troilus full fast her soule sought,
Without words, on him alway she thought.

These women that thus wenden her to please,
About naught gan all her tales spend,
Such vanitie me can doen her none ease,
As she that all this meane while vtrend
Of other passion than they wend,
So that she felt almost her heart die
For wo, and were of that compane.

For which might she no lenger restraine
Her teares, they gan so vp to well,
That gaue signes of her bitter paine,
In which her spirit was, and must dwell,
Remēbring her from heauen vnto which hell
She fallen was, sens she forgo the sight
Of Troilus, and forrowfully she sight.

And thilke fooles, sitting her about,
Wende that she wept and sighed sore,
Because that she should out of the rout
Departen, and neuer play with hem more,
And they that had knowen her of yore,
See her so wepe, and thoght it was kindnesse,
And ech of hem wept eke for her distresse.

And busily they gonnen her to comforten
On thing God wot, on which she litle thoght,
And with her tales wenden her disporten,
And to be glad they oft her besought,
But such an ease therwith they her wrought,
Right as a man is eased for to fele,
For ache of head, to clawen him on his hele.

But after all this nice vanitie,
They took her leue, and home they wenten all,
Creseide full of sorrowfull pitie,
Into her chamber vp went out of the hall,
And on her bedde she gan for dead to fall,
In purpose neuer thens for to rise,
And thus she wrought, as I shall you deuise.

Her owended hair, that sonnish was of hew,
She rent, and eke her fingers long and smale
She wrong full oft, and bad God on her rew,
And with the death to do bote on her bale,
Her hew whylome bright, that tho was pale,
Bare witnesse of her wo, and her constraint,
And thus she spake, sobbing in her compleint,

Alas

Alas (qd.she) out of this regioun,
I wofull wretch and infortuned wight,
And borne in curled constellatioun,
Mote gon, and thus departen fro my knight,
Wo worth alas, that ilke daies light,
On which I saw him first with eyen twaine,
That causeth me, and I him all this paine.

Therewith the teares from her eyen two
Doune fell, as shoure in Aprill swithe,
Her white breast she bet, and for the wo,
After the death she cried a thousand sithe,
Sens he that wont her wo was for to lithe,
She mote forgone, for which disaventure
She held her selfe a forlost creature.

She saied, how shall he doen and I also,
How should I liue, if that I from him twin,
O dere heart eke that I loue so,
Who shall that sorow slaen, that ye ben in?
O Calcas father, thine be all this sin:
O mother mine, that cleped wert Argiue,
Wo worth that day that thou me bare on liue.

To what fine should I liue and sorowen thus,
How should a fish withouten water dure?
What is Creseide worth from Troilus?
How should a plant or liues creature
Liue withouten his kind noriture,
For which full oft a by word here I sey,
That rootelesse mote greene soone dey.

I shal doen thus, sens neither sword ne dart
Dare I none handle, for the cruelte,
That ilke day that I fro you depart,
If sorow of that nill nat my bane be,
Then shall no meat ne drinke come in me,
Till I my soule out of my brest unbreath,
And thus my selven woll I doen to death.

And Troilus, my clothes everychone
Shull blacke ben, in tokening hart swete,
That I am as out of this world agone,
That wont was you to set in quiete,
And of mine order aye, till death me mete,
The observaunce ever in your absence,
Shall sorow ben, complaint, and abstinence.

Mine hart, and eke the wofull ghost therein
Bequeath I with your spirit to complaine
Eternally, for they shall never twin.
For though in yearth twinned be we twaine,
Yet in the field of pitie, out of paine,
That hight Elisos, shall ben ifere,
As Orpheus and Erudice his fere.

Thus heart mine, for Antenor alas
I soone shall be chaunged, as I wene,
But how shall ye doen in this sorowfull caas,
How shall your tender hart this sustene?
But hart mine, forget this sorow and tene,
And me also, for soothly for to sey,
So ye well fare, I recche not to dey.

How might it ever redde ben or isong
The plaint that she made in her distresse,
I not, but as for me my little tong
If I discriuen would her heauinesse,
It should make her sorow seeme lesse
Than that it was, and childishly deface
Her high complaint, and therfore I it pace.

Pandare, which that sent from Troilus
Was unto Creseide, as ye haue heard deuise,
That for the best it was accorded thus,
And he full glad to doen him that seruise,
Unto Creseide in a full secret wise,
There as she lay in tourment and in rage,
Came her to tell all holly his message.

And fond that she her selven gan to grete
Full pitously, for with her salt teares,
Her brest and face ibathed was full wete,
Her mightie tresses of her sonnish heares
Unbroiden, hangen all about her eares,
Which gaue him very signe of mattire
Of death, which that her hart gan desire.

When she him saw, she gan for sorow anon
Her tearie face at wirt her armes hide,
For which this Pandare is so wo bigon,
That in the hous he might vneth abide,
As he that felt sorow on every side,
For if Creseide had erst complained sore,
Tho gan she plaine a thousand times more.

And in her aspre plaint, thus she seide:
Pandare, first of foes mo than two,
Was cause, calling unto me Creseide,
That now transmued ben in cruell wo,
Whether shall I say to you welcome or no?
That alderfirst me brought unto seruise
Of loue alas, that endeth in such wise.

Endeth then loue in wo? Ye or men lieth,
And all worldly blisse, as thinketh me,
The end of blisse aye sorow it occupieth,
And who troweth not that it so be,
Let him upon me wofull wretch see,
That my selfe hate, and aye my birth curse,
Feeling alway, fro wicke I go to worse.

Who so me seeth, he seeth sorow all atonis,
Paine, tourment, plaint, wo, and distresse,
Out of my wofull body harme there none is,
As langour, anguish, cruell bitternesse,

Annoy, smart, dreed, furie, and eke sickneſſe,
I trow twis from heauen teares raine,
For pitie of my alpre and cruell paine.

And thou my ſuster, full of diſcomfort,
(Qd. Pandarus) what thinkeſt thou do?
Why ne haſt thou to thy ſeluen ſome reſport?
Why wilt thou thus thy ſelfe alas fordo?
Leaue all this werke, and take now heed to
That I ſhall ſaine, and hearken of good entent
This meſſage, that by me Troilus you ſent.

Tourned her tho Creſeide, a wo making,
So great, that it a death was for to ſee,
Alas (qd. ſhe) what words may ye bring,
What will my dere hart ſaine to mee,
Which that I dreede neuermore to ſee,
Will he haue plaint or teares ere I wend,
I haue ynough, if he thereafter ſend.

She was right ſuch to ſeene in her viſage,
As is that wight that men on beare bind,
Her face like of Paradis the image,
Was all ychaunged in another kind,
The play, the laughter, men wer wont to find
On her, and eke her ioies euerichone
Ben fled, and thus lieth Creſeide alone.

About her eyen two, a purpre ring
Bitrent, in ſoothfaſt tokening of her paine,
That to behold it was a deadly thing,
For which Pandare might nat reſtraine
The teares from his eyen for to raine,
But nathelelle as the beſt might he ſeide
From Troilus theſe words to Creſeide.

Lo nece, I trow ye han heard all how
The king with other Lords for the beſt,
Hath made eſchaunge of Antenor and you,
That cauſe is of this ſorow and this vnreſt,
But how this caſe doeth Troilus moleſt,
This may none yearthly mans tongue ſay,
For very wo, his wit is all away.

For which we haue ſo ſorowed, he and I,
That into little it had vs both ſlaw,
But through my counſaile this day finally,
He somewhat is fro weeping withdraw,
And ſeemeth me that he deſireth faw,
With you to ben all night for to deuiſe
Remedie of this, if there were any wiſe.

This ſhort and plain, theffect of my meſſage,
As ferforth as my wit can comprehend,
For ye that ben of tourment in ſuch rage,
Way to no long prologue as now entend,
And hereupon ye may anſwere him ſend,
And for the loue of God my nece dere,
So leaue this wo or Troilus be here.

Great is my wo (qd. ſhe) and ſighed ſore,
As ſhe that feeleth deadly ſharpe diſtreſſe,
But yet to me his ſorrow is moſell more,
That loue him bet than he himſelfe I geſſe,
Alas, for me hath he ſuch heuineſſe,
Can he for me ſo pitouſly complaine,
I wis this ſorow doubleth all my paine.

Greuous to me God wot it is for to twin
(Qd. ſhe) but yet it harder is to me,
To ſeene that ſorrow which that he is in,
For well wot I, it woll my bane be,
And die I woll in certaine tho (qd. ſhe),
But bid him come, er deth ꝑ thus me threteth,
Driue out ꝑ ghoſt which in mine hart beteth.

Theſe words ſaied, ſhe on her armes two
Fill gruffe, and gan to weepen pitouſly:
(Qd. Pandarus) alas, why doe ye ſo,
Sens ye well wote the time is faſt by
That he ſhall come, ariſe vp haſtely,
That he you nat biwepen thus ne find,
But ye woll haue him wood out of his mind.

For wiſt he that ye farde in this manere,
He would himſelfe ſlea: and if I wend
To haue this fare, he ſhould not come here,
For all the good that Ilium may diſpend:
For to what fine he would anon pretend,
That know I well, and for thy pet I ſey,
So leaue this ſorow, or plainly he woll dey.

And ſhapeth you his ſorow for to abredge,
And nat encreaſe, leſe nece ſwete,
Be the rather to him cauſe of plat than edge,
And with ſome wiſdome ye his ſorowes bete,
What helpeth it to weepen full a ſtrete,
Or though ye both in ſalt teares dreint,
Bet is a time of cure aye than of plaint.

I meane thus, when I him hither bring,
Sens ye be wiſe, and both of one aſſent,
So ſhapeth how to diſtourbe your going,
Or come ayen ſoone after ye be went,
Women been wiſe, in ſhort auiſement,
And let ſeene how your wit ſhall auaile,
And what that I may helpe, it ſhall nat faile.

Go (qd. Creſeide) and vncle truely,
I ſhall doen all my might me to reſtraine
From weeping in his ſight, and buſily
Him for to glad, I ſhall doen all my paine,
And in my heart ſecken euery vaine,
If to this ſore there may ben founden ſalue,
It ſhall nat lacke certaine on mine halue.

Goth

Goth Pandarus, and Troilus he sought,
Till in a temple he found him all alone,
As he that of his life no lenger rought,
But to the pitous gods euerichone,
Full tenderly he praied, and made his mone,
To doen him soone out of this world to pace,
For wel he thoght there was non other grace.

And shortly, all the sooth for to sey,
He was so fallen in dispaire that day,
That vtterly he shope him for to dey,
For right thus was his argument alway,
He saied he nas but lorne, welaway,
For all that commeth, commeth by necessitie,
Thus to ben lorne, it is no destinie.

For certainly, this wote I well he saide,
That foresight of diuine purueiaunce
Had seene alway me to forgone Creseide,
Sens God seeth euery thing out of doutaūce,
And hem disposeth through his ordinaunce,
In his merites soothly for to be,
As they shull comen by predestine.

But natheless alas, whom shall I leue,
For there ben great clerkes many one,
That destinie, through arguments preue,
And some saine, that nedely there is none,
But that free choice is yeuen vs euerychone,
O welaway, so sligh arne clerkes old,
That I nat whose opinion I may hold.

For some men sain, that God seeth all biforne,
Ne God may nat deceiued ben parde,
Thē mote it fallen, though men had it sworne,
That purueiaunce hath seene beforne to be,
Wherefore I say, that from eterne if he
Hath wist beforn our thought eke as our dede,
We haue no free choice, as these clerkes rede.

For other thought, nor other deed also,
Might neuer been, but such as purueyaunce,
Which may nat been deceiued neuer mo,
Hath seied biforne, without en ignorance,
For if there might ben a variaunce
To writhen out fro Gods purueying,
There were no prescience of thing comming.

But it were rather an opinion
Uncertaine, and no stedfast foreseeing,
And certes that were an abusion,
That God should haue no perfite clere weting
More than we men, ỹ haue doutous wening,
But such an errour vpon God to gesse,
Were false, and foule, and wicked cursednesse.

Eke this is an opinion of some,
That haue her top ful high and smooth shore,
They saine right thus, ỹ thing is nat to come,
For that the prescience hath seene before
That it shall come, but they sain that therfore
That it shall come, therefore the purueyaunce
Wote it before without ignorance.

And in this manner this necessitee
Retourneth in his part contrary againe,
For needfully behoueth it nat to be,
That thilke things fallen in certaine
That ben purueied, but needfully as they saine
Behoueth it that things which that fall,
That they in certaine ben purueyed all.

I meane as though I laboured me in this,
To inquire which thig cause of which thig be,
As whether that the prescience of God is
The certaine cause of the necessite
Of things that to comen be parde,
Or if necessitie of thing comming,
Be cause certaine of the purueying.

But now ne enforce I me not in shewing,
How ỹ order of the causes stant, but wel wot I
That it behoueth, that the befalling
Of things wist before certainly,
Be necessarie, all seeme it not thereby,
That prescience put falling necessaire
To thing to come, all fall it foule or faire.

For if there sit a man yond on a see,
That by necessitie behoueth it,
That certes thine opinion sooth be,
That weenest or conicctest that he sit,
And further ouer, now ayenward yet,
Lo, right so is it on the part contrarie,
As thus, now hearken, for I woll nat tarie.

I say, that if the opinion of thee
Be sooth for that he sit, then say I this,
That he mote sitten by necessitee,
And thus necessitie in either is,
For in him nede of sitting is wis,
And in the nede of sooth, and thus forsoth
There mote necessitie ben in you both.

But thou maist saine the man sit nat therfore,
That thine opinion of his sitting sooth is,
But rather for the man sate there before,
Therefore is thine opinion sooth wis,
And I say, though the cause of sooth of this
Commeth of his sitting, yet necessitee
Is enterchaunged both in him and in thee.

Thus in the same wise out of doutaunce,
I may well maken, as it seemeth me,
Of my reasoning of Gods purueyaunce,
And of the things that comen be,

By which reason men may well ysee,
That thilke things that in earth fall,
That by necessitie they comen all.

For although that forthing shall come iwis
Therefore is it purueyed certainely,
Nat that it commeth, for it purueyed is,
Yet natheless behoueth it needfully,
That thing to come be pursueyed trewly,
Or els things that purueyed be,
That they betiden by necessite.

And this sufficeth right ynough certaine,
For to destroy our free choise euerydell,
But now is this abusion to saine,
That falling of the things temporell,
Is cause of the gods prescience eternell.
Now truly that is a false sentence,
That thing to come shuld cause his prescience.

What might I wene, & I had such a thought?
But that God purueieth thing ỹ is to come,
For that it is to come, and els nought:
So might I wene, that things all and some,
That whylome ben befall and ouercome,
Ben cause of thilke soueraine purueyaunce,
That forwote all, withouten ignorance.

And ouer all this, yet say I more thereto,
That right as when I wote there is a thing,
Iwis that thing mote needfully be so,
Eke right so, when I wot a thing comming,
So mote it come, and thus they befalling
Of things that ben wist before the tide,
They mowe not ben eschewed on no side.

Then said he thus, almighty Ioue in trone,
That wotest of all this thing ỹ soothfastnesse,
Rew on my sorrow, and do me dien sone,
Or bring Creseide and me fro this distresse.
And whyle he was in all this heauinesse,
Disputing with himselfe in this matere,
Came Pandare in, and said as ye may here.

O mighty God (qd. Pandarus) in trone,
Eigh, who saw euer a wise man faren so?
Why Troilus, what thinkest thou to done?
Hast thou such lust to ben thine owne fo?
What parde, yet is nat Creseide ago,
Why list thee so thy selfe forgone for drede,
That in thine head thine eyen semen dede.

Hast thou nat liued many a yere before
Withouten her, and farde full well at ease?
Art thou for her and for none other borne,
Hath kind thee wrought al only her to please?
Let be and thinke right thus in thy disease,
That in ỹ dice right as there fallen chaunces,
Right so in loue there come & gon pleasances.

And yet this is a wonder most of all,
Why thou thus forwoest, sith thou wost nat yet
Touching her going how that it shall fall,
Nek she can her selfe distourben it,
Thou hast nat yet assaied all her wit,
A man may all betime his necke bede
When it shall off, and forowen at the nede.

For thy, take hede of all that I shall say,
I haue with her ispoke, and long ibe,
So as accorded was betwixe vs twey,
And euermore me thinketh thus, that she
Hath somewhat in her hearts priuite,
Wherewith she can, & I shall aright rede,
Disturbe all this, of which thou art in drede.

For which my counsell is, when it is night,
Thou to her go, and make of this an end,
And blisfull Juno, through her great might,
Shall (as I hope) her grace vnto vs send,
Mine hart seith certaine she shall nat wend,
And for thy, put thine heart a while in rest,
And hold thy purpose, for it is the best.

This Troilus answerde, and sighed sore,
Thou saist right well, and I will do right so,
And what him list, he said vnto him more,
And when that it was time for to go,
Full priuely himselfe without en mo
Unto her came, as he was wont to done,
And how they wrought, I shall you tell soone.

Sooth is, that when they gon first to mete,
So gan the paine her hearts for to twist,
That neither of hem other might grete,
But hem in armes tooke, and after kist,
The lasse wofull of hem both nist
Wher ỹ he was, ne might o word outbring,
As I said erst, for wo and for sobbing.

The wofull teares that they leten fall,
As bitter weren out of teares kind
For paine, as is ligne aloes, or gall,
So bitter teares wept not as I find
The wofull Mirra, through the barke & rind,
That in this world there nis so hard an hart,
That nolde haue rewed on her paines smart.

But when her wofull wery ghosts twaine
Returned ben, there as hem ought to dwell,
And that somwhat to weken gan the paine
By length of plaint, and ebben gan the well
Of her teares, and the heart vnswell,
With broke voice, al horse for shright, Creseid
To Troilus these ilke words seid.

O Ioue I die, and mercy thee beseech,
Helpe Troilus: and therwithal her face
Upon his brest she laid, and lost her speech,
Her wofull spirite from his proper place
Right with the worde, away in point to pace,
And thus she lith, with hewes pale and grene,
That whilom fresh and faireſt was to sene.

This Troilus that on her gan behold,
Cleping her name, and she lay as for deed,
Withouten answere, & felt her limmes cold,
Her eien throwen vpward to her heed:
This sorowful man, can now non other rede
But oft time her colde mouth he kist,
Where hun was wo, God and himself it wist.

He riseth him vp, & long straite he her leide,
For ligne of life, for aught he can or may,
Can he none finde, in nothing of Creseide,
For which his song full oft is wela way:
But when he saw that speechlesse she lay,
With sorowful voice, and hart of bitter al bare,
He said, how she was fro this world ifare.

So after that he long had her complained,
His hondes wrong, and said that was to sey,
And with his teeres salt her brest berained,
He gan tho teeres wipen off full drey,
And pitously gan for the soule prey,
And said, Lord that set art in thy trone,
Rewe eke on me, for I shal folow her sone.

She cold was, and without sentement,
For ought he wote, for brethe felt he none,
And this was him a preignant argument,
That she was forth out of this world agone:
And when he saw there was non other wõne,
He gan her limmes dresse, in such manere,
As men don hem that shall ben laide on bere.

And after this, with sterne and cruel harr,
His swerde anon out of his sheth he twight,
Him selfe to sleen, how sore that him smart,
So that his soule, her soule folowen might,
There as the dome of Minos would it dight,
Sith loue and cruel fortune it ne would,
That in this world he lenger liuen should.

Then said he thus, fulfilde of high disdaine,
O cruel Ioue, and thou fortune aduerse,
This is all and some, that falsly haue ye slaine
Creseide, and sith ye may do me ne werse,
Fie on your might and werkes so diuerse,
Thus cowardly ye shull me neuer winne,
There shall no deth me fro my lady twinne.

For I this world, sith ye haue slain her thus
Woll let, and folow her spirite low or hie,
Shal neuer louer saine that Troilus,
Dare nat for feare with his lady die,
For certaine I woll beare her companie,
But sithe ye wol nat suffre vs liuen here,
Yet suffreth that our soules ben ifere.

And thou Citie in which I liue in wo,
And thou Priam, and brethren al ifere,
And thou my mother, farewell for I go,
And Attropose make redy thou my bere:
And thou Creseide, O sweete hart dere,
Receiue now my spirite, would he sey
With swerde at hart, all redy for to dey.

But as God would, of swough she abraide,
And gan to sighe, and Troilus she cride,
And he answerde, lady mine Creseide,
Liue ye yet? and let his swerde doun glide:
Ye hart mine, that thanked be Cupide,
(qd. she) and therwithal she sore sight,
And he began to glade her as he might.

Toke her in armes two and kist her oft,
And her to glad, he did al his entent,
For which her gost, that flikered aie a loft,
Into her wofull hart ayen it went:
But at the last, as that her eye glent
Aside, anon she gan his swerde aspie,
As it lay bare, and gan for feare crie.

And asked him why he had it out drawe,
And Troilus anon the cause her told,
And how himself therwith he wold haue slaw,
For which Creseide vpon him gan behold,
And gan him in her armes fast fold,
And said, O mercy God, lo which a dede
Alas, how nigh we weren both dede.

Then if I nadde spoken, as grace was,
Ye would haue slain your selfe anon (qd. she)
Ye doutelesse: and she answerde alas,
For by that ilke lorde that made me,
I nolde a forlong way on liue haue be,
After your deth, to haue ben crouned Quene
Of al the londe the sunne on shineth shene.

But with this selue sword, which ꝑ here is
My selfe I would haue slain (qd. she) tho:
But ho, for we haue right inough of this,
And let vs rise and straite to bedde go:
And there let vs speken of our wo,
For by that morter, which that I see brenne,
Know I ful well, that day is nat farre henne.

When they wer in her bed in armes fold,
Naught was it like tho nights here before,
For petously ech other gan behold,
As they that hadden al her blisse forne,

Bewailing aie the day that they were borne,
Til at the last, this sorowful wight Creseide,
To Troilus these like words seide.

Lo hart mine, wel wote ye this (qd. she)
That if a wight alway his wo complaine,
And seketh nat how holpen for to be,
It nis but folie, and encrease of paine:
And sens that here assembled be we twaine,
To find bote of wo that we ben in,
It were time al sone to begin.

I am a woman, as ful wel ye wotte,
And as I am auised sodainly,
So wol I tel you, while it is hotte,
Me thinketh thus, that neyther ye nor I,
Ought halfe this wo to maken skilfully,
For there is art inough for to redresse,
That yet is misse, and sleen this heuinesse.

Soth is, the wo the which we ben inne,
For aught I wote, for nothing els is,
But for the cause that we should twinne,
Considred al, there nis no more amis:
And what is then a remedy vnto this?
But that we shape vs sone for to mete,
This al and some, my dere hart swete.

Now that I shall wel bringen it about
To comen ayen, sone after that I go,
Therof am I no maner thing in dout,
For dredelesse, within a weke or two
I shal ben here: and that it may be so,
By all right and in words few,
I shal you wel an heape of waies shew.

For which I woll nat maken long sermon,
For time lost may not recouered be,
But I will go to my conclusion,
And to the best, in aught that I can see:
And for the loue of God forgeue it me,
If I speake aught ayenst your harts rest,
For trewly I speake it for the best.

Making alway a protestacion,
That now these words which I shal say,
Nis but to shew you my motion,
To find vnto our helpe the best way,
And take it no otherwise I pray,
For in effect, what so ye me commaund,
That wol I done, for that is no demaund.

Now herkeneth this, ye haue wel vnderstōd
My going graunted is by parlement,
So forforth that it may not ben withstond,
For al this world, as by my iudgement:
And sithe there helpeth none auisement,
To letten it, lette it passe out of mind,
And let vs shape a better way to find.

The sothe is, the twinning of vs twaine,
Wol vs disease, and cruelly anoie:
But him behoueth sometime haue a paine,
That serueth loue, if that he woll haue ioie:
And sith I shall no farther out of Troie
Than I may ride ayen on halfe a morow,
It ought lasse causen vs for to sorow.

So as I shal nat so ben hid in mew,
That day by day, mine owne hart dere,
Sens well ye wote that it is now a trew,
Ye shal ful wel al mine estate here:
And er that truce is done, I shal ben here,
Than haue ye both Antenor i wonne,
And me also, bethe glad now if ye conne.

And thinke right thus, Creseid is now agon,
But what, she shal come hastely ayen,
And when alas? by God, lo right anon
Er daies ten, this dare I sikely saine,
And then at erst, shal we be so faine,
So as we shal togithers euer dwell,
That al this world ne might our blisse tell.

I see that oft time, there as we ben now
That for the best, our counsaile for to hide,
Ye speke nat with me, nor I with you
In fourtenight, ne see you go ne ride:
May ye nat ten daies then abide,
For mine honour, in such auenture?
I wis ye mowe, or els lite endure.

Ye know eke how that all my kin is here,
But if that onely it my father be,
And eke mine other things al ifere,
And namely my dere herte ye,
Whom that I nolde leauen for to see,
For al this world, as wide as it hath space,
Or els see I neuer Ioues face.

Why trowe ye my father in this wise,
Coueiteth so to see me, but for drede,
Lest in this toune that folkes me dispise,
Biсause of him, for his vnhappy dede?
What wote my father what life that I lede,
For if he wist in Troie how wel I fare,
Us neded for my wending nat to care.

Ye, that euery day eke more and more,
Men treate of peace, and it supposed is,
That men the quene Heleine shall restore,
And Grekes vs restore that is mis:
Though there were comfort none but this,
That men purposen peace on euery side,
Ye may the better at ease of hart abide.

For

For if that it be peace, mine hart dere,
The nature of the peace mote nedes driue,
That men must entrecomune ifere,
And to and fro ete ride and gone as bliue,
All day as thicke as Been flien from an hiue,
And euery wight haue liberty to bleue
Where as him list, the bet withouten leue

And though so be ỳ peace ther may bene none,
Yet hither, though ther neuer peace ne were,
I must come, for whider should I gone,
Or how mischaunce should I dwell there
Among tho men of armes euer in fere,
For which, as wisely God my soule rede,
I can nat sene wherof ye should drede.

Haue here another way, if it so be
That al this thing ne may you not suffice,
My father as ye knowen well parde,
Is olde, and ete full of couetise,
And I right now haue founden al the gise,
Withouten nette, wherwith I shal him hent,
And herkeneth now, if that ye woll assent.

Lo Troilus, men saine, That ful hard it is
The wolfe ful, and the wedder hole to haue,
This is to saine, that men full oft iwis,
Mote spenden parte, the remnant for to saue:
For aie with Gold, men may the harte graue,
Of him that set is vpon couetise,
And how I meane, I shal it you deuise.

The moueable, which ỳ I haue in this toun
Unto my father shal I take, and say,
That right for trust, and for saluatioun,
It sent is from a frende of his or tway,
The which frendes feruently him pray,
To sende after more, and that in hie,
While that this toun stant thus in ieopardie.

And that shalbe of gold an huge quantite,
Thus shal I sain, but lest folke it aspide,
This may be sent by no wight but by me:
I shal ete shewen him, if peace betide
What frends that I haue on euery side,
Toward the court, to don the wrath pace,
Of Priamus, and do him stonde in grace.

So what for o thing and for other, I wete,
I shal him so enchaunten with my sawes,
That right in heuen his soule is, shal he mete,
For all Apollo, or his clerkes lawes,
Or calculing, auailleth not thre hawes:
Desire of Gold shall so his soule blend,
That as me list, I shall wel make an end.

And if he would aught by his sort it preue,
If that I lie, in certaine I shall fond
To disturben him, and plucke him by the sleue,
Making his sort, and bearen him on hond,
He hath nat well the goddes vnderstond,
For goddes spoke in amphibologies,
And for o sothe, they tellen twenty lies.

Ete drede fond first goddes, I suppose,
Thus shall I saine, & that his coward hart,
Made him amis the goddes text to glose,
When he for ferde out of Delphos stert:
And but I make him sone to conuert,
And done my rede, within a day or twey,
I wol to you oblige me to dey.

And trewly, as written wel I find,
That al this thing was said of good entent,
And that her hart trewe was and kind
Towardes him, and spake right as she ment,
And that she starfe for wo nigh whē she went,
And was in purpose euer to be trewe,
Thus writen they, that of her werkes knew.

This Troilus, with hart and eeres spradd
Herde al this thing deuised to and fro,
And verily it seemed that he had
The selue witte, but yet to let her go
His hart misyaue him euermo,
But finally he gan his hart wrest,
To trusten her, and take it for the best.

For which the great fury of his penaunce,
Was queint with hope, & therwith hē betwen
Began for ioy the amorous daunce,
And as the birds, when the sunne shene,
Deliten in her songe, in leues greene,
Right so the words, that they spake ifere,
Deliten hem, and made her harts chere.

But natheless, the wending of Creseide,
For al this world may nat out of his mind,
For which ful oft he pitously her preide,
That of her heste he might her trewe find:
And said her, certes if ye be kind,
And but ye come at day set, in Troie,
Ne shal I neuer haue heale, honor, ne ioie.

For al so sothe as sunne vprist to morow,
And God so wisely thou me woful wreech
To rest bring, out of this cruel sorow,
I wol my selucn slee, if that ye dreech:
But of my death though litle be to reech,
Yet er that ye me causen so to smart,
Dwel rather here my owne swete hart.

For trewly mine owne lady dere,
The sleights yet, that I haue herd you stere,
Ful shapely ben to fallen all ifere,
For thus men saith, ỳ one thinketh the bere,

But al another thinketh the ledere,
Your syre is wise, and said is out of drede,
☞ Men may the wise out renne, & not out rede.

☞ It is full harde to halten vnespied
Before a crepil, for he can the craft,
Your father is in sleight as Argus eied,
For al be it that his mouable is him biraft,
His old sleight is yet so with him laft,
Ye shal nat blende him for your womanhede
Ne faine aright, and that is all my drede.

I not if peace shal euermo betide,
But peace or no, for ernest ne for game,
I wote sith Calcas on the Grekes side,
Hath ones ben, and lost so foule his name,
He dare no more come here ayen for shame,
For which that we, for ought I can espie,
To trusten on, nis but a fantasie.

Ye shal eke seen your father shall you glose,
To ben a wife, and as he can well prech,
He shal some Greke so preise and wel alose,
That rauishen he shal you with his spech:
Or do you done by force, as he shal rech,
And Troilus on whom ye nil haue routh,
Shall causeles so steruen in his trouth.

And ouer al this your father shall dispise
Us al, and saine this cite is but lorne,
And that thassege neuer shall arise,
For why the Grekes haue it al sworne,
Til we ben slaine, and doun our walles torne,
And thus he shal you with his wordes fere,
That ate drede I, that ye wol bleuen there.

Ye shall eke sene so many a lusty knight,
Among the Grekes ful of worthinesse,
And ech of hem, with hart, wit, and might
To pleasen you, done al his businesse,
That ye shull dullen of the rudenesse
Of sely Troians, but if routhe
Remorde you, or vertue of your trouthe.

And this to me so greuous is to thinke,
That fro my brest it wol my soule rende,
Ne drede lesse, in me there may nat sinke
O good opinion, if that ye wende,
For why, your fathers sleight woll vs shende,
And if ye gone, as I haue told you yore,
So thinke I nam but deed, withouten more.

For which with humble, true & pitous hart
A thousand times mercy I you pray,
So reweth on mine aspre paines smart,
And doth somwhat, as that I shall you say:
And let vs stealе away betwixt vs tway,
☞ And thinke that foly is, when a man may chese
For accident, his substaunce for to lese.

I meane thus, that sens we mowe or day
Wel stealе away, and ben togither so,
What wit were it to putten in assay,
(In case ye shoulden to your father go)
If that ye mighten come ayen or no:
Thus meane I, that were a great follie
To put that siker nesse in ieopardie.

And bulgarly to speken of substaunce,
Of treasour may we both with vs lede,
Ynough to liue in honour and pleasaunce,
Til vnto time that we shall ben dede:
And thus we may eschewen all this drede,
For euery other waie ye can recorde,
Mine hart twis may therwith nat acorde.

And hardely ne dredeth no pouerte,
For I haue kin and frendes elswhere,
That though we comen in our bare sherte,
Vs should neuer lacke Golde ne geere,
But ben honoured while we dwelten there,
And go we anone, for as in mine entent,
This is the best, if that ye woll assent.

Creseide with a sigh, right in this wise
Answerde, twis my dere hart trew,
We may well stealе away, as ye deuise,
And finden such vnthrifty waies new:
But afterward full sore it woll vs rew,
And helpe me God so at my most nede,
As causeles ye suffren al this drede.

For thilke day that I for cherishing,
Of drede of father, or for any other wight,
Or for estate, delite, or for wedding,
Be false to you, my Troilus my knight,
Saturnus doughter Juno, thrugh her might
As wood as Athamante do me dwell
Eternally with Stix in the pit of Hell.

And this, on euery God celestiall
I sweare it you, and eke on eche Goddesse,
On euery nimphe, and deite infernall,
On Satiry and faunes more and lesse,
That halue goddes ben of wildernesse,
And Attropos my threde of life to brest,
If I be false, now trowe me if you lest.

And thou Simois, that, as an arowe, clere
Thrugh Troy rennest, ay downward to the see,
Be witnesse of this word, that said is here,
That thilke day that I untrew be
To Troilus, mine owne hart free,
That thou returne backward to thy well,
And I with body and soule sinke to hell.

But that ye speake away thus for to go,
And letten all your friends, God forbede,
For any woman that ye shoulden so,
And namely, sens Troy hath now such nede
Of helpe, and eke of o thing taketh hede,
If this were wist, my life lay in ballaunce,
And your honor, God shilde vs fro mischaunce.

And if so be that peace hereafter be take,
As all day happeth after anger game,
Why lord the sorow and wo ye wolden make,
That yene durst come ayen for shame,
And ere that ye ieoparden so your name,
Beth nat too hastie in this hote fare,
For hastie man ne wanteth neuer care.

What trow ye the people eke all about
Would of it say? it is full light to arede,
They woulden say, and swere it out of dout,
That loue ne draue you nat to done this dede,
But lust voluptuous, and coward drede,
Thus were all lost twis mine hart dere
Your honour, which that now shineth clere.

And also thinketh on mine honeste,
That floureth yet, how foule I should it shend,
And with what filth it spotted should be,
If in this forme I should with you wend,
Ne though I liued vnto the worlds end,
My name should I neuer ayenward winne,
Thus were I lost, and ỹ were routh and sinne.

And for thy, flee with reason all this hete,
Wen sane, the sufferaunt ouercommeth parde,
Eke who so woll haue lefe, he lefe mote lete,
Thus maketh vertue of necessite
By patience, and thinke that lord is he
Of fortune aye, that naught woll of her recch,
And she ne daunteth no wight but a wretch.

And trusteth this, that certes heart swete,
Or Phebus suster, Lucina the shene,
The Lion passe, out of this Arite,
I woll been here, withouten any wene,
I meane, as helpe me Iuno heauens Quene,
The tenth day, but if that death me assaile,
I woll you seene, withouten any faile.

And now so this be sooth (qd. Troilus)
I shall well suffer vnto the tenth day,
Sens that I see that nede it mote ben thus,
But for the loue of God, if it be may,
So let vs stealen priuely away,
For euer in one, as for to liue in rest,
Mine hart saieth that it woll be the best.

O mercie God, what life is this (qd. she)
Alas, ye slea me thus for very tene,
I see well now that ye mistrusten me,
For by your words it is well sene,
Now for the loue of Scinthia the shene,
Mistrust me nat thus causelesse for routh,
Sens to be true I haue you plight my trouth.

And thinketh well, that sometime it is wit
To spend a time, a time for to win,
Ne parde lorne am I nat fro you yet,
Though that we ben a day or two atwin,
Driue out tho fantasies you within,
And trusteth me, and leaueth eke your sorow,
Or here my trouth, I wol nat liue til morow.

For if ye wist how sore it doeth me smart,
Ye would cesse of this, for God thou wost
The pure spirit weepeth in mine hart
To seen you weepen, which that I loue most,
And that I mote gone vnto the Grekes host,
Ye, nere it that I wist a remedie
To come ayen, right here I would die.

But certes I am not so nice a wight,
That I ne can imaginen a way
To come ayen that day that I haue hight,
For who may holden a thing that woll away,
My father naught, for all his queint play,
And by my thrift, my wending out of Troy
Another day shall tourne vs all to ioy.

For thy, with all mine heart I you beseke,
If that you list doen aught for my praiere,
And for the loue which that I loue you eke,
That ere that I depart fro you here,
That of so good a comfort and a chere
I may you seene, that ye may bring at rest
My hart, which is at point to brest.

And ouer all this I pray you (qd. she) tho,
Mine owne hearts soothfast suffisaunce,
Sith I am thine all hole withouten mo,
That while that I am absent, no pleasaunce
Of other, doe me fro your remembraunce:
For I am euer agast, for why men rede,
That loue is thing aye full of busie drede.

For in this world there liueth ladie none,
If that ye were vntrue, as God defend,
That so betraied were, or wo begon,
As I, that all trouth in you entend:
And doubtlesse, if that iche other wend,
I nere but dead, and ere ye cause find,
For Gods loue, so beth nat vnkind.

To this answered Troilus, and seide,
Now God, to whom there nis no cause iwrie,
Be glad, as wis I neuer vnto Creseide,
Sith thilke day I saw her first with eye,

Was

Was false, ne neuer shall till I die,
At short wordes, well ye may me leue,
I can no more, it shall be found at preue.

Graunt mercy good hert mine twis (qd. she)
And blissfull Venus let me neuer sterue,
Er I may stonde of pleasaunce in degre,
To quite him well, that so well can deserue:
And while that God my wit will me conserue,
I shall so doen, so true I haue you found,
That aie honour to meward shall rebound.

For trusteth well, that your estate roiall,
Ne vaine delite, nor onely worthinesse
Of you in werre or turnaie marciall,
Ne pompe, arraie, nobley, or eke richesse:
Ne made me to rue on your distresse,
But morall vertue, grounded vpon trouth,
That was the cause I first had on you routh.

Eke gentle hart, and manhood that ye had,
And that ye had (as me thought) in dispite
Euery thing that sowned in to bad,
As rudenesse, and peoplish appetite
And that your reason bridled your delite,
This made abouen euery creature,
That I was yours, & shall while I may dure.

And this may length of yeres nat fordoe,
Ne remuablest fortune deface,
But Jupiter, that of his might may doe
The sorowfull to be glad, so yeue vs grace
Er nights tenne, to meten in this place,
So that it may your harte and mine suffise,
And fareth now well, for time is that ye rise.

And after that they long iplained had,
And oft ikist, and straite in armes folde,
The day gan rise, and Troilus him clad,
And rufully his Lady gan behold:
As he that felt deaths cares cold,
And to her grace he gan him recommaund,
Where he was wo, this hold I no demaund.

For mans hedde imaginen ne can,
Ne entendement consider, ne tongue tell
The cruell paines of this sorowfull man,
That passen euery torment doune in hell:
For when he saw that she ne might dwell,
Which that his soule out of his hart rent,
Withouten more, out of the chāber he went.

Explicit liber quartus.

Incipit liber quintus.

Aprochen gan the fatall destine,
That Ioues hath in disposicion,
And to you angry Parcas sustren thre,
Committeth to doen execucion,
For which Creseide must out of the toun,
And Troilus shall dwell forth in pine,
Till Lachesis his thredrup lengere wine.

The golden tressed Phebus high on lofte,
Thrise had all with his beames clere,
The Snowes molte, and Zephirus as oft,
I brought ayen the tender leaues grene:
Sens that the sonne of Ecuba the Quene,
Began to loue her first, for whom his sorow
Was all, that she depart should a morow.

Full redy was at prime Diomede,
Creseide vnto the Grekes hoste to lede,
For sorow of which, she feft her hart vlede,
As she that nist what was best to rede:
And truely, as men in bokes rede,
Men wist neuer woman haue the care,
Ne was so lothe out of a toune to fare.

This Troilus withouten rede or lore,
As man that hath his ioies eke forlore,
Was waiting on his lady euermore,
As she that was sothfast croppe and more,
Of all his lust or ioyes here tofore:
But Troilus now farwell all thy ioie,
For shalt thou neuer seen her eft in Troie.

Soth is, that while he bode in this manere,
He gan his wofull manly for to hide,
That well vnneth it seen was in his chere,
But at the yate there she should out ride,
With certain folke he houed her to abide,
So wo bigon, all would he not him plain;
That on his hors vnneth he sate for pain.

For ire he quoke, so gan his hart gnaw,
When Diomede on hors gan him dight,
And saied vnto himselfe this ilke saw,
Alas (qd. he) thus foule a wretchednesse
Why suffre I it? Why nill I it redresse?
Were it nat bet at ones for to die,
Than euermore in langour thus to crie?

Why nill I make at ones rich and poore,
To haue inough to doen er that she go?
Why nill I bring all Troie vpon a roore?
Why nill I slaen this Diomede also?

Why

Why nill I rather with a man or two,
Steale her away? Why woll I this endure?
Why nill I helpen to mine owne cure?

But why he nolde doen so fell a deede,
That shall I sain, and why him list it spare,
He had in hart alway a maner drede,
Lest that Creseide, in rumour of this fare
Should haue ben slain, so this was al his care,
And els certain, as I saied yore,
He had it doen withouten wordes more.

Creseide when she redy was to ride,
Full sorowfully she sighed, and saied alas,
But forth she rode, for aught that may betide,
And forth she rideth full sorowfully apaas:
There is no other remedy in this caas,
What wonder is, though that her sore smart
When she forgoeth her owne swete hart?

This Troilus in gise of curtesie,
With hauke on hond, and with an huge rout
Of knights, rode and did her companie,
Passing all the valey, ferre without,
And ferther would haue ridden out of doubt,
Full faine, and wo was him to gone so sone,
But tourne he must, and it was eke to doen.

And right with that was Antenor icome,
Out of the Grekes hoste, and every wight
Was of him glad, and saied he was welcome,
And Troilus, al nere his harte light,
He pained him, with all his full might
Him to with hold of weping at least,
And Antenor he kist, and made feast.

And therewithal he must his leaue take,
And cast his eye vpon her pitously,
And nere he rode, his cause for to make,
To take her by the honde al soberly:
And Lorde so she gan wepen tenderly,
And he full soft and sighly gan her seie,
Now hold your day, and doe me not to deie.

With that his courser tourned he about,
With face pale, and vnto Diomede
No worde he spake, ne none of all his rout,
Of which the sonne of Tideus toke hede,
As he that kouthe more than the crede,
In soche a craft, and by the rain her hent,
And Troilus to Troie homewards went.

This Diomede, that lad her by the bridell,
Whan that he saw the folke of Troie away,
Thought, all my labor shall not been on idell,
If that I may, for somewhat shall I say:
For at the worst, it short may our way,
I haue heard say eke, times twise twelue,
He is a foole that woll forgete him selue.

But nathelesse, this thought he well inough
That certainly I am about naught,
If that I speake of loue, or make it to tought,
For doubtlesse, if she haue in her thought,
Him that I gesse, he may not been ibrought
So sone away, but I shall find a meane
That she nat yet wete shall what I meane.

This Diomede, as he that could his good,
When this was doen, gan fallen forth in speech
Of this and that, and aske why she stood
In soch disease, and gan her eke beseech
That if that he encreasen might or ech,
With any thing her ease, that she should
Commaunde it him, and saied he doen it would.

For truely he swore her as a knight, (plese
that ther nas thing, with which he might her
That he nolde doen his pain, and al his might
To doen it, for to doen her hart an ease:
And praied her she would her sorow apease,
And saied, iwis we Grekes can haue ioy
To honouren you, as well as folke of Troy.

He said eke thus, I wot you thinketh straunge,
No wonder is, for it is to you new,
Thacquaintaunce of these Troiãs to chaunge
For folke of Grece, that ye neuer knew:
But would neuer God, but if as true
A Grecke ye should emong vs all find,
As any Troian is, and eke as kind.

And bicause I swore you right now,
To been your freude, and helpy to my might,
And for that more acquaintaunce eke of you
Haue I had, than an other straunger wight:
So fro this forth, I pray you day and night,
Commaundeth me, how sore that me smart,
To doen all that may like vnto your hart.

And that ye me wold, as your brother treat,
And taketh not my frendship in dispite,
And thouz your sorowes been for things gret,
Not I nat why, but out of more respite,
Mine hart hath for to amend it great delite,
And if I may your harmes nat redresse,
I am right sorry for your heauinesse.

(wroth
For though ye Troians, with vs Grekes
Haue many a day been, alway yet parde,
O God of loue, in sothe we seruen bothe:
And for the loue of God my Lady free,
Whom so ye hate, as beth not wroth with me,
For truely there can no wight you serue,
That half so loth your wrath would deserue.

And nere it that we been so nere the tent
Of Calcas, which that seen vs both mate,
I would of this you tell all mine entent,
But this ensealed till an other date,
Yeue me your honde, I am and shall be aie,
God helpe me so, while that my life may dure,
Your owne, abouen euery creature.

Thus said I neuer er now to womã borne,
For God mine hart as wisely glad so,
I loued neuer woman here before,
As paramours, ne neuer shall no mo:
And for the loue of God be not my so,
All can I not to my Ladie dere
Complain a right, for I am yet to lere.

And wõdreth nought mine owne lady bright,
Though ỹ I speake of loue to you thus blue,
For I haue heard or this of many a wight,
Hath loued thing he neuer saw his liue:
Eke I am not of power for to striue
Ayenst the God of Loue, but him obay
I woll alway, and mercy I you pray.

There beeth so worthy knights in this place,
And ye so faire, that eueriche of hem all
Woll pain him to stonden in your grace,
But might me so faire a grace fall
That ye me for your seruant would call,
So lowly, ne so truely you serue,
Nill none of hem, as I shall till I sterue.

Creseide vnto that purpose lite answerde,
As she that was with sorow oppressed so,
That in effect she naught his tales herde,
But here and there, now here a word or two:
Her thought her sorowfull hart brest a two,
For when she gan her father fore espie,
Well nigh doune of her hors she gan to lie.

But natheless she thonketh Diomede,
Of all his trauaile and his good chere,
And that him list his frendship to her bede,
And she accepteth it in good manere,
And woll doe fain that is him lefe and dere,
And trusten him she would, & well she might,
As saied she, and from her hors she alight.

Her father hath her in his armes nome,
And twētie times he kist his doughter swete,
And saied: O dere doughter mine welcome,
She said eke, she was fain with him to mete:
And stode forth muet, milde, and mansuete,
But here I leaue her with her father dwell,
And forth I woll of Troilus you tell.

To Troie is come this wofull Troilus,
In sorow aboue all sorowes smert,
With felon loke, and face dispitous,
Tho sodainly doune from his hors he stert,
And through his paleis with swolne hert,
To chamber he went of nothing toke he hede
Ne none to him dare speke a worde for drede.

And there his sorowes that he spared had,
He yaue an issue large, and death he cride,
And in his throwes, frenetike and mad
He curseth Juno, Apollo, and eke Cupide,
He curseth Bachus, Ceres, and Cipride,
His birth, himselfe, his fate, and eke nature,
And saue his Ladie, euery creature.

To bed he goth, & weileth there & turneth,
In furie, as doeth he Ixion in hell,
And in this wise he nigh till day sojourneth,
But tho began his hart alite vnswell,
Through teares, which that gonnē vp to wel
And pitiously he cried vpon Creseide,
And to him selfe right thus he spake and seide.

Where is mine owne lady lefe and dere?
Where is her white brest, where is it where?
Where been her armes, and her eyen clere
That yesterday this time with me were?
Now may I wepe alone many a teare,
And graspe about I may, but in this place
Saue a pilow, I find naught to embrace.

How shal I doen, whē shal she come again?
I not alas, why let I her go?
As would God I had as tho be slain,
O hart mine Creseide, O swete so,
O Lady mine, that I loue and no mo,
To whom for euer more mine hart I bowe,
See how I die, ye nill me not rescowe.

Who seeth you now, my right lodesterre?
Who sitteth right now in your presence?
Who can comforten now your hartes werre?
Now I am gon, whom yeue ye audience?
Who speaketh for me right now in your absēce,
Alas no wight, and that is all my care,
For well wote I, as cuill as I ye fare.

How should I thus ten daies full endure,
Whan I the first night haue all this tene,
How shall she eke sorowfull creature,
For tenderneffe, how shall she this sustene:
Soche wo for me, o pitous pale, and grene,
Shall been your freshe womanly face,
For langour er ye tourne vnto this place.

And whan he fill in any slombrings,
Anon begin he should for to grone,
And dreamen of the dreadfullest things
That might been: as mete he were alone
In place horrible, making aie his mone,

Or meten that he was emonges all
His enemies, and in her hondes fall.

And therewithall his body should start,
And with the start all sodainly awake,
And soche a tremour fele about his hart,
That of the feare his body should quake:
And therwithall he should a noise make,
And seme as though he should fall depe,
From high alofe, and then he would wepe.

And rewen on himselfe so pitously,
That wonder was to here his fantasie,
An other time he should mightely
Comfort himselfe, and sain it was folie,
So causelesse, soche drede for to drie,
And eft begin his aspre sorowes new,
That euery man might on his paines rew.

Who could tell all, or fully discriue
His wo, his plaint, his langour, and his pine?
Nat all the men that han or been on liue,
Thou reader maiest thy selfe full well deuine,
That soche a wo my wit can not define,
Unidell for to write it should I swinke,
When that my wit is werie it to thinke.

On heauen yet the sterres weren seen
Although full pale iwoxen was the Mone,
And whiten gan the Orisont shene,
All Eastward, as it was wont to doen,
And Phebus with his rosie carte sone,
Gan after that to dresse him vp to fare,
When Troilus sent after Pandare.

This Pandare, that of all the day before
Ne might him comen this Troilus to se,
Although he on his hedde it had sworne,
For with the king Priam alday was he,
So that it lay nat in his liberte,
No where to gon, but on the morow he went
To Troilus when that he for him sent.

For in his hart he could well deuine,
That Troilus al night for sorow woke,
And that he would tell him of his pine,
This knew he well inough without boke:
For which to chāber streight the way he toke,
And Troilus tho soberly he grette,
And on the bedde full sone he gan him sette.

My Pandarus (qd. Troilus) the sorow
Which that I drie, I may not long endure,
I trowe I shall not liuen till to morow,
For which I would alwaies on auenture
To thee deuisen of my sepoulture
The forme, and of my mouable thou dispoen
Right as thee semeth best is for to doen.

But of the fire and flambe funerall,
In which my body brennen shall to glede,
And of the feast and plaies palestrall,
At my vigile, I pray thee take good hede
That that be well: and offer Mars my stede,
My sword, mine helme: & leue brother dere,
My shelde to Pallas yeue, that shineth clere.

The poudre in which min hart ibrēd shal turn
That pray I thee thou take, and it conserue
In a vessell that men clepeth an vrne
Of Gold, and to my lady that I serue,
For loue of whom thus pitously I sterue,
So yeue it her, and doe me this pleasaunce,
To praien her to kepe it for a remembraunce.

For well I fele by my maladie,
And by my dreames, now and yore ago,
All certainly, that I mote nedes die:
The oule eke, which that hight Ascaphilo,
Hath after me shright, all these nights two,
And God Mercurie, now of me wofull wretch
The soule guide, and when thee list it fetch.

Pandare answerde and saied, Troilus
My dere frende, as I haue told thee yore,
That it is folie for to sorowen thus,
And causelesse, for which I can no more:
But who so woll not trowen rede ne lore,
I can not seen in him no remedie,
But let him worchen with his fantasie.

But Troilus I pray thee tell me now,
If that thou trowe er this that any wight,
Hath loued paramours as well as thou,
Ye God wot, and fro many a worthy knight
Hath his Ladie gon a fourtenight,
And he nat yet made haluendele the fare,
What nede is thee to maken all this care?

Sens day by day thou maist thy seluen see
That from his loue or els from his wife
A man mote twinnen of necessitie,
Ye, though he loue her as his owe life:
Yet nill he with himself thus maken strife,
For well thou wost my lefe brother dere,
That alway frendes may not been ifere.

How doen this folke, ẏ seen her loues wedded
By frendes might? as it betideth full oft,
And seen hem in her spouses bedde ibedded,
God wote they take it wisely faire and soft:
For why, good hope halt vp her hart aloft,
And for they can a time of sorow endure,
As time hem hurteth, a time doeth hem cure.

So shouldest thou endure, and letten slide
The time, and fonde to been glad and light.

Tenne daies nis not so long to abide,
And sens she to comen ther hath behight,
She nill her hest breaken for no wight,
For dede thee nat, that she nill find way
To come ayen, my life that durst I lay.

Thy swevenes eke, and all soch fantasie
Drive out, and let hem faren to mischaunce,
For they procede of thy melancolie,
That doeth thee fele in slepe all this penaūce:
A straw for all swevenesse signifiaunce,
☞ God helpe me so, I coumpt hem not a Beane,
There wot no mā aright what dremes mean.

For priests of the temple tellen this,
That dreames been the revelacions
Of Goddes, and als well they tel iwis,
That they been infernalles illusions
And Leches saine, that of complections
Proceden they of fast, or glotonie,
Who woe in soothe thus what they signifie?

Eke other sain, that through impressions,
As if a wight hath fast a thing in mind,
That therof cometh soche avisions:
And other sain, as they in bokes find,
That after times of the yere by kind,
Men dreme, & that theffect goth by the mone,
But leve no dreme, for it is nat to doen.

Wel worth of dreams aie these old wives,
And truly eke, augurie of these foules,
For feare of which, men wenen lese her lives,
As ravens qualm, or schriching of these oules:
To trowen on it, both false and foule is,
☞ Alas alas, that so noble a creature
As is a man, should drede soch orrdure.

For which with al mine hart I thee beseech,
Unto thy self, that all this thou forgeve,
And rise now up, withouten more speech,
And let vs cast how forth may best be driven
The time, and eke how freshly we may liven,
When she cometh, ỹ which shall be right sone,
God helpe me so, the best is thus to doen.

Rise, let vs speake of lustie life in Troy
That we have lad, and forth the time drive,
And eke of time coming vs reioy,
That hingen shall our bliss now so blive,
And langour of these twise daies five.
We shall therwith so forget or oppresse,
That well vneth it doen shall vs duresse.

This toune is full of lordes al about,
And truce lasten all this meane while,
So we playen vs in some lustie rout,
To Sarpedon, not hens but a mile,
And thus thou shalt the time well beguile,
And drive it forth, vnto that blisfull morow,
That thou her see, that cause is of thy sorow.

Now rise my dere brother Troilus,
For certes it non honour is to thee
To wepe, and in thy bedde to rouken thus,
For truely of o thing trust to me,
If thou thus ligge, a day, two or three,
The folke wol wene, that thou for cowardise,
Thee fainest sick, and that thou darst not rise.

This Troilus answerde: O brother dere
This folke know that have isuffred pain,
That though he wepe, & make sorowful chere
That feeleth harme and smart in euery vain:
No wonder is, and though I euer plain
Or alway wepe, I am nothing to blame,
Sens that I have lost ỹ cause of all my game.

But sens of fine force I mote arise,
I shall arise, as sone as euer I may,
And God to whom mine hart I sacrifice,
So send vs hastely the tenth day:
For was there neuer foule so faine of May,
As I shal ben, when that she cometh in Troie,
That cause is of my tourment and my ioie.

But whider is thy rede (qd. Troilus)
That we may play vs best in all this toun?
By God my counsaile is (qd. Pandarus)
To ride and play vs with king Sarpedoun.
So long of this they speaken vp and doun,
Till Troilus gan at the last assent
To rise, and forth to Sarpedon they went.

This Sarpedon, as he that honourable
Was euer his live, and full of hie prowesse,
With all that might iserued been on table,
That deintie was, all coste it great richesse,
He fedde hem day by day, that soche noblesse
As saiden both the most and eke the least,
Was neuer er that day wiste at any feast.

Nor in this world there is none instrumēt,
Delicious, through winde or touche on corde,
As ferre as any wight hath euer iwent,
That tonge tell, or harte may recorde,
But at that feast, it was well heard recorde:
Ne of Ladies eke so faire a companie,
On daunce er tho, was neuer iseen with ye.

But what availeth this to Troilus,
That for his sorow, nothing of it rought,
But euer in one, as hart pitous,
Full busily Creseide his Lady sought:
On her was euer al that his hart thought,
Now this now that, so fast imagining,

That

That glad twis can him no feasting.

These Ladies eke, that at this feast been,
Sens that he saw his Ladie was awaie,
It was his sorow vpon hem for to seen,
Or for to heare on instruments plaie:
For she that of his hart hath the kaie,
Was absent, so this was his fantasie
That no wight should maken melodie.

Nor there nas houre in al the day or night,
When he was ther as no mã might him here,
That he ne saied, O louesome Lady bright,
How haue ye faren sins that ye were there:
Welcome twis mine owne ladie dere,
But welaway, all this nas but a mase,
Fortune his houe entended but to glase.

The letters eke, that she of old time
Had him sent, he would alone rede
An hundred sith, atwixt noone and prime,
Refiguring her shape, and her womanhede,
Within his hart, and euery worde and dede
That passed was, & thus he droue to an end,
The fourth day, and said he wol wend.

And said leue brother Pandarus,
Intendest thou that we shall here bleue,
Til Sarpedon wol forth conueyen vs,
Yet were it fairer that we toke our leue:
For goddes loue, let vs now sone at eue
Our leaue take, and homeward let vs turne,
For trewly I nill nat thus sojourne.

Pandare answerde, be we comen hither
To fetchen fire, and rennen home againe,
God helpe me so, I can nat tellen whither
We might gone, if I shal sothly saine:
Here any wight is of vs more faine
Than Sarpedon, and if we hence hie
Thus sodainly, I holde it vilanie.

When that we saiden we would bleue
With him a weke, and now thus sodainly
The fourth day to take of him our leue,
He would wondren on it trewly:
Let vs holden forth our purpose fermely,
And sens that ye behighten him to abide,
Hold forward now, and after let vs ride.

This Pandarus, with al pine and wo
Made him to dwel, and at the wekes end,
Of Sarpedon they toke her leaue tho,
And on her way they speden hem to wend:
(qd. Troilus) now Lord me grace send,
That I may find at mine home comming,
Creseide comen, and therwith gan he sing.

Ye haselwode thought this Pandare,
And to him selfe ful softly he seide,
God wotte refrained may this hotte fare,
Er Calcas send Troilus Creseide:
But natheless he paped thus and seide,
And sawe twis, his hart him wel behight,
She would come, as sone as euer she might.

When they vnto the paleis were icomen,
Of Troilus they doun of horse alight,
And to ỹ chambre her way haue they nõmen,
And vnto time that it gan to night,
They speken of Creseide the lady bright,
And after this, when hem both lest,
They spede hem fro the supper vnto rest.

On morow as sone as day began to clere,
This Troilus gan of his slepe to abreide,
And to Pandarus, his owne brother dere
For loue of God, full pitously he seide:
As go we seene the paleis of Creseide,
For sens we yet may haue no more feest,
So let vs seine her paleis at the leest.

And therwithall his meine for to blende,
A cause he fonde in toun for to go,
And to Creseides house they gan wende,
But lorde this sely Troilus was wo,
Him thought his sorowful hart brast atwo,
For when he saw her doores sparred all,
Wel nigh for sorow adoun he gan to fall.

Therwith when he was ware, & gan behold
How shet was euery windowe of the place,
As frost him thought his hart gan to cold,
For which with chaunged deedly pale face,
Withouten worde, he forth by gan to pace,
And as God would, he gan so fast ride,
That no wight of his countenaunce aspide.

Than saide he thus: O paleis desolate,
O house of houses, whilom best ibight,
O paleis empty and disconsolate,
O thou lanterne of which queint is the light,
O paleis whilom day, that now art night,
Wel oughtest thou to fall, and I to die,
Sens she is went, that wont was vs to gie.

O paleis whilom croune of houses all,
Enlumined with sunne of al blisse,
O ring, of which the rubie is out fall,
O cause of wo, that cause hast ben of blisse:
Yet sens I may no bet, faine would I kisse
Thy colde doores, durst I for this rout,
And farewel shrine, of which the saint is out.

Therwith he cast on Pandarus his eie,
With changed face, and pitous to behold,

And when he might his time aright aspie,
Ne as he rode, to Pandarus he told
His new sorow, and eke his ioyes old,
So petously, and with so deed an hew,
That euery wight, might on his sorow rew.

Fro thence forth he rideth vp and doune
And euery thing came him to remembraunce,
As he rode forth by the places of the toune,
In which he whilom had all his pleasaunce:
Lo, ponder saw I mine owne Lady daunce,
And in that temple with her eien clere,
We caught first my right Lady dere.

And ponder haue I herde full lustely
My dere hart laugh, and ponder play
Saw I her ones eke ful blisfully,
And ponder ones to me gan she say
Now good sweete, loue me well I pray,
And ponde so goodly gan she me behold,
That to the death mine hart is to her hold.

And at the corner in the ponder house,
Herde I mine alderleuest lady dere,
So womanly, with voice melodiouse,
Singen so wel, so goodly and so clere,
That in my soule yet me thinketh I here
The blisfull sowne, and in that ponder place
My lady first me toke vnto her grace.

Then thouzt he thus, O blisful lord Cupide
When I the processe haue in memory,
How thou me hast wered on euery side,
Yen might a booke make of it like a story:
What nede is thee to seeke on me victory,
Sens I am thine, and holy at thy will,
What ioy hast thou thine owne folke to spill?

Wel hast thou Lord ywroke on me thine ire,
Thou mighty God, and dredful for to greue,
Now mercy Lord, thou wost wel I desire
Thy grace most, of all lustes leue,
And liue and die I wol in thy beleue,
For which I ne aske in guerdon but a bone,
That thou Creseide ayen me send sone.

Distraine her hart as fast to returne,
As thou doest mine to longen her to see,
Then wote I wel that she nil nat sojourne,
Now blisful Lord, so cruel thou ne be
Unto the blood of Troy, I pray thee,
As Juno was vnto the blode Thebane,
For which ye folke of Thebes cauzt her bane.

And after this he to the yates went,
There as Creseide out rode, a full good paas,
And vp and doun there made he many a went,
And to him selfe ful oft he said alas:
Fro hence rode my blisse and my solas,
As would blisful God now for his ioie,
I might her sene ayen come to Troie.

And to the ponder hil I gan her guide,
Alas, and there I toke of her my leue,
And ponde I saw her to her father ride,
For sorow of which mine hart shal to cleue:
And hither home I come when it was eue,
And here I dwell, out cast from all ioie,
And shal, til I may sene her eft in Troie.

And of him selfe imagined he oft,
To ben defaited, pale, and woxen lesse
Than he was wont, & that men saiden soft,
What may it be? who can the sothe gesse,
Why Troilus hath al this heuinesse?
And al this nas but his melancolie,
That he had of him selfe such fantasie.

Another time imaginen he would,
That euery wight that went by the wey,
Had of him routh, & that they saine should,
I am right sory, Troilus wol dey:
And thus he droue a day yet forth or twey,
As ye haue herde, such life gan he lede,
As he that stode betwixen hope and drede.

For which him liked in his songes shewe
Thenchelon of his wo, as he best might,
And made a songe, of wordes but a fewe,
Somwhat his wofull hart for to light:
And when he was from euery mans sight,
With softe voice, he of his Lady dere,
That absent was, gan sing as ye may here.

O sterre, of which I lost haue all the light,
With hart sore, wel ought I to bewaile,
That euer derke in turment, night by night
Toward my deth, with winde I stere & saile:
For which the tenth night, if that I faile,
The guiding of thy bemes bright an houre,
My ship and me Caribdes wol deuoure.

This song when he thus songen had lone,
He fel ayen into his sighes old,
And euery night, as was he wont to done,
He stode the bright moone to behold:
And al his sorow he to the moone told,
And said, iwis whan thou art horned new,
I shal be glad, if al the world be trew.

I saw thine hornes old eke by that morow,
Whan hence rode my right lady dere,
That cause is of my turment and my sorow,
For which, O bright Lucina the clere,
For loue of God ren fast about thy sphere,
For whan thine hornes new ginnen spring,

Then

Then shall she come that may my blisse bring.

The day is more, and lenger euery night
Than they ben wont to be, him thought tho,
And that the sunne went his course vnright,
By lenger way than it was wont to go,
And said, twis, I drede me euermo
The sunnes sonne Pheton be on liue,
And that his fathers cart amisse he driue.

Upon the wals fast eke would he walke,
And on the Greekes host he would see,
And to himselfe right thus he would talke:
Lo, yonder is mine owne lady free,
Or els yonder, there the tents bee,
And thence commeth this aire that is so soote,
That in my soule I fele it doth me boote.

And hardly, this wind that more and more
Thus stoundmeale encreaseth in my face,
Is of my ladies deepe sighes sore,
I preue it thus, for in none other space
Of all this toune, saue only in this place,
Feele I no wind, that soumeth so like paine,
It saith alas, why twined be we twaine.

This long time he driueth forth right thus,
Till fully passed was the ninth night,
And aye beside him was this Pandarus,
That busily did all his full might
Him to comfort, and make his hart light,
Yeuing him hope alway the tenth morow,
That she shal comen, and stinten all his sorow.

Upon that other side eke was Creseide
With women few among the Grekes strong,
For which full oft a day, alas she seide
That I was borne well may mine hart long
After my death, for now liue I too long
Alas, and I ne may it not amend,
For now is worse than euer yet I wend.

My father nill for nothing doe me grace
To gone ayen, for aught I can him queme,
And if so be that I my terme pace,
My Troylus shall in his heart deme
That I am false, and so it may well seme,
Thus shall I haue vnthonke on euery side,
That I was borne so welaway the tide.

And if that I me put in ieopardie,
To steale away by night, and it befall
That I be caught, I shal be hold a spie,
Or elslo, this drede I most of all,
If in the honds of some wretch I fall,
I nam but lost, all be mine heart trew,
Now mightie God, thou on my sorow rew.

Full pale iwoxen was her bright face,
Her limmes leane, as she that all the day,
Stode when she durst, and loked on the place
There she was borne, and dwelt had aye,
And all the night weeping alas she lay,
And thus dispeired out of all cure
She lad her life, this wofull creature.

Full oft a day she sighed eke for distresse,
And in her selfe she went aye purtraying
Of Troilus the great worthinesse,
And all his goodly words recording,
Sens first that day her loue began to spring,
And thus she set her wofull hart afire,
Through remembrance of that she gan desire.

In all this world there nis so cruel hart,
That her had heard complainen in her sorow,
That nold haue wepten for her paines smart,
So tenderly she wept, both eue and morow,
Her needed no teares for to borow,
And this was yet the worst of all her paine,
Ther was no wight, to whom she durst plain.

Full rewfully she looked vpon Troy,
Beheld the Toures high, and eke the Hallis,
Alas (qd. she) the pleasaunce and the ioy,
The which that now all turned into gall is,
Haue I had oft within yonder wallis,
O Troilus, what dost thou now she seide,
Lord, whether thou yet thinke vpon Creseide.

Alas, that I ne had trowed on your lore,
And went with you, as ye me redde ere this,
Then had I now not sighed halfe so sore,
Who might haue said, that I had done amis
To steale away with such one as he is,
But all too late commeth the lectuarie,
When men the corse vnto the graue carie.

Too late is now to speke of that matere,
Prudence, alas one of thine eyen three
Ne lacked alway ere that I came here:
For on time passed well remembred mee,
And present time eke could I well see,
But future time, ere I was in the snare,
Could I not seene, that causeth now my care.

But natheless, betide what betide,
I shal to morow at night, by east or west,
Out of this hoast steale, on some side,
And gone with Troilus, where as him lest,
This purpose woll I hold, and this is the best,
No force of wicked tongues iangleric,
For euer on loue haue wretches had enuie.

For who so woll of euery word take hede,
Or rule hem by euery wights wit,

Ne shall he neuer thriuen out of drede,
For that that some men blamen euer yet,
Lo other manner folke commenden it,
And as for me, for all such variaunce,
Felicitie clepe I my suffisaunce.

For which, withouten any words mo,
To Troy I woll, as for conclusioun,
But God it wote, ere fully moneths two,
She was full ferre fro that ententioun,
For both Troilus and Troy toun
Shall knotlesse throughout her hart slide,
For she woll take a purpose for to abide.

This Diomede, of whom I you tell gan,
Goth now within himselfe aye arguing,
With all the sleight and all that euer he can,
How he may best with shortest tarying,
Into his nette Creseides heart bring,
To this entent he couth neuer fine,
To fishen her, he laid out hooke and line.

But nathelesse, well in his hart he thought,
That she nas nat without a loue in Troy,
For neuer sithen he her theuce brought,
Ne couth he seene her laugh, or maken ioy,
He nist how best her hart for tacoie,
But for tassey, he said nought it ne greueth,
For he that naught assaieth, naught atcheueth.

Yet said he to himselfe vpon a night,
Now am I nat a foole, that wote well how
Her wo is, for loue of another wight,
And here vpon to gone assay her now,
I may well wete, it nill nat ben my prow,
For wise folke in bookes it expresse,
Men shall nat woe a wight in heuinesse.

But who so might winnen such a floure
Fro him, for whom she mourneth night & day,
He might saine he were a conquerour:
And right anone, as he that bold was aye,
Thought in his hart, hap how hap may,
All should I die, I woll her heart seech,
I shall no more lesen but my speech.

This Diomede, as bookes vs declare,
Was in his nedes prest and courageous,
With stern voice, and mighty limmes square,
Hardy, testife, strong, and cheualrous
Of deeds like his father Tideus,
And some men saine he was of tonge large,
And heire he was of Calcidony and Arge.

Creseide meane was of her stature,
Thereto of shape, of face, and eke of chere,
There might ben no fairer creature,
And oft time this was her manere,
To gone itressed with her haires clere
Downe by her colere, at her backe behind,
Which with a thred of gold she would bind.

And saue her browes ioyneden ifere,
There nas no lacke, in aught I can espien,
But for to speaken of her eyen clere,
Lo, truly they written that her seien,
That Paradis stood formed in her eien,
And with her rich beautie euermore
Stroue loue in her, aie which of hē was more.

She sobre was eke, simple, and wise withall,
The best inorished eke that might bee,
And goodly of her speech in generall,
Charitable, estately, lusty, and free.
Ne neuermore ne lacked her pitee,
Tender hearted, sliding of corage,
But truly I cannat tell her age.

And Troilus well woxen was in hight,
And complete formed by proportioun,
So wel, that kind it naught amenden might,
Young, fresh, strong, and hardie as Lioun,
Trew as steele, in ech conditioun,
One of the best entetched creature,
That is or shall, while that ẏ world may dure.

And certainely, in story as it is fond,
That Troilus was neuer vnto no wight
As in his time, in no degree second,
In daring do that longeth to a knight,
All might a Giaunt passen him of might,
His hart aye with the first and with the best,
Stood peregall to dare done what him lest.

But for to tellen forth of Diomede,
It fill, that after on the tenth day,
Sens that Creseide out of the citie yede,
This Diomede, as fresh as braunch in May,
Came to the tent there as Calcas lay,
And fained him with Calcas haue to done,
But what he ment, I shall you tellen sone.

Creseide at short words for to tell,
Welcommed him, and downe him by her sette,
And he was ethe ynough to maken dwell,
And after this, withouten long lette,
The spices and the wine men forth hem fette,
And forth they speke of this and that ifere,
As friends done, of which some shall ye here.

He gan first fallen of the warre in speech
Betwixen hem and the folke of Troy toun,
And of thassiege he gan eke her beseech,
To tellen him what was her opinioun:
Fro that demaund he so discendeth doun,
To asken her, if that her straunge thought

The

The Greeks gise, & werks that they wrought

And why her father tarieth so long
To wedden her vnto some worthy wight,
Creseide that was in her paines strong,
For loue of Troilus her owne knight,
So ferforth as she cunning had or might,
Answerde him tho, but as of his entent,
It seemed nat she wist what he ment.

But natheless, this ilke Diomede
Gan on himselfe assure, and thus he seide:
If I aright haue taken on you hede,
Me thinketh thus, O lady mine Creseide,
That sens I first hond on your bridle leide,
When I out came of Troy by the morrow,
Ne might I neuer seene you but in sorrow.

I can nat saine what may the cause be,
But if for loue of some Troian it were,
The which right sore would athinken me,
That ye for any wight that dwelleth there,
Shoulden spill a quarter of a tere,
Or pitously your seluen so begile,
For dredelesse it is nat worth the while.

The folke of Troy, as who saith all and some,
In prison ben, as ye your seluen see,
Fro thence shall nat one on liue come,
For all the gold atwixen sunne and see,
Trusteth well, and vnderstondeth mee,
There shall nat one to mercy gone on liue,
All were he lord of worlds twise fiue.

Such wreech on hem for fetching of Heleine
There shall be take, ere that we hence wend,
That Maumes, which ỹ gods ben of peine,
Shall ben agast that Grekes wol hem shend,
And men shall drede vnto the worlds end
From henceforth, to rauisben any Queene,
So cruell shall our wreche on hem be seene.

And but if Calcas lede vs with ambages,
That is to saine, with double words slie,
Such as mẽ clepen a word with two visages,
Ye shall well knowen that I nat ne lie,
And all this thing right sene it with your eie,
And that anon, ye nill nat trow how soone,
Now taketh hede, for it is for to doone.

What wene ye your wise father would
Haue peuen Antenor for you anone,
If he ne wist that the citie should
Destroied ben? why nay so mote I gone,
He knew full well there shall nat scapen one
That Troian is, and for the great fere
He durst nat that ye dwelt lenger there.

What woll ye more, O louesome lady dere,
Let Troy and Troians fro your heart passe,
Driue out ỹ bitter hope, and make good chere,
And clepe ayen the beautie of your face,
That ye with salt teares so deface,
For Troy is brought in such a leopardie,
That it to saue is now no remedie.

And thinketh well, ye shall in Grekes find
A more perfite loue, ere it be night,
Than any Troian is, and more kind,
And bet to seruen you woll done his might,
And if ye vouchsafe my lady bright,
I woll ben he, to seruen you my selue,
Ye leuer than be lord of Greces twelue.

And with that word he gan to waxen reed,
And in his speech a little while he quoke,
And cast aside a little with his heed,
And stint a while, and afterward he woke,
And soberly on her he threw his loke,
And said I am, albeit to you no ioy,
As gentill a man as any wight in Troy.

For if my father Tideus (he seide)
Liued had, I had been ere this,
Of Calcidonie and Arge a king, Creseide,
And so hope I that I shall be iwis:
But he was slaine alas, the more harme is,
Unhappely at Thebes all to rathe,
Polimite, and many a man to scathe.

But hart mine, sith that I am your man,
And ben the first, of whom I seche grace,
To serue you as heartely as I can,
And euer shall, while I to liue haue space,
So that, ere I depart out of this place,
Ye woll me graunt, that I may to morrow
At better laiser tell you of my sorrow.

What should I tel his words that he seide?
He spake ynough for o day at the meste,
It preueth well he spake so, that Creseide
Graunted on the morrow at his requeste
For to speake with him at the leaste,
So that he nolde speake of such matere,
And thus she to him said, as ye mowe here.

As she that had her hart on Troilus
So fast, that there may it none arace,
And straungely she spake, and said thus:
O Diomede, I loue that ilke place
There I was borne, and Ioues of thy grace
Deliuer it soone of all that doth it care,
God for thy might so leue it well to fare.

That Grekes wold her wrath on Troy wreke
If that they might, I know it well iwis,

But

But it shall naught befallen as ye speke,
And God toforne, and farther ouer this,
I wote my father wise and ready is,
And that he me hath bought, as ye me told,
So dere am I to more vnto him hold.

That Grekes ben of high conditioun,
I wote eke well, but certaine men shall find
As worthie folke within Troy toun,
As conning, as persite, and as kinde,
As ben betwixt Orcades and Inde,
And that ye could well your lady serue
I trow eke well, her thonke for to deserue.

But as to speake of loue, iwis (she seide)
I had a lord, to whom I wedded was,
His whole mine hart was all till he deide,
And other loue, as helpe me now Pallas,
There in mine hart nis, ne neuer was,
And that ye ben of noble and high kinrede,
I haue well herde it tellen out of drede.

And that doth me to haue so great a wonder,
That ye woll scornen any woman so,
Eke God wote, loue and I ben fer asonder,
I am disposed bet, so mote I go,
Vnto my death plaine and make wo,
What I shall after done, I can nat say,
But truely as yet me list nat play.

Mine hart is now in tribulatioun,
And ye in armes busie day by day,
Hereafter when ye wonnen haue the toun,
Parauenture then, so it happen may,
That when I see that I neuer ere sey,
Thē woll I werke that I neuer ere wrought,
This word to you ynough suffisen ought.

To morow eke wol I speken with you faine,
So that ye touchen naught of this matere,
And when you list, ye may come here againe,
And ere ye gone, thus much I say you here,
As helpe me Pallas, with her haires clere,
If that I should of any Greeke haue routh,
It should be your seluen by my trouth.

I say nat therefore that I woll you loue,
Ne say nat nay, but in conclusioun,
I meane well by God that sit aboue:
And therewithall she cast her eien doun,
And gan to sigh, & said, Troilus & Troy toun
Yet bidde I God, in quiet and in rest
I may you seene, or do mine hart brest.

But in effect, and shortly for to say,
This Diomede all freshly new againe,
Gan preasen on, and fast her mercy pray,
And after this, the sooth for to saine,
Her gloue he toke, of which he was full faine,
And finally, when it was woxen eue,
And all was well, he rose and tooke his leue.

The bright Venus folowed and aie taught
The way there brode Phebus doune alight,
And Cithera her chare horse ouertaught,
To whirle out of the Lion, if she might,
And Signifer his candles sheweth bright,
When that Creseide vnto her bed went,
Within her fathers faire bright tent.

Retourning in her soule aye vp and doun
The words of this suddaine Diomede,
His great estate, and perill of the toun,
And that she was alone, and had nede
Of friends helpe, and thus began to brede
The cause why, the sooth for to tell,
She tooke fully purpose for to dwell.

The morow came, and ghostly for to speke,
This Diomede is come vnto Creseide,
And shortly, least that ye my tale breke,
So well he for himselfe spake and seide,
That all her sighes sore, doune he leide,
And finally, the sooth for to saine,
He reft her the great of all her paine.

And after this, the story telleth vs,
That she him yaue the faire bay stede,
The which she ones wan of Troilus,
And eke a brooch (and that was little nede)
That Troilus was, she yaue this Diomede,
And eke the bet from sorow him to relene,
She made him weare a pencell of her sleue.

I find eke in stories elswhere,
When through the body hurt was Diomede
Of Troilus, tho wept she many a tere,
When that she saw his wide wounds blede,
And that she tooke to kepen him good hede,
And for to healen him of his smart,
Men saine, I not, that she yaue him her hart.

But truely the storie telleth vs,
There made neuer woman more wo
Than she, when that she falsed Troilus,
She said alas, for now is elene ago
My name in trouth of loue for euermo,
For I haue falsed one the gentillest
That euer was, and one the worthiest.

Alas, of me vnto the worlds end
Shall neither ben iwritten or isong
No good word, for these bokes woll me shend:
I rolled shall I been on many a tong,
Throughout the world my bell shall be rong,
And women most woll hate me of all,

Alas,

Alas, that such a caas me should fall.

They woll saine, in as much as in me is,
I haue hem doen dishouour welaway,
All be I not the first that did amis,
What helpeth that, to doen my blame away,
But sens I see there is no better way,
And that too late is now for me to rue,
To Diomede I woll algate be true.

But Troilus, sens I no better may,
And sens that thus departen ye and I,
Yet pray I God so yeue you right good day,
As for the gentillest knight truely
That euer I saw, to seruen faithfully,
And best can aye his ladies honour kepe,
And with that word she brast anon to wepe.

And certes, you ne haten shall I neuer,
And friends loue, that shall ye haue of me,
And my good word, all should I liuen euer,
And truly I would right sorrie be,
For to seene you in aduersite,
And guiltelesse I wot well I you leaue,
And all shall passe, and thus take I my leaue.

But truly how long it was bitwene,
That she forsoke him for this Diomede,
There is none authour telleth it I wene,
Take euery man now to his bookes hede,
He shall no terme finden, out of drede,
For though that he began to woe her sone,
Ere he her wan, yet was there more to done.

Ne me ne list this fickle woman chide,
Farther than the storie woll deuise,
Her name alas is published so wide,
That for her gilt it ought ynough suffise,
And if I might excuse her in any wise,
For she so sorrie was for her vntrouth,
Iwis I would excuse her yet for routh.

This Troilus, as I before haue told,
Thus driueth forth, as wel as he hath might,
But oft was his heart hote and cold,
And namely that ilke ninth night,
Which on the morrow she had him behight
To come ayen, God wote full little rest
Had he that night, nothing to slepe him lest.

The laurer crowned Phebus, with his heat
Gan in his course aie vpward as he went,
To warmen of the East sea the waues wete,
And Circes doughter song, with fresh entent,
When Troilus his Pandare after sent,
And on the wals of the towne they pleide,
To looke, if they can seene aught of Creseide,

Till it was noone, they stooden for to see
Who that there came, for euery maner wight
That came fro ferre, they saiden it was shee,
Till that they coulden knowen him aright,
Now was his heart dull, now was it light,
And thus bepaped stooden for to stare
About naught, this Troilus and Pandare.

To Pandarus this Troilus tho seide
For aught I wot, before noone likely,
Into this toune ne cometh not here Creseide,
She hath ynough to doen hardely
To winnen from her father, so trow I,
Her old father woll yet make her dine
Ere that she go, God yeue his hart pine.

Pandarus answerd, it may well been certain,
And for thy let vs dine, I thee beseech,
And after noone then maist thou come again,
And home they go, without more speech,
And comen ayen, but long may they seech,
Ere that they find that they after gape,
For tune hem both thinketh for to gape.

(Qd. Troilus) I see well now that she
Is taried with her old father so,
That ere she come, it woll nigh euen be,
Come forth, I woll vnto the yate go,
These porters ben vnkonning euermo,
And I woll doen hem holden vp the yate,
As naught ne were, although she come late.

The day goth fast, and after that came eue,
And yet came nat to Troilus Creseide,
He looketh forth by hedge, by tree, by greue,
And ferre his head ouer the wall he leide,
And at the last he tourned him, and seide,
By God I wote her meaning now Pandare,
Almost twis all new was my care.

Now doubtlesse this Ladie can her good,
I wote she commeth riding priuely,
I commend her wisedome by mine hood,
She woll nat maken people nicely
Gaure on her when ỹ she commeth, but softely
By night into the toune she thinketh ride,
And dere brother, thinke nat long to abide.

We haue naught els for to doen twis,
And Pandarus, now wilt thou trowen me,
Haue here my trouth, I see her, yond she is,
Heaue vp thine eyen man, maiest thou nat see:
Pandare answerde, nay, so mote I thee,
Al wrõg by God, what saist thou mã wher art,
That I see yonde a farre, nis but a cart.

Alas thou saiest right sooth (qd, Troilus)
But hardely it is not all for nought,

That

That in mine hart I now reioice thus,
It is ayenst some good, I haue a thought,
Not I nat how, but sens ꝑ I was wrought,
Ne felt I such a comfort dare I say,
She cometh to night, my life that durst I lay.

Pandarus answerde, it may be well inough,
And held with him of all that euer he saied,
But in his hart he thought, and soft lough,
And to himselfe full soberly he saied,
From hasell wood, there iolly Robin plaied,
Shall come all that thou abidest here,
Ye, farwell all the snow of ferne yere.

The wardein of the yates gan to call
The folk, which that without the yates were,
And bad hem driuen in her beasts all,
Or all the night they must bleuen there,
And ferre within the night, with many a tere,
This Troilus gan homeward for to ride,
For well he seeth it helpeth nat to abide.

But natheless, he gladded him in this,
He thought he misacompted had his day,
And saied, I vnderstand haue all amis,
For thilke night I last Creseide sey,
She saied I shall ben here, if that I may,
Ere that the Moone, O dere hart swete,
The Lion passe out of this Ariete.

For which she may yet hold all her behest,
And on the morrow vnto the yate he went,
And vp and doune, by West and eke by East
Upon the walls made he many a went,
But al for naught, his hope alway him blent,
For which at night, in sorow and sighes sore,
He went him home, without en any more.

This hope all cleane out of his hart fled,
He ne hath whereon now longer for to hong,
But for the paine him thought his hart bled,
So were his throws sharp, & wonder strong,
For when he saw that she abode so long,
He nist what he iudgen of it might,
Sens she hath broken that she him behight.

The third, fourth, fift, and sixt day
After the daies tenne, of which I told,
Betwixen hope and drede his hart lay,
Yet somewhat trusting on her hestes old,
But when he saw she nolde her terme hold,
He can now seene none other remedie,
But for to shape him soone for to die.

Therwith the wicked spirit, God vs blesse,
Which that men clepen wood ialousie,
Gan in him crepe, in all this heuinesse,
For which because he would soone die,
He ne eat ne dronke for his melancolie,
And eke from euery companie he fled,
This was the life that all this time he led.

He so defaite was, that no manner man,
Unneth he might knowen there he went,
So was he leane, and thereto pale and wan,
And feeble, that he walketh by potent,
And with his ire he thus himselfe shent:
But who so asked him whereof him smart,
He saied, his harme was all about his hart.

Priam full oft, and eke his mother dere,
His bretherne and his sustren gan him frain
Why he so sorrowfull was in all his chere,
And what thing was the cause of all his pain:
But all for naught, he nolde his cause plain,
But saied, he felt a greuous maladie
About his hart, and faine he would die.

So on a day he laid him downe to slepe,
And so befell, that in slepe him thought,
That in a forrest fast he walked to wepe
For loue of her ꝑ him these paines wrought,
And vp and doune as he that forrest sought,
He met he saw a Boze, with tuskes great,
That slept ayenst the bright Sunnes heat.

And by this Boze, fast in her armes fold
Lay kissing aye his lady bright Creseide,
For sorrow of which, when he it gan behold,
And for dispite, out of his slepe he breide,
And loud he cried on Pandarus, and seide,
O Pandarus, now know I crop and root,
I nam but dead, there nis none other boot.

My lady bright Creseide hath me betraied,
In whom I trusted most of any wight,
She elswhere hath now her hart apaied,
The blisfull gods, through her great might,
Haue in my dreame ishewed it full right,
Thus in my dreame Creseide haue I behold,
And all this thing to Pandarus he told.

O my Creseide, alas, what subtelte:
What newfast: what beauty: what science:
What wrath of iust cause haue ye to me:
What guilt of me: what fell experience
Hath me rafte alas thine aduertence:
O trust, O faith, O depe assurance,
Who hath me raft Creseide all my plesaunce:

Alas, why let I you from hence go:
For which well nigh out of my wit I breide,
Who shall now trow on any othes mo:
God wote I wend, O lady bright Creseide,
That euery word was Gospell that ye seide,
But who may bet beguile, if him list,

Than he on whom men wenen best to trist.

What shall I doen, my Pandarus, alas?
I fele now so sharpe a new paine,
Sens that there is no remedy in this caas,
That bet were it I with mine honds twaine
My seluen slow, than alway thus to plaine,
For throgh ẏ death my wo shuld haue an end,
There euery day with life my selfe I shend.

Pandare answerd and said, alas the while
That I was borne, haue I nat saied er this,
That dreames many a manner man beguile:
And why? For folke expounden hem amis,
How darst thou saine that false thy lady is,
For any dreame, right for thine own drede,
Let be this thoght, thou canst no dreams rede.

Perauenture there thou dremest of this bore,
It may so be that it may signifie
Her father, which that old is and eke hore,
Ayen the sunne lieth on point to die,
And she for sorow ginneth wepe and crie,
And kisseth him, there he lieth on the ground,
Thus shuldest thou thy dreme aright expound

How might I then doen (qd. Troilus)
To know of this, yea were neuer so lite:
Now saiest thou wisely (qd. this Pandarus)
My rede is this, sens thou canst well endite,
That hastily a letter thou her write,
Through which thou shalt well bringē about
To know a sooth of that thou art in dout,

And see now why? for this dare I well sain,
That if so is, that she vntrue be,
I cannot trowen that she woll write again,
And if she write, thou shalt full sone isee,
As whether she hath any liberte
To come ayen, or els in some clause
If she be let, she woll assigne a cause.

Thou hast not written to her sens ẏ she went,
Nor she to thee, and this I durst lay,
There may such cause ben in her entent,
That hardely thou wolt thy seluen say,
That her abode the best is for you tway,
Now write her then, and thou shalt fele sone
A sooth of all, there is no more to done.

Accorded ben to this conclusioun,
And that anon, these ilke lords two,
And hastely sate Troilus adoun,
And rolleth in his hart too and fro,
How he may best discriuen her his wo,
And to Creseide his owne lady dere,
And wrote right thus, and said as ye may here

¶ The copie of the letter.

Right fresh flour, whose I haue ben & shall,
Withouten part of elswhere seruise,
With hart, body, life, lust, thought, and all,
I wofull wight in euery humble wise
That tong can tell, or hart may deuise,
As oft as matter occupieth place,
Me recommaund vnto your noble grace.

Liketh it you to weten sweet hart,
As ye well know, how long time agon
That ye me left in aspre paines smart,
When that ye went, of which yet bote non
Haue I non had, but euer worse bigon,
Fro day to day am I, and so mote dwell,
While it you list, of wele and wo my well.

For which to you, with dredeful hart trew,
I write (as he that sorow driueth to write)
My wo, that euery houre encreaseth new,
Complaining as I dare, or can endite,
And that defaced is, that may ye wite,
The teares, which that from mine eyen raine,
That wulden speke, if that they durst, & plain.

You first beseech I, that your eyen clere
To looke on this defouled ye nat hold:
And ouer all this, that ye my lady dere
Woll vouchsafe this letter to behold,
And by the cause eke of my cares cold,
That slaeth my wit, if aught amis me start,
For yeue it me mine owne sweet hart.

If any seruaunt durst or ought of right
Vpon his lady pitously complaine,
Then wene I that I ought be that wight,
Considred this, that ye these moneths twaine
Haue taried, there ye saiden sooth to saine,
But tenne daies ye nolde in hoste soiourne,
But in two moneths yet ye not retourne.

But for as much as me mote nedes like
All that you list, I dare nat plaine more,
But humbly, with sorowfull sighes sike,
You write I mine vnrestie sorowes sore,
Fro day to day, desiring euermore
To knowen fully, if your will it were,
How ye haue fared and don while ye be there.

Whose welfare and heale eke God encrease
In honour such, that vpward in degree
It grow alway, so that it neuer cease,
Right as your hart aye can my lady free
Deuise, I pray to God so mote it be,
And graunt it, that you soone vpon me rew,
As wisely as in all I am to you trew.

And if you liketh knowen of the fare

Of me, whose wo ther may no wight discriue,
I can no moze, but chest of euery care,
At writing of this letter I was on liue,
All redy out my wofull ghost to dziue,
Which I delay, and hold him yet in hond,
Upon the sight of matter of your lond.

Mine eyen two, in vaine with which I see,
Of sozowfull teares salt arne wozen wells,
My song in plaint of mine aduerlite,
My good in harm, mine ease eke wozē hell is,
My ioy in wo, I can sey now nought ellis,
But tourned is, foz which my life I warie
Euery ioy oz ease in his contrarie.

Which with your coming home ayen to Troy
Ye may redzesse, and moze a thousand sithe,
Than euer I had encreasen in me ioy,
Foz was there neuer hart yet so blithe
To saue his life, as I shall ben as swithe
As I you see, and though no manner routh
Can meuen you, yet thinketh on your trouth.

And if so be my gilt hath death deserued,
Oz if you list no moze vpon me see,
In guerdon yet of that I haue you serued,
Beseech I you, mine owne lady free,
That hereupon ye woulden wzite me
Foz loue of God, my right lodesterre,
That death may make an end of al my werre.

If other cause aught doeth you foz to dwell,
That with your letter ye may me recomfozt,
Foz though to me your absence is an hell,
With patience I woll my wo comfozt,
And with your letter of hope I woll dispozt,
Now wziteth swete, & let me thus nat plaine
With hope oz death, deliuereth me fro paine.

I wis mine owne dere hart trew,
I wote that when ye next vpon me see,
So lost haue I mine heale and eke mine hew,
Creseide shall not conne knowen me,
I wis mine harts day my lady free,
So thursteth aye mine hart to behold
Your beautie, that vnneth my life I hold.

I say no moze, all haue I foz to sey
To you well moze than I tell may,
But whether that ye do me liue oz dey,
Yet pzay I God, so yeue you right good day,
And fareth well goodly faire fresh May,
As ye that life oz death me may commaund,
And to your trouth aye I me recommaund.

With heale such, that but ye yeuen me
The same heale, I shall none heale haue,
In you lieth, when you list that it so be,
The day in which me clothen shall my graue,
And in you my life, in you might foz to saue
Me fro disease of all paines smart,
And fare now well mine owne sweet hart.

La vostre T.

This letter forth was sent vnto Creseide,
Of which her answere in effect was this,
Full pitously she wzote ayen, and seide,
That all so soone as she might wis,
She would come, & amend all that was amis
And finally, she wzote and saied then,
She would come, ye, but she nist when.

But in her letter made she such feasts,
That wōder was, & swoze she loued him best,
Of which he found but bottomlesse bihests,
But Troilus thou maiest now East and West
Pipe in an Jute leafe, if that thee lest,
thus goth ỹ wozld, god shild vs fro mischaūce,
And euery wight ỹ meaneth trouth auaunce.

Encreasen gan the wo fro day to night
Of Troilus, foz tarying of Creseide,
And lessen gan his hope and eke his might,
Foz which all doun he in his bedde him leide,
He ne eat, dzonke, ne slept, ne wozd seide,
Imagining aye that she was vnkind,
Foz which wel nigh he wext out of his mind.

This dzeme, of which I told haue eke befozne,
May neuer come out of his remembzaunce,
He thought aye well he had his lady lozne,
And that Joues, of his puruеyaunce,
Him shewed had in sleepe the signifiaunce
Of her vntrouth, and his disauenture,
And that the boze was shewed him in figure.

Foz which he foz Sibille his suster sent,
That called was Cassandze eke all about,
And all his dzeame he told her ere he stent,
And her besought assoilen him the dout
Of the strong Boze, with tuskes stout,
And finally, within a little stound,
Cassandze him gan thus his dzeme expound.

She gan first smile, & said, O bzother dere,
If thou a sooth of this desirest to know,
Thou must a few of old stozies here,
To purpose how that foztune ouerthzow
Hath lozds old, thzogh which within a thzow
Thou shalt this Boze know, & of what kind
He comen is, as men in bookes find.

Diane, which that wzoth was and in ire,
Foz Greekes nolde doen her Sacrifice,
Ne incens vpon her Altar set on fire,
She foz that Greekes gon her so dispise,
Wzake her in a wonder cruell wise,

Foz

For with a Bore as great as ore in stall,
She made vp frete her corne and vines all.

To slea ỹ Bore was all the countrey raised,
Emong which there came this Bore to
A maid, one of this world the best ipraised,
And Meleager, lord of that countre,
He loued so this fresh maiden free,
That with his manhood, ere he would stent,
This Bore he slough, and her the hed he sent.

Of which, as old bookes tellen vs,
There rose a conteke and a great enuie,
And of this lord discended Tideus
By line, or els old bookes lie:
But how this Meleager gan to die
Through his mother, will I you not tell,
For all too long it were for to dwell.

She told eke how Tideus, ere she stent,
Unto the strong citie of Thebes
(To claimen kingdome of the citie) went
For his fellaw dan Polimites,
Of which the brother dan Ethiocles
Full wrongfully of Thebes held the strength,
This told she by proceste all by length.

She told eke how Hemonides astart,
When Tideus slough fiftie knights stout,
She told eke all the Prophecies by hart,
And how that seuen kings with her rout
Beliegeden the citie all about,
And of the holy Serpent, and the well,
And of the furies all she gan him tell.

Associat profugus Tideus primo Polynicem
Tidea legatum docet insidiasque secundo,
Tertius Harmoniam canit, & vatem latitantem
Quartus habet reges ineuntes prælia septem
Lemniadum furiæ quinto narrantur & anguis
Archemori bustum: sexto ludique seguuntur.
Dat Thebis vatem Graiorum septimus vmbris
Octauo cecidit Tideus spes vita Pelasgum
Hippomedon nono moritur cum Parthenopeo
Fulmine percussus decimo Capaneus superatur
Vndecimo perimunt sese per vulnera fratres
Argiuum flentem, narrat duodenus & ignem.

Of Archinorices burying, and the plaies,
And how Amphiorax fill through the ground,
How Tideus was slaine, lord of Argeies,
And how Hippomedon in a little stound
Was dreint, and dead Parthenope of wound,
And also how Campaneus the proud
With thunder dint was slaine, that cried loud.

She gan eke tell him how that either brother
Ethiocles and Polimites also
At a scarmishe eche of hem slough other,
And of Argiues weeping and her mo,
And how the toun was brent she told eke tho,
And tho discended doun from iestes old
To Diomede, and thus she spake and told.

This ilke Bore betokeneth Diomede,
Tideus sonne, that doune discended is
Fro Meleager, that made the Bore to blede,
And thy Ladie, where so she be wis,
This Diomede her hart hath, and she is his,
Weepe if thou wolt, or leaue, for out of dout
This Diomede is in, and thou art out.

Thou saist nat sooth (qd. he) thou sorceresse,
With all thy false ghost of Prophetie,
Thou wenest been a great deuineresse,
Now seest thou nat this foole of fantasie,
Paimen her on ladies for to lie,
Away (qd. he) there Ioues yeue thee sorow,
Thou shalt be fals peraunture yet to morow.

As well thou mightest lien on good Alceste,
That was of creatures (but men lie)
That euer weren, kindest, and the best,
For when her husbond was in ieopardie
To die himselfe, but if she would die,
She chese for him to die, and gone to hell,
And starke anon, as vs the bookes tell.

Cassandre goeth, and he with cruell hart
Forpate his wo, for anger of her speech,
And fro his bedde all suddainly he start,
As though all hole him had imade a leech,
And day by day he gan enquire and seech
A sooth of this, with all his full cure,
And thus he driueth forth his auenture.

Fortune, which that permutation
Of all things hath, as it is her committed,
Through purueyance and disposition
Of high Ioue, as reignes shall ben fitted
Fro folk to folk, or whē they shall ben smitted,
Gan pull away the feathers bright of Troy
Fro day to day, till they ben bare of ioy.

Emong all this, the fine of the ieopardie
Of Hector gan approchen wonder bliue,
The fate would his soule should vnbodie,
And shapen had a meane it out to driue,
Ayenst which fate him helpeth not to striue,
But on a day to fighten gan he wend,
At which alas, he caught his liues end.

For which me thinketh euery manner wight
That haunteth armes, ought to bewaile
The death of him that was so noble a knight:
For as he drough a king by thauentaile

Unware of this, Achilles through the maile
And through the bodie gan him for to riue,
And thus the worthy knight was reft of liue.

For whom, as old bookes tellen vs,
Was made such wo, that tong it may nat tell,
And namely, the sorrow of Troilus,
That next him was of worthinesse the well,
And in this wo gan Troilus to dwell,
That what for sorow, loue, and for vnrest,
Full oft a day he bad his heart brest.

But nathelesse, though he gon him dispaire,
And dreed aye that his ladie was vntrue,
Yet aye on her his heart gan repaire,
And as these louers doen, he sought aye new
To get ayen Creseide bright of hew,
And in his hart he went her excusing,
That Calcas caused all her tarying.

And oft time he was in purpose great,
Himselucn like a pilgrime to disguise,
To seene her, but he may not counterfeat,
To ben vnknowen of folke that weren wise,
Ne find excuse aright that may suffise,
If he among the Grekes knowen were,
For which he wept full oft many a tere.

To her he wrote yet oft time all new,
Full pitously, he left it nat for slouth,
Beseeching her, sens that he was true,
That she wol come ayen, and hold her trouth,
For which Creseide vpon a day for routh,
I take it so, touching all this matere,
Wrote him ayen, and saied as ye may here.

Cupides sonne, ensample of goodlihede,
O swerde of knighthood, sours of gentilnesse,
How might a wight in turment and in dreed,
And healelesse you send, as yet gladnesse,
I heartlesse, I sicke, I in distresse,
Sens ye with me, nor I with you may deale,
You neither send I hart may nor heale.

Your letters full the paper all iplainted,
Conceiued hath mine hearts pite,
I haue eke seene with teares all depainted,
Your letter, and how that ye requiren me
To come ayen, which yet ne may not be,
But why, least that this letter founden were,
No mention ne make I now for fere.

Greuous to me (God wote) is your vnrest,
Your hast, and that the gods ordinaunce
It seemeth nat ye take it for the best,
Nor other thing nis in your remembraunce,
As thinketh me, but onely your pleasaunce,
But beth not wroth, and that I you beseech,
For that I tarie is all for wicked speech.

For I haue heard well more than I wend
Touching vs two, how things haue stond,
Which I shall with dissimuling amend,
And beth nat wroth, I haue eke vnderstond,
How ye ne doe but holden me in hond,
But now no force, I can nat in you gesse,
But all trouth and all gentilnesse.

Come I woll, but yet in such disioint
I stond as now, that what yere, or what day
That this shall be, that can I nat appoint,
But in effect I pray you as I may
Of your good word, and of your friendship aie,
For truly while that my life may dure,
As for a friend ye may in me assure.

Yet pray I you, no cuill ye ne take
That it is short which that I to you write,
I dare nat there I am well letters make,
Ne neuer yet ne could I well endite,
Eke great effect, men write in place lite,
Thentent is all, and nat the letters space,
And fareth well, God haue you in his grace.

La vostre T.

This Troilus thought this letter all straunge
When he it saw, and sorowfully he sight,
Him thought it like a kalends of eschaunge,
But finally he full ne trowen might,
That she ne would him holden that she hight,
For with ful cuill will list him to leue, (greue.
That loueth well in such case, though him

But nathelesse, men saine that at the last,
For any thing, men shall the sooth see,
And such a case betide, and that as fast,
That Troilus well vnderstood that she
Nas nat so kind as that her ought be,
And finally, he wote now out of dout,
That all is lost that he hath ben about.

Stood on a day in his melancholie
This Troilus, and in suspection
Of her, for whom he wend to die,
And so befell, that throughout Troy toun
As was the guise, iborne was vp and doun
A manner cote armoure, as saith the storie,
Before Deiphebe, in signe of his victorie.

The which cote, as telleth Lollius,
Deiphebe it had rent fro Diomede:
The same day, and when this Troilus
It saw, he gan to taken of it hede,
Auising of the length and of the brede,
And all the werke, but as he gan behold,
Full suddainly his heart gan to cold.

As

As he that on the coler found within
A brooch, that he Creseide paue at morow
That she from Troy must nedes twin,
In remembraunce of him, and of his sorow,
And she him laid ayen her faith to borow,
To keepe it aye: but now full well he wist,
His lady nas no longer on to trist.

He goeth him home, and gan full soone send
For Pandarus, and all this new chaunce,
And of this broch, he told him word and end,
Complaining of her harts variaunce,
His long loue, his trouth, and his penaunce,
And after death, without words more,
Full fast he cried, his rest him to restore.

Then spake he thus, O lady mine Creseide,
Where is your faith, & where is your behest?
Where is your loue, where is your trouth he seide,
Of Diomede haue ye now all this rest? (seide,
Alas, I would haue trowed at the least,
That sens ye nolde in trouth to me stond,
That ye thus nolde haue holden me in hond.

Who shall now trowen on any othes mo?
Alas I neuer would haue wend ere this,
That ye Creseide could haue chaunged so,
Ne but I had agilt, and done amis,
So cruell wend I nat your hart iwis,
To slea me thus, alas your name of trouth
Is now forsworne, and that is all my routh.

Was there none other broche you list lete,
To feast with your new loue (qd. he)
But thilke broche that I with teres wete
You paue, as for a remembrauuce of me
None other cause alas, ne had ye,
But for despite, and eke for that ye ment
All vtterly to shewen your entent.

Through which I see, ỹ clene out of your mind
Ye haue me cast, and I ne can nor may
For all this world within mine hart find,
To vnloue you a quarter of a day:
In cursed time I borne was, welaway,
That you that done me all this wo endure,
Yet loue I best of any creature.

Now God (qd. he) me send yet the grace,
That I may meten with this Diomede,
And truely, if I haue might and space,
Yet shall I make I hope his sides blede:
Now God (qd. he) that aughtest taken hede
To sorthren trouth, and wrongs to punice,
Why nilt thou don a vengeaunce of this vice.

O Pandarus, that in dremes for to trist
Ye blamed hast, and wont art oft vpbreide,
Now maiest thou seen thy self, if that thee list,
How trew is now thy nece bright Creseide:
In sundry formes (God it wote) he seide,
The gods shewen both ioy and tene
In slepe, and by my dreme it is now sene.

And certainely without en more speech,
From henceforth, as forforth as I may,
Mine owne death in armes woll I seech,
I recch nat how soone be the day,
But truly Creseide, sweet maie,
Whom I haue with all my might iserued,
That ye thus done, I haue it nat deserued.

This Pandarus, that all these things herd,
And wist well he said a sooth of this,
He nat a word ayen to him answerd,
For sorrie of his friends sorrow he is,
And shamed for his nece hath done amis,
And stant astonied of these causes twey,
As still as stone, o word ne could he sey.

But at the last, thus he spake and seide,
My brother dere, I may do thee no more,
What should I saine, I hate iwis Creseide,
And God it wote, I woll hate her euermore:
And that thou me besoughtest done of yore,
Hauing vnto mine honour ne my rest
Right no regard, I did all that thee lest.

If I did aught that might liken thee,
It is me leke, and of this treason now,
God wote that it a sorrow is to me,
And dredelesse, for hearts ease of you,
Right faine I would amend it, wist I how:
And fro this world, almighty God I pray
Deliuer her soone, I can no more say.

Great was the sorow & plaint of Troilus,
But forth her course fortune aye gan hold,
Creseide loueth the sonne of Tideus,
And Troilus mote wepe in cares cold,
Such is this world, who so it can behold,
In eche estate is little harts rest,
God leue vs to take it for the best.

In many cruell battaile out of drede,
Of Troilus, this ilke noble knight,
(As men may in these old bookes rede)
Was seen his knighthod and his great might,
And dredelesse his ire day and night
Full cruelly the Grekes aye abought,
And alway most this Diomede he sought.

And oft time (I find) that they mette
With bloody strokes, and with words great,
Assaying how her speares were whette,
And God it wote, with many a cruell heat

Gan Troilus vpon his helme to beat,
But natheleſſe, fortune naught ne would
Of others hond that either dien ſhould.

And if I had itaken for to write
The armes of this ilke worthy man,
Then would I of his battailes endite,
And for that I to writen firſt began
Of his loue, I haue ſaid as I can
His worthy deeds, who ſo liſt hem here,
Rede Dares, he can tell hem all ifere.

Beſeeching euery lady bright of hew,
And euery gentill woman, what ſhe be,
Albeit that Creſeide was vntrew,
That for that gilt ye be nat wroth with me,
Ye may her gilt in other bookes ſee,
And gladder I would write, if you leſt,
Penelopes trouth, and good Alceſte.

Ne ſay I nat this all onely for theſe men,
But moſt for women that betraied be
Through falſe folk, God yeue hem ſorow, amen,
That with her great wit and ſubtilte
Betraien you: and this meueth me
To ſpeake, and in effect you all I pray
Beth ware of men, and herkeneth what I ſay.

Go little booke, go my little tragedie,
There God my maker yet ere that I die,
So ſend me might to make ſome comedie:
But little booke, make thou none enuie,
But ſubiect ben vnto all poeſie,
And kiſſe the ſteps whereas thou ſeeſt pace
Of Vergil, Ouid, Homer, Lucan, and Stace.

And for there is ſo great diuerſite
In Engliſh, and in writing of our tong,
So pray I to God, that none miſwrite thee,
Ne thee miſſe metre, for defaut of tong:
And redde where ſo thou be, or elſ ſong,
That thou be vnderſtond, God I beſeech.
But yet to purpoſe of my rather ſpeech.

The wrath (as I began you for to ſey)
Of Troilus, the Greekes boughten dere,
For thouſands his honds maden dey,
As he that was withouten any pere,
Saue in his time Hector, as I can here,
But welaway, ſaue onely Gods will,
Diſpitouſly him ſlough the fierce Achill.

And when that he was ſlain in this manere,
His light ghoſt full blikfully is went
Up to the hollownеſſe of the ſeuenth ſphere,
In his place leting euerich element,
And there he ſaw with full auiſement
The erratike ſterres, herkening armonie,
With ſownes full of heauens melodie.

And doun from thence, faſt he gan auiſe
This little ſpot of earth, that with the ſee
Enbraced is, and fully gan deſpiſe
This wretched world, and held all vanite
To reſpect of the plaine felicite
That is in heauen aboue: and at the laſt,
There he was ſlaine, his looking doun he caſt.

And in himſelfe he lough right at the wo
Of hem that wepten for his death ſo faſt,
And damned all our werkes that followeth ſo
The blind luſt, which that may nat laſt,
And ſhoulden all our hart on heauen caſt;
And forth he went, ſhortly for to tell,
There as Mercurie ſorted him to dwell.

Such fine hath to this Troilus for loue,
Such fine hath all his great worthineſſe,
Such fine hath his eſtate royall aboue,
Such fine his luſt, ſuch fine hath his nobleſſe,
Such fine hath falſe worldes vtelneſſe,
And thus began his louing of Creſeide,
As I haue told, and in this wiſe he deide.

O young freſh folkes, he or ſhe,
In which ỹ loue vp groweth with your age,
Repaireth home from worldly vanite,
And of your harts vp caſteth the viſage
To thilke God, that after his image
You made, and thinketh all nis but a faire,
This world that paſſeth ſone, as floures faire.

And loueth him, the which ỹ right for loue,
Vpon a croſſe our ſoules for to bey,
First ſtarke and roſe, and ſit in heuen aboue,
For he nill falſen no wight dare I ſey,
That will his hart all wholly on him ley,
And ſens he beſt to loue is, and moſt meeke,
What needeth fained loues for to ſeeke.

Lo here of painems curſed old rites,
Lo here what all her gods may auaile,
Lo here this wretched worldes appetites,
Lo here the fine and guerdon for trauaile,
Of Ioue, Apollo, of Mars, and ſuch raſkaile,
Lo here the forme of old clerkes ſpeech
In poetrie, if ye her bookes ſeech.

O moral Gower, this booke I direct
To thee, and to the Philoſophicall Strode,
To vouchſafe there need is, to correct,
Of your benignities and zeales good,
And to the ſoothfaſt Chriſt that ſtarke on rood,
With all mine heart of mercy euer I pray,
And to the Lord aright, thus I ſpeake and ſay.

Thou

Thou one, two, and three, eterne on liue,
That raignest ate in thre, two, and one,
Uncircumscript, and all maist circumscriue,
Us from visible and inuisible fone
Defend, and to thy mercy euerichone,
So make vs Jesus to thy mercy digne,
For loue of maide, and mother thine benigne.

¶ Thus endeth the fifth booke, and laste of Troilus: and here foloweth the pitifull and dolorous Testament of faire Creseide.

The Testament of Creseide.

Doly season till a carefull dite,
Should correspond, and be equiuolent,
Right so it was when I began to write
This tragedy, the weder right feruent,
When Aries in middes of the Lent,
Showres of haile can fro the North discend,
That scantly fro the cold I might me defend.

Yet neuertheless within mine orature
I stode, when Titan had his beames bright
Withdrawen doun, and seyled vnder cure,
And faire Uenus the beaute of the night,
Upraise, and sette vnto the weste ful right,
Her golden face in oppositioun,
Of God Phebus directe discending doun.

Throughout ỳ glasse her beams brast so faire,
That I might see on euery side me by,
The northren winde had purified the aire,
And shedde his misty cloudes fro the skie:
The froste freseth, the blastes bitterly,
Fro pole Artike come whisking loud & shrill,
And caused me remoue ayenst my will.

For I trusted that Uenus, loues Quene,
To whom somtime I hight obedience,
My faded hart, of loue she would make grene,
And therupon with humble reuerence,
I thought to pray her high magnificence,
But for great colde as then I letted was,
And in my chambre to the fire can pas.

Though loue be hote, yet in a man of age,
It kindleth nat so soone as in youtheed,
Of whom the blood is flowing in a rage,
And in the old, the corage dull and deed,
Of which the fire outward is best remeed,
To help by Philike where that nature failed,
I am expert, for both I haue assailed.

I made the fire, and beaked me aboute,
Then tooke I drinke my spirites to comfort,
And armed me wel fro the colde theroute,
To cutte the winter night & make it short:
I toke a queare, and left all other sport,
Writen by worthy Chaucer glorious,
Of faire Creseide, and lusty Troilus.

And there I found, after that Diomede
Receiued had that lady bright of hewe,
How Troilus nere out of his witte abrede,
And wept sore, with visage pale of hewe:
For which wanhope his teares gan renewe,
While Esperus reioysed him againe:
Thus while in ioy he liued, & while in paine.

Of her behest he had great comforting,
Trusting to Troy that she wold make retour
Which he desired most of al earthly thing,
For why she was his onely paramour:
But when he saw passed both day and hour
Of her gainecome, in sorow can oppresse
His wofull hart, in care and heuinesse.

Of his distresse me needeth nat reherse,
For worthy Chaucer in that same booke,
In goodly termes, and in ioly verse,
Compiled hath his cares, who wil looke:
To breke my sleepe another queare I tooke,
In which I founde the fatal destiny
Of faire Creseide, which ended wretchedly.

Who wote if al ỳ Chaucer wrate, was trewe
Nor I wote nat if this narracion
Be authorised, or forged of the newe,
Of some Poete by his inuencion,
Made to report the lamentacion,
And wofull end of this lusty Creseide,
And what distresse she was in or she deide.

When Diomede had al his appetite,
And more fulfilled of this faire lady,
Upon another sette was al his delite,
And send to her a libel repudy,
And her excluded fro his company:
The desolate she walked vp and doune,
As some men saine, in the court as commune.

O faire Creseide, the floure and a per se,
Of Troy & Grece, how were thou fortunate,
To chaunge in filth al thy feminite,
And be with fleshly lust so maculate,
And go among the Grekes erly and late,
So giglotlike, taking thy foule pleasaunce:
I haue pite the should fall such mischaunce.

Yet neuertheleſſe, what euer men deme or ſay
In ſcornfull language of thy vnkyndelneſſe,
I ſhal excuſe, as forſoth as I may,
Thy womanhed, thy wiſedome and fairneſſe:
The which fortune hath put to ſuch diſtreſſe,
As her pleaſed, & nothing through the gilt
Of thee, through wicked langage to be ſpilt.

This faire lady on this wiſe deſtitute
Of al comfort and conſolation,
Right priuely without felowſhip or refute,
Diſcheuelde, paſſed out of the toun
A mile or two vnto a manſioun,
Bilded ful gaie, wher her father Calcas
Which then amōg ỹ Grekes dwelling was.

When her he ſaw, the cauſe he can enquire
Of her comming: ſhe ſaid ſighing full ſore,
Fro Diomede had gotten his deſire,
He wore wery and would of me no more.
qd. Calcas, Doughter weep thou nat therfore,
Parauenture al cometh for the beſt,
Welcome to me thou art full dere a geſt.

This old Calcas, after the law was tho
Was keper of the temple as a preeſt,
In which Venus and her ſonne Cupido
Were honoured, and his chambre was neſt,
To which Creſeide with bale enewed in breſt,
Vſed to paſſe, her praiers for to ſay,
While at the laſt vpon a ſolemne day,

As cuſtome was, the people ferre and nere
Before the noone, vnto the temple went,
With ſacrifice deuout in their manere,
But ſtill Creſeide heuie in her entent,
Into the Church would nat her ſelfe preſent,
For giuing of the people any deeming,
Of her expulſe fro Diomede the king.

But paſſed into a ſecrete oratore,
Where ſhe might wepe her woful deſtenie,
Behind her backe ſhe cloſed faſt the dore,
And on her knees bare fel doune in hie,
Vpon Venus and Cupide angerly,
She cried out, and ſaid in this wiſe,
Alas that euer I made you ſacrifice.

Ye gaue me ones a diuine reſponſaile,
That I ſhould be the floure of loue in Troy,
Now am I made an vnworthy outwaile,
And al in care tranſlated is my ioy:
Who ſhal me gide, who ſhal me now conuoie,
Sith I fro Diomede, and noble Troilus
Am clene excluded, as abiect odious?

O falſe Cupide, none is to wite but thou
And the mother of loue, that blind goddace,
Ye cauſed me vnderſtand alway and trow
The ſeede of loue was ſowen on my face,
And aie grew grene through your ſople grace,
But now alas, that ſeede with froſt is ſlaine,
And I fro louers left and all forlaine.

When this was ſaid, doun in an extaſie
Rauiſhed in ſpirite, in a dreame ſhe fell,
And by apparaunce herde where ſhe did lie,
Cupide the king tinging a ſiluer bell,
Which men might here fro heuen into hell:
At whoſe ſound before Cupide a peres,
The ſeuen planets diſcēding fro their ſperes.

Which hath power of al thing generable,
To rule and ſtere by their great influence,
Weder and winde, and courſe variable:
And firſt of all Saturne gaue his ſentence,
Which gaue to Cupide litel reuerence,
But as a boiſtus chorle in his manere,
Came crabbedly with auſtrine loke & chere.

His face frounſed, his lere was like the lede,
His teeth chattred, and ſheuered with ỹ chin,
His eien drouped hole ſonken in his heed,
Out at his noſe the mildrop faſt gan rin,
With lippes blo, and chekes leane and thin,
The ſicikels that fro his heer doun hong,
Was wonder great, and as a ſpeare as long.

Attour his belte his hart lockes laie,
Feltred vnkaire, ouer fret with froſtes hoore,
His garment and his gate ful gay of graie,
His widdred wede fro him ỹ wind out wore,
A boſtous bowe within his honde he bore,
Vnder his girdle a falſhe of felone flains,
Feddred with ire, and headed with boiſtains.

Then Jupiter right faire and amiable,
God of the ſterres in the firmament,
And norice to all thing generable,
Fro his father Saturne farre different,
With burly face, and browes bright and bret,
Vpon his heed a garlond wonders gaie,
Of floures faire, as it had been in Maie.

His voice was clere, as criſtal was his eien,
As golden wier ſo glittring was his heare,
His garment and his gite ful gaie of grene,
With golden liſtes gilte on euery geare,
A burly brande about his middle he beare,
And in his right hād he had a grounden ſpere,
Of his father, the wrothe fro vs to bere.

Next after him came Mars the God of ire,
Of ſtrife, debate, and all diſcenſioun,
To chide and fight, as fierce as any fire,
In harde harneſſe hewmonde & habergioun,

And

And on his haunch a rusty fel fauchoun,
And in his hand he had a rusty sword,
Wrything his face, with many angry word.

Shaking his brande, before Cupide he come
With reed visage, and grisly glowing eien,
And at his mouth a blubber stode of fome,
Like to a Bore, whetting his tuskes kene,
Right tulure like, but temperaunce in tene,
In horne blewe with many boustous bragge,
Which al this world with war hath made to wagge.

Then faire Phebus, lanterne & lampe of light,
Of man and beast, both fruit and norishing,
Tender norice, and banisher of night,
And of the world, causing by his mouing
And influence, life in al earthly thing,
Without comfort of whom of force to nought,
Must go die, ꝑ all this worlde hath wrought.

As king royall, he rode vpon a chare,
The which Phiton somtime gided vnright,
The brightnesse of his face when it was bare,
Non might behold, for persing of his sight:
This golden carte with firy beames bright,
Foure yoked stedes full different of hewe,
Bout baite or tiring through ꝑ spheres drewe.

The first was sord, with mane as reed as rose
Called Eoye into the Orient,
The second stede to name, hight Ethiose,
Whitely and pale, and somdele ascendent,
The third Perose, right hote & ekeferuent,
The fourth was blacke, called Phlegone,
Which rolleth Phebus doun into the see.

Venus was there present, that goddes gay
Her sonnes quarel to defend and make,
His owne complaint, cladde in a nice aray
The one half greene, thother half sable blake
White heer as Gold, kembet and shede abake,
But in her face seemed great variaunce,
While parfite truth, and whiles inconstaunce.

Under smiling she was dissimulate,
Prouocatiue with blinkes amorous,
And sodainly chaunged and alterate,
Angry, as any serpent venomous:
Right pungitiue with wordes odious,
Thus variaunt she was who liste take kepe,
With one eie laugh, and with the other wepe.

In tokening that all fleshly paramour,
Which Venus hath in rule and gouernaunce,
Is somtime swete, somtime bitter and sour,
Right vnstable and ful of variaunce:
Minged with careful ioy & false pleasaunce,
Now hote, now cold, now blith, now ful of wo,
Now grene as leke, now widred and ago.

With boke in hād, then come Mercurious
Right eloquent and ful of rethorie,
With polute termes and delicious,
With penne and inke to report al redie,
Setting songes, and singing merely,
His hode was reed heeled attour his croun,
Like til a Poete of the old fascioun.

Bores he bare with fine electuares,
And sugred siropes for digestion,
Spices belonging to the potiquares,
With many holsome swete confection:
Doctor in phisike cledde in a scarlet goun,
And furred well as such one ought to be,
Honest and good, and nat a worde couth lie.

Next after him come lady Synthia,
The last of all, and swiftest in her spere,
Of colour blake, busked with hornes twa,
And in the night she listeth best tapere,
Hawe as the leed, of colour nothing clere,
For al the light she borroweth at her brother
Titan, for of her selfe she hath none other.

Her gite was gray and ful of spottes blake,
And on her brest a chorle painted full euen,
Bearing a bushe of thornes on his bake,
Which for his theft must clime no ner ꝑ heuē:
Thus when they gadred were ꝑ goddes seuē,
Mercurius they chosed with one assent,
To be forespeker in the Parliment.

Who had ben there and liking for to here
His faconde tonge and termes exquisite,
Of rethorike the practike he might lere,
In breke sermon, a preignant sentence write:
Before Cupide baling his cappe a lite,
Sper is the cause of that vocacioun,
And he anon shewde his entencioun.

Lo (qd. Cupide) who wol blaspheme ꝑ name
Of his owne God, either in word or dede,
To all goddes he doeth both losse and shame
And should haue bitter paines to his mede:
I say this by yonder wretch Creseide,
The which through me was somtime flour of
Ye & my mother she stately can reprone. (loue

Saying of her great infelicite
I was the cause, and my mother Venus
She called a blinde goddes and might nat se,
With sclaunder and defame iniurious,
Thus her liuing vncleane and lecherous,
She would retorte in me and my mother,
To whom I shewde my grace aboue al other.

And

And sithe ye are al seuen deficate,
Perticipant of diuine sapience,
This great iuiury done to our hie estate,
Me think with pain we shuld make recōpēce,
Was neuer to goddes done such violence,
As wel for you as for my selfe I say,
Therfore go helpe to reuenge I you pray.

Mercurius to Cupide gaue answere
And said, sir king, my counsaile is that ye,
Referre you to the hiest planet here,
And take to him the lowest of degree,
The paine of Creseide for to modifie,
As God Saturne with him take Sinthia,
I am content (qd. he) to take they twa.

Then thus proceded Saturne & the Mone,
When they the mater ripely had degest,
For the dispite to Cupide that she had done,
And to Uenus open and manifest,
In all her lyfe with payne to be oprest,
And turment sore, with sicknesse incurable,
And to al louers be abhominable.

This doleful sentēce Saturne toke in hād,
And passed doun where carefull Creseide lay,
And on her heed he laide a frosty wande,
Then lawfully on this wise can he say,
Thy great fairenesse, and al thy beauty gay,
Thy wanton blood, and eke thy golden heere,
Here I exclude fro thee for euermeere.

I chaunge thy mirthe into melancoly,
Which is the mother of all pensiuenesse,
Thy moyster and thy hete, into colde and dry,
Thine insolence, thy play, & thy wantonnesse
To great disease, thy pompe and thy richesse,
Into mortall nede and great penurie,
Thou suffre shalt, and as a begger die.

O cruel Saturne, froward and angry,
Harde is thy dome, and too malicious,
Of faire Creseide, why hast thou no mercy,
Which was so swete, gentill and amorous,
Withdraw thy sentence and be gracious,
As thou were neuer, so sheweth through thy (dede,
A wrekeful sentēce giuē on Creseide.

Then Sinthia, whē Saturne past away,
Out of her seate, discended doun bliue,
And reed a bill on Creseide where she lay,
Containing this sentence diffinitiue:
Fro heale of body here I thee depriue,
And to thy sicknesse shalbe no recure,
But in dolour thy dayes to endure.

Thy christal iyen mēged with blood I make,
Thy voice so clere, vnpleasant heer and hace,
Thy lusty lere ouerspred with spots blake,
And lumpes hawe appering in thy face,
Where thou comest eche man shall flie ẏ place,
Thus shalt thou go begging ito hous to hous
With cuppe and clapper like a Lazarous.

This doolie dreame, this vgly visioun
Brought till an end, Creseide fro it awoke,
And all that court and conuocatioun,
Uanished away: then rose she vp and toke
A polished glasse, and her shadow couth loke,
And when she saw her visage so deformate,
If she in hart were wo, I ne wite God wate.

Weping full sore, lo what it is (qd. she)
With froward langage to moue and stere
Our crabbed Goddes, and so is seen on me,
My blasphemīg now haue I bought ful dere,
All yearthly ioy and mirthe I set arere,
Alas this day, alas this wofull tide,
When I began with my Goddes to chide.

Be this was saied, a child came fro the hall
To warne Creseide the supper was redie,
First knocked at the doore, and eft couth cal,
Madame, your father biddeth you cum in hie
He hath marueile so long on grofe ye lie,
And saith your beades bethe to long somdele,
The Goddes wote all your entent full wele.

(Qd. she) faire child, go to my father dere
And pray him come to speake with me anon,
And so he did, and saied daughter what chere,
Alas (qd. she) father, my mirth is gon,
How so (qd. he) and she can all expon,
As I haue told, the vengeaunce, & the wrake,
For her trespas, Cupide on her couth take.

He looked on her vgly Lepers face,
The which before was white as Lely floure,
Wringing his hands, oft times saied alace
That he had liued to see that wofull houre:
For he knew well that there was no socour
To her sicknesse, and that doubled his paine,
Thus was ther care inow betwixt hē twain.

When they togider mourned had ful lang,
(qd. Creseide) father, I would nat be kend,
Therfore in secrete wise ye let me gang,
To yon Hospitall at the tounes end:
And thider some meate for charite me send,
To liue vpon, for all mirthe in this yearth
Is fro me gone, such is my wicked wearth.

When in a mantill, and a Beuer hat,
With cuppe and clapper wonder priuely,
He opened a secrete gate and out thereat,
Conueied her, that no man should espie,

There-

There to a village halfe a mile thereby,
Deliuered her in at the Spittell hous,
And daily ſent her part of his almous.

Sum knew her well, & ſum had no knowlege
Of her, bicauſe ſhe was ſo deformate,
With biles blake ouerſpred in her viſage,
And her fayre colour faded and alterate:
Yet they preſumed for her hie regrate,
And ſtil mourning, ſhe was of noble kin,
With bitter will there they tooke her in.

The day paſſed, and Phebus went to reſt,
The cloudes blake ouerwheled all the Skie,
God wote if Creſeide were a ſorowfull geſt,
Seing that vncouth kare and herbrie:
But meate or drinke, ſhe dreſſed her to lie
In a darke corner of the hous alone,
And on this wiſe weping ſhe made her mone.

¶ Here foloweth the complaint of Creiſeide.

Soppe of ſorowe ſonken into care,
O caitife Creſeide now & euermare,
Gon is thy ioy and all thy mirth in yearth,
Of all blythneſſe now art thou blake and bare
There is no ſalue may helpe thy ſare,
Fell is thy fortune, wicked is thy werth
Thy bliſſe is baniſhed and thy bale vnderde,
Vnder the great God if I grauen ware,
Where mē of Grece ne yet of Troie mizt herd.

Where is thy chamber wantonly beſeen,
With burly bedde and bankers brouded been,
Spices and wine to thy colatioun,
The cuppes all of gold and ſiluer ſhene,
Thy ſwete meates ſerued in plates clene,
With ſauery ſauce of a good ſalbioun,
Thy gay garments with many goodly goun,
Thy pleſaunt laune pinned with golden pene,
All is arere thy great royall renoun.

Where is thy gardein with thy greces gay
And freſhe floures, which the quene Flozay
Had painted pleſauntly in euery way,
Where thou were wont full merily in May,
To walke, and take the dewe by it was day,
And heare the Merle and Mauſe many one,
With ladies faire in carrolling to gone,
And ſee the roiall renkes in their raie.

This leper loge take for thy goodly boure,
And for thy bed, take now a bounche of ſtro,
For wailed wine and meates thou had tho,
Take mouled bread, pirate, and ſider ſoure
But cuppe and clapper is all now ago.

My clere voice and my courtly carolling,
Is ranke as roke, full hidous heer and hace
Deformed is the figure of my face,
To loke on it no people hath liking,
So ſped in ſight, I ſay with ſore ſighing
Lyng emong the leper folke alas.

O ladies faire of Troy and Grece attend
My freile fortune, mine infelicite,
My great miſchief which no man can amend,
And in your mind a mirrour make of me:
As I am now parauenture that ye,
For al your might may come to the ſame end,
Or els worſe, if any worſe may be,
Beware therefore approches nere your end.

Nought is your fairneſſe but a fading floure,
Nought is your famous laude & hie honour,
But winde inflate in other mens eares,
Your roſing redde to rotting ſhall retoure,
Exemple make of me in your memore:
Which of ſoch things, wofull witnes beares,
Al welth in yearth, as wind away it weares,
Be ware therfore approcheth nere your hour.

Thus chiding with her drerie deſtenie,
Weping, ſhe woke the night fro end to end,
But all in vaine her dole, her carefull crie
Might not remedy, ne yet her mourning mēd,
A leper ladie roſe, and to her wende,
And ſaied, Why ſpurnes thou again ỹ wall,
To ſlea thy ſelf, and mende nothing at al:

Sith that thy weping but doubleth thy wo,
I counſaile thee make vertue of a nede,
Go learne to clappe thy clapper to and fro,
And learne after the lawe of lepers lede. (pede
There was no bote but forthwith then ſhe
Fro place to place, while cold and hunger ſore
Compelled her to be a ranke beggore.

That ſame time of Troie the garniſoun,
Which had the chiefetain worthy Troilus
Throuz ieoperdy of warre had ſtriken doun,
Knights of Grece in nomber marueilous,
With great triumph, and laude victorious,
Againe to Troie right royally they rode,
The way where Creſeid with the leper ſtode.

Seing that company come, al with o ſteuin
They gaue a crie, and ſhoke cupps good ſpede
Worthy lordes, for Goddes loue of heuin,
To vs leper, part of your almoſe dede:
Then to her crie noble Troilus toke hede,

Hauing

Hauing pite, nere by the place gan pas,
Wher Creseide sat, nat weting what she was.

Then vpon him she kest vp both her yen,
And with a blinke it come in till his thought,
That he sometime her face before had sein,
But she was in soch plite he knew her nought,
Yet then her loke into his minde he brought,
The swete visage, and amorous blenking,
Of faire Creseide, sometime his owne derling.

No wonder was, suppose in mind that he
Toke her figure so sone, and lo now why,
The Idoll of a thing in case may be
So depe enprinted in the fantasie,
That it deludeth the wittes outwardly,
And so appereth in forme and like estate,
Within the minde, as it was figurate.

A sparke of loue thē til his hart couth spring,
And kindeled his body in a fire,
With hote feuer, in swette, and trembling
Him tooke, while he was readie to expire,
To beare his shield his brest began to tire,
Within a while he chaunged many a hewe,
And neuertheles nat one an other knew.

For knightly pite and memoriell
Of faire Creseide, a girdel gan he take,
A purse of gold, and many a gaie iewell,
And in the skirt of Creseide doun can shake:
Then rode awaie, and nat a word he spake,
Pensife in hart while he came to the toune,
And for great care oft sith almost fell doune.

The lepre folke to Creseide then couth draw,
To see the equall distributioun
Of the almose, but when the gold they saw,
Ech one to other priuely can roun,
And saied, pon lord hath more affectioun,
How euer it be, vnto pon Lazarous
Than to vs al, we know by his almous.

What lord is pon (qd. she) haue ye no sele,
That doeth to vs so great humanite?
Yes qd. a lepre man, I know him wele
Sir Troilus it is, a knight gentle and free.
When Creseide vnderstood that it was hee,
Stiffer than stele there sterte a bitter stound,
Throughout her hart, & fill doun to ỹ ground.

Whē she ouercome with sighing sore & sad,
With many a carefull cric and cold atone,
Now is my brest with stormy stoundes stad,
Wrapped in wo wretchfull will of one,
Then fell in swoun ful oft or she would sone,
And euer in her swouning cried she thus,
O false Creseide, and true knight Troilus,

Thy loue, thy laude, and all thy gentilnesse,
I compted small in my prosperite,
So estated I was in wantounesse,
And clambe vpon the fickell whele so hie,
All faith and loue I promitted to thee,
Was in thy selfe fekell and furious,
O false Creseide, and true knight Troilus.

For loue of me thou kept countenaunce,
Honest and chast in conuersation,
Of all women protectour and defence
Thou were, and helped their opinion:
My minde and fleshly foule affection,
Was enclined to lustes lecherous,
Fie false Creseide, O true knight Troilus.

Louers beware, and take good hede about,
Whom that ye loue, for when ye suffre pain,
I let you wit there is right few throughout,
Whom ye may trust to haue true loue again,
Proue when ye woll your labour is in vain,
Therefore I rede ye take them as ye find,
For they are sad as Wedercocke in wind.

Bicause I know the great vnstablenesse,
Brittle as glasse, vnto my self I say,
Trusting in other as great bytelnesse,
As inconstaunt, and as vntrue of kay:
Though some be true, I wot right few ar they,
Who findeth truth, let him his lady ruse,
None but my self as now I woll accuse.

Whē this was said, with paper she sat doun
And in this maner made her testament:
Here I bequeth my corse and carioun,
With wormes and with Toodes to be rent,
My cuppe, my clapper, and mine ornament,
And all my gold these lepre folke shall haue,
When I am dedde, to bury me in graue.

This roiall ring set with this Rubie redde,
Whith Troilus in Dowrie to me send,
To him again I leaue it when I am dedde,
To make my carefull death vnto him kend:
Thus I conclude shortly and make an end,
My spirit I leaue to Diane where she dwels,
To walke with her in wast wodes & welles.

O Diomede thou hast both broche & belt,
Which Troilus gaue me, in tokening
Of his true loue, & with that worde she swelt,
And soone a leaper man toke off the ring,
Then buried her withouten tariyng,
To Troilus forthwith the ring he bare,
And of Creseide the death he gan declare.

When he had heard her great infirmite,
Her legacie, and lamentacioun,

And

And how she ended in such pouerte,
He swelt for wo and fell doune in a swoun,
For sorow his hart to brast was boun,
Sighing full sadly saied I can no more,
She was vntrue, and wo is me therefore.

Some saith he made a tōbe of marble gray,
And wrote her name and superscripcioun,
And laied it on her graue whereas she lay,
In golden letters, conteining this reasoun:
Lo faire Ladies, Creseide of Troie toun,
Somtime compted the floure of womanhed,
Under this stone, late leper lieth dedde.

Now worthy women in this balade short,
Made for your worship and instruction,
Of charite I monish and exhort,
Minge nat your loue with false discepcion:
Beare in your mind this sore conclusion,
Of faire Creseide, as I haue saied before,
Sith she is dedde, I speake of her no more.

The Legende of good Women.

For that some Ladies in the Court tooke offence at Chaucers large speeches against the vntruth of women, the Queene enioyned him to compile this booke in the commendation of sundry maydens and wiues, who shewed themselues faithfull to faithlesse men.

A Thousand times I haue hearde men tell,
That there is ioy in heauen, and paine in hell,
And I accord it wele that it is so,
But nathelesse yet wote I wele also,
That there nis non dwelling in this countre,
That either hath in heauen or in hell ibe,
Ne may of it none other waies witten,
But as he heard saied, or found it written,
For by assay there may no man it preue.
But God forbede but men should leue
Wel more thing than they haue seen with iye,
Men shall nat wenen euery thing a lie
But if himself it seeth, or els it dooth,
For God wote thing is neuer the lesse soth,
Though euery wight ne may it not isee.
Bernarde the Monke ne saugh all parde,
Then mote we to bookes that we find,
(Through which that old things ben in mind)
And to the doctrine of the old wise,
Yeue credence, in euery skilful wise,
That tellen of the old appreued stories,
Of holines, of reignes, of victories,
Of loue, of hate, and other sundry things,
Of which I may not make rehearsings:
And if that old bookes were away,
Iorne were of all remembraunce the kay.
Well ought vs then, honouren and beleue
These bookes, there we han none other preue.
And as for me, though that I can but lite,
On bookes for to rede I me delite,
And to hem yeue I faith and full credence,
And in mine harte haue hem in reuerence
So hartely, that there is game none,
That fro my bookes maketh me to gone,
But it be seldome on the holy daie,
Saue certainly, when ẏ the month of May
Is comen, and that I heare the foules sing,
And that the floures ginnen for to spring,
Farwell my booke, and my deuocion.
Now haue I then eke this condicion,
That of all the floures in the Mede,
Then loue I most these floures white & rede,
Soch that men callen Daisies in our toun,
To hem I haue so great affectioun,
As I saied erst, when comen is the Maie,
That in my bedde there daweth me no daie,
That I nam vp, and walking in the Mede,
To seen this floure ayenst the Sunne sprede,
When it vp riseth early by the morow,
That blissfull sight softeneth all my sorow,
So glad am I when that I haue presence
Of it, to doen it all reuerence,
As she that is of all floures floure,
Fulfilled of all vertue and honoure,
And euery ilike faire, and fresh of hewe
And euer I loue it, and euer ilike newe,
And euer shall, till that mine harte die,
All sweare I not, of this I woll not lie.
There loued no wighe hotter in his life,
And when that it is eue I renne blithe,
As sone as euer the Sunne ginneth West,
To seen this floure, how it woll go to rest,
For feare of night, so hateth she derknesse,
Her there is plainly spred in the brightnesse
Of the Sunne, for there it woll vnclose:
Alas that I ne had English rime, or prose
Suffisaunt, this floure to praise aright,
But helpeth ye, that han cōning and might,
Ye louers that can make of sentement,
In this case ought ye be diligent,
To forthren me somewhat in my labour,
Whether ye been with the lefe or with ẏ flour,
For well I wote, that ye han here beforne
Of making, ropen, and had alway the corne,

And I come after, gleaning here and there,
And am full glad, if I may find an eare
Of any goodly worde that ye han left,
And though it happen me to rehearsen eft,
That ye han in your freshe songes saied,
Forbeareth me, and beth not cuill apaied,
Sith that ye se, I doe it in the honour
Of loue, and eke of seruice of the flour,
Whom that I serue, as I haue wit or might,
She is the clerenesse and the very light,
That in this derke world me wint and leadeth
The hart within my sorowfull brest you dre-
And loueth so sore, that ye been verily (deth,
The maistres of my wit, and nothing I,
My word, my workes, is knit so in your bonde,
That as an harpe obeieth to the honde,
And make it sounc after his fingering,
Right so mowe ye out of mine hart bring,
Soch voice, right as you list, to laugh or plain,
Be ye my guide, and Lady soueraine,
As to mine yearthly God, to you I call,
Both in this werke, and my sorowes all,
But wherefore that I spake to yeue credence
To old stories, and doen hem reuerence,
And that men musten more thing bileue
That men may seen at eye, or els preue,
That shall I seen, when that I see my time,
I may nat all atones speake in rime,
My busie ghost, that thursteth alway new,
To seen this flour so yong, so fresh of hew,
Constrained me, with so gredy desire,
That in my harte I felc yet the fire,
That made me rise ere it were day,
And this was now the first morow of May,
With dreadfull harte, and glad deuocion
For to been at the resurrection
Of this floure, when that it should vnclose,
Again the Sunne, that rose as redde as rose,
That in the brest was of the beast that day,
That Argenores doughter ladde away:
And doune on knees anon right I me sette,
And as I could, this freshe floure I grette:
Kneeling alway, till it vnclosed was,
Upon the small, sofe, swete gras,
That was with floures swete embrouded all,
Of such swetenesse, and soch odour ouer all,
That for to speake of gomme, herbe, or tree,
Comparison may not imaked be,
For it surmounteth plainly all odoures,
And of riche beaute of floures,
Forgotten had the yearth his poore estate
Of Winter, that him naked made and mate,
And with his sword of cloud so sore greued,
Now hath the attempre sunne al that releued
That naked was, and cladit new again,
The small foules, of the season fain,
That of the panter and the net been scaped,
Upon the fouler, that hem made awhaped
In Winter, and destroied had her brood,
In his despite hem thought it did hem good,
To sing of him, and in her song despise
The foule chorle, that for his couetise,
Had hem betraied, with his Sophistrie,
This was her song, The fouler we defie,
And all his craft: and some songen clere,
Laies of Loue, that ioy it was to here,
In worshipping and praysing of her make,
And for the new blisfull Somers sake,
Upon the braunches full of blosmes soft,
In her delite, they tourned hem ful oft,
And songen, blissed be sainct Valentine,
For on his day I chese you to be mine,
Withouten repenting mine harte swete,
And therwithall her bekes gonnen mete,
Yelding honour, and humble obeisaunce
To loue, and bidden her other obseruaunce
That longeth vnto loue, and vnto nature,
Constre we that as you list, I doe no cure:
And tho that had doen vnkindnesse,
As doeth the Tidife, for new fanglenesse,
Besought mercy of her trespasing,
And humbly song her repenting,
And sworen on the blosmes to be true,
So that her makes would vpon hem rue,
And at the last maden her accorde,
All sound they Daunger for the time a lorde,
Yet Pite, through his strong gentill might,
Forpaue, and made mercy passen right
Through Innocence, and ruled Curtesie:
But I ne cleape it nat Innocence folie,
Ne false pite, for vertue is the meane,
As Ethike saieth, in soch maner I meane.
And thus these foule, voide of all malice,
Accorded en to Loue, and lafte vice
Of hate, and song all of one accorde,
Welcome Sommer, our gouernour & lorde,
And Zephirus, and Flora gentelly,
Yaue to the floures soft and tenderly,
Her swote breth, and made hem for to sprede,
As God and Goddesse of the flouric Mede,
In which me thought I might day by daie,
Dwellen alway, the ioly month of May,
Withouten slepe, withouten meat or drinke,
Adowne full softly I gan to sinke,
And leaning on my elbow and my side,
The long day I shope me for to abide,
For nothing els, and I shall nat lie,
But for to looke vpon the Daisie,
That well by reason men it call may
The Daisie, or els the ye of the day,
The emprise, and floure of floures all,
I pray to God that faire mote she fall,
And all that louen floures, for her sake,
But nathelesse, ne wene nat that I make
In prasing of the floure againe the lefe,
No more than of the corne againe the shefe:

For

For as to me nis leuer none ne other,
I nam withholden yet with neuer nother,
Ne I not who serueth leke, ne who the floure,
Well brouken they her seruice or laboure,
For this thing is all of another tonne,
Of old storie, er soch thing was begonne,
Whē that the sunne out the South gā West,
And that this floure gan close, and gan to rest,
For derknes of the night, the which she drede,
Home to mine house full swiftly I me spede
To gone to rest, and earely for to rise,
To seene this floure to spredе, as I deuise,
And in a little herber that I haue,
That benched was on turues fresh igraue,
I bad men should me my couche make,
For deintie of the new Sommers sake,
I bad hem strawen floures on my bedde,
When I was laied, and had mine iyen hedde,
I fell a slepe, and slept an houre or two,
Me met how I lay in the Medow tho,
To seen this floure, that I loue so and drede,
And from a ferre came walking in the Mede
The God of Loue, and in his hand a Quene,
And she was clad in royall habite grene,
A fret of gold she had next her heere,
And vpon that a white croune she beare,
With flouroun smal, and I shall not lie,
For all the world right as a Deisie
Icrouned is, with white leaues lite,
So were the florons of her croune white,
For of o perle fine orientall,
Her white croune was imaked all,
For which the white croune, aboue the grene,
Made her like a Deisie for to seme,
Considred eke her fret of gold aboue:
Iclothed was this mighty God of Loue
In silke embroided, full of grene greues,
In which a fret of redde rose leues,
The freshest semy the world was first begon,
His gilt heere was crouned with a son,
In stede of gold, for heuinesse and weight,
Therwith me thought his face shone so bright
That well vnnethes might I him behold,
And in his hand, me thought I saw him hold
Two fiers dartes, as the gledes rede,
And Angelike his winges saw I spredе:
And all be that men sain, that blind is he,
Algate me thought that he might se,
For sternely on me he gan behold,
So that his loking doeth mine hart cold,
And by the hand he held this noble Queene,
Crouned with white, and clothed al in greene,
So womanly, so benigne, and so meke,
That in this world though ꝑ men wold seke,
Halfe her beaute, should they not finde
In creature that formed is by kinde,
And therfore may I sain as thinketh me,
This song in prailing of this Lady fre.

Hide Absolon thy gilt tresses clere,
Hester lay thou thy meknesse all adoun,
Hide Jonathas all thy frendly manere,
Penelopee, and Marcia Catoun,
Make of your wifehode no comparisoun,
Hide your beauties, Isoude and Helein,
My Lady cometh, that all this may disdain.

Thy faire body let it not appere,
Lauine, and thou Lucrece of Rome toun,
And Polixene, that boughten loue so dere,
And Cleopatras, with all thy passioun,
Hide your trouth of loue, and your renoun,
And thou Tisbe, that hast of loue soch pain,
My Lady cometh, that all this may disdain.

Hero, Dido, Laodomia all ifere,
And Phillis, hanging for Demophoun,
And Canace, espied by thy chere,
Hipsiphile betrayed with Jasoun:
Maketh of your trouth neither boste ne soun,
Nor Hipermistre, or Ariadne, ye twain,
My Lady cometh, that all this may disdain.

This balade may full well isongen be,
As I haue saied erst, by my Lady fre,
For certainly, all these mowe not suffice,
To apperen with my Lady in no wise,
For as the Sunne will the fire distain,
So passeth all my lady souerain,
That is so good, so faire, so debonaire,
I pray to God that euer fall her faire,
For had comfort ben of her presence,
I had ben dead, withouten any defence,
For drede of Loues words, and his chere,
As when time is, hereafter ye shall here.

Behind this God of Loue vpon the grene,
I saw coming of Ladies nine tene,
In roiall habit, a full easie pace,
And after hem came of women soch a trace,
That sens that God, Adā had made of erth,
The third part of mankind, or the erth,
Ne wende I not by possibilite,
Had euer in this wide world ibe,
And true of loue, these women were echon,
Now whether was ꝑ a wonder thing or non,
That right anon, as that they gonne espie
This floure, which that I clepe the Daisie,
Full sodainly they stinten all at ones,
And kneled doune, as it were for the nones,
And songen with o voice, heale and honour
To trouth of womanhede, and to this flour,
That beareth our alderprise in figuring,
Her white croune beareth the witnessing,
And with that word, a compas enuiroun,
They sitten hem ful softly adoun:
First sat the god of Loue, and sith his quene,
With the white croune, clad all in grene,

And sithen al the remnaunt by and by,
As they were of estate, full curtesly,
Ne nat a worde was spoken in the place,
The mountenance of a furlong way of space.
I kneling by this floure, in good entent
Abode to knowen what this people ment,
As still as any stone, till at the last
This God of Loue, on me his yen cast,
And said, who kneleth there? and I answerde
Unto his asking, when that I it herde,
And saied, sir it am I, and come him nere,
And saiued him: (qd. he) what doest thou here,
So nigh mine owne floure, so boldly?
It were better worthy truely,
A worme to nighen nere my floure than thou.
And why sir (qd. I) and it like you?
For thou (qd. he) art therto nothing able,
It is my relike, digne and delitable,
And thou my foo, and all my folke werriest,
And of mine old seruaunts thou misdoest,
And hinderest hem, with thy translacion,
And letterest folke from her deuocion,
To serue me, and holdest it folie
To serue Loue, thou maiest it nat denie,
For in plain text, without en nede of glose,
Thou hast translated the Romaunt of the rose,
That is an heresie ayenst my law,
And makest wise folke fro me withdraw,
And of Creseide, thou hast said as the list,
That maketh men to women lesse trist,
That ben as trewe as euer was any stele:
Of thine answere auise thee right wele,
For though thou renied hast my lay,
As other wretches haue done many a day,
By seint Venus, that my mother is,
If that thou liue, thou shalt repenten this,
So cruelly, that it shall well be sene.
Tho spake this lady, clothed all in greene
And said, God right of your curtesie,
Ye mote herken if he can replie,
Ayenst all this that ye haue to him meued,
A God ne should nat be thus agreued,
But of his deite he shal be stable,
And thereto gracious and merciable:
And if ye were a God that knowen all,
Then might it be as I you tellen shall,
This man to you may falsely ben accused,
That as by right, him ought ben excused,
For in your court is many a losengeour,
And many a queinte totoler accusour,
That tabouren in your eares many a soun,
Right after her imaginacioun,
To haue your daliaunce, and for enuie,
These ben the causes, and I shall nat lie,
Enuie is lauender of the court alway,
For she ne parteth neither night ne day,
Out of the house of Cesar, thus saith Dant,
Who so that goeth algate she wol nat want.
And eke peraunter for this man is nice,
He might done it gelling no malice,
But for he vseth things for to make,
Him recketh nought of what matter he take,
Or him was boden make thilke two,
Of some persone, and durst it nat withsey:
Or him repenteth vtterly of this,
He ne hath nat done so greuously amis,
To translaten that old clerkes writen,
As though that he of malice would enditen,
Dispite of loue, and himselfe it wrought,
This shold a right wise lord haue in his thought,
And nat be like tiraunts of Lombardie,
That han no reward but at tyrannie,
For he that king or lorde is naturell,
Him ought nat be tiraunt ne cruell,
As is a lermour, to done the harme he can,
He must thinke it is his liege man,
And is his tresour, and his gold in cofer:
This is the sentence of the Philosopher,
A king to kepe his lieges in Justice,
Withouten doute that is his office,
All woll he kepe his lordes in her degree,
As it is right and skil, that they bee
Enhaunsed and honoured, and most dere,
For they ben halfe goddes in this world here,
Yet mote he done both right to poore & riche,
All be that her estate be nat both iliche,
And haue of poore folke compassion,
For lo, the gentill kinde of the lion,
For when a flie offendeth him or biteth,
He with his taile away the flie smiteth,
Al easily, for of his gentrie,
Him deineth nat to wreke him on a flie,
As doeth a curre, or els another beest,
In noble corage ought ben areest,
And waien euery thing by equite,
And euer haue regard vnto his owne degre:
For sir, it is no maistrie for a lord
To dampne a man, without answere of word,
And for a lorde, that is full foule to vse
And it so be, he may him nat excuse,
But asketh mercy with a dreadfull hart,
And prokereth him, right in his bare shirte
To ben right at your owne iudgement,
Then ought a God by shorte auisement,
Consider his owne honour, and his trespace,
For sith no cause of death lieth in this case,
Yow ought to ben the lightlier merciable,
Letteth your ire & be the somewhat tretable:
The man hath serued you of his commings,
And forthred well your law in his makings,
All be it that he can nat well endite,
Yet hath he made feude folke delite
To serue you, in preising of your name,
He made the boke, ỹ hight, The house of fame,
And eke the death of Blaunche the Duchesse,
And the Parliament of Fowles, as I gesse,

And al the loue of Palamon and Arcite
Of Thebes, though the ſtorie is knowen lite,
And many an Himpne, for your holy daies,
That highten balades, rondels, virelaies:
And for to ſpeake of other holineſſe,
He hath in proſe translated Boece,
And made the life also of ſaint Cecile:
He made also, gone is a great while,
Origenes vpon the Maudelaine:
Him ought now to haue the leſſe paine.
He hath made many a ley, and many a thing.
Now as ye be a God, and eke a king,
I your Alceſte, whilom quene of Trace,
I aſke you this man right of your grace,
That ye him neuer hurt in al his liue,
And he ſhal ſwearen to you, and that bliue,
He ſhal neuer more agilten in this wiſe,
But ſhal maken as ye woll deuiſe,
Of women trewe in louing al her life,
Where ſo ye woll, of maiden or of wife,
And forthren you as much as he miſſeide,
Or in the Roſe, or els in Creſeide.
The God of Loue anſwerde her thus anon,
Madame (qd. he) it is ſo long agon,
That I you knew ſo charitable and trewe,
That neuer yet, ſens the world was newe,
To me ne found I better none than ye,
If that I woll ſaue my degree:
I may nor wol nat werne your requeſt,
Al lieth in you, doth with him as you leſt.
I al forgeue without en lenger ſpace,
For who ſo geueth a yefte or doth a grace,
Do it betime, his thanke ſhall be the more,
And demeth ye what he ſhal do therfore.
Go thanke now my lady here (qd. he)
I roſe, and doun I ſet me on my knee,
And ſaid thus: Madame, the God abeue
For yelde you that the God of Loue,
Haue maked me his wrath to forgeue,
And grace ſo long for to liue,
That I may know ſothely what ye be,
That haue me holpen, and put in this degre,
But trewly I wende, as in this caas
Nought haue a gilte, ne done to loue treſpas,
For why a trewe man without drede,
Hath nat to parten with a theues dede.
Ne a trewe louer ought me nat to blame,
Though ſ I ſpeke a falſe louer ſome ſhame:
They ought rather with me for to hold,
For that I of Creſeide wrote or told,
Or of the Roſe, what ſo mine authorment,
Algate God wote it was mine entent
To forthren trouth in loue, and it cherice
And to ben ware fro falſeneſſe and fro vice,
By which enſample, this was my mening.
And ſhe anſwerde, let be thine arguing,
For loue ne wol not counterpleted be,
In right ne wrong, and lerne that of me:
Thou haſt thy grace, and hold the right there:
Now woll I ſaine what penáce thou ſhalt do
For thy treſpace, vnderſtand it here,
Thou ſhalt while ſ thou liueſt yere by yere
The moſt partie of thy time ſpende,
In making of a glorious legende,
Of good women, maidens, and wiues,
That weren trewe in louing all her liues,
And tell of falſe men that hem betraien,
That al her life ne do nat but aſſaien
How many women they may done a ſhame,
For in your world that is now hold a game:
And though thee like nat a louer be,
Speke wel of loue, this penance yeue I thee,
And to the God of loue I ſhal ſo pray,
That he ſhall charge his ſeruáts by any way,
To forthren thee, and wel thy labour quite.
Go now thy waie, this penaunce is but lite:
And when this boke is made, yeue it ſ quene
On my behalfe, at Eltham, or at Shene.
The God of loue gan ſmile, and then he ſaid:
Woſt thou (qd. he) where this be wife or maid,
Or queene, or counteſſe, or of what degree,
That hath ſo litell penaunce yeuen thee,
That haſt deſerued ſore for to ſmart,
But pite renneth ſoone in gentle hart:
That maiſt thou ſene, ſhe kitheth what ſhe is é
And I anſwerde, naie ſir ſo haue I blis,
No more, but that I ſee well ſhe is good.
That is a trewe tale by mine hood.
(Qd. Loue) and thou knoweſt wel parde,
If it be ſo that thou auiſe the,
Haſt thou nat in a booke in thy cheſte,
The great goodneſſe of the quene Alceſte,
That turned was into a Daiſie,
She that for her husband chefe to die,
And eke to gone to hell, rather than he,
And Hercules reſcued her parde,
And brought her out of hel againe to blis?
And I anſwerde againe, and ſaid yes,
Now know I her, And is this good Alceſte,
The Daieſie, and mine owne harts reſte?
Now fele I well the goodneſſe of this wife,
That both after her death, and in her life,
Her great bounte doubleth her renoun,
Wel hath ſhe quit me mine affection,
That I haue to her floure the Daieſie,
No wonder is though Ioue her ſtelliſie,
As telleth Agaton, for her great goodneſſe,
Her white corowne beareth of it witneſſe:
For all ſo many vertues had ſhe,
As ſmal ſtorounes in her corowne be,
In remembraunce of her, and in honour,
Cibilla made the daieſie and the floure,
Icrowned al with white, as men may ſe,
And Mars yaue to her a corowne reed parde,
In ſtede of Rubies ſet amõg the white, (alite.
Therewith this quene wore reed for ſhame

When she was prayed so in her presence,
Then said Loue, a full great negligence
Was it to thee, that ilke time thou made,
(Hide Absolon thy tresses) in balade,
That thou forget in thy songe to sette,
Sith that thou art so greatly in her dette,
And wost well that kalender is she
To any woman, that woll louer be:
For she taught all the craft of trewe louing,
And namely of wifehode the liuing,
And all the bondes that she ought keepe,
Thy litel witte was thilke time a sleepe:
But now I charge thee vpon thy life,
That in thy legende make of this wife,
When thou hast other smale imade before,
And fare now well I charge thee no more,
But er I go, thus much I will the tell,
☞ Ne shal no trewe louer come in hell.

These other ladies sitting here a rowe,
Ben in my balade, if thou const hem know,
And in thy bokes, al thou shalt hem find,
Haue hem now in thy legende al in mind,
I meane of hem that ben in thy knowing,
For here ben twenty thousand mo sitting
Than thou knowest, good women all,
And trewe of loue, for ought that may befall:
Make the metres of hem as the leste,
I mote gone home, the sunne drayeth west,
To paradis, with all this companie,
And serue alway the fresh Daisie.
At Cleopatras I woll that thou begin,
And so forth, & my loue so shalt thou win,
For let see now what man that louer be,
Nol done so strong a paine for loue as she,
I wote wel that thou maist nat all it rime,
That such louers did in her time:
It were too long to reden and to here,
Suffiseth me thou make in this manere,
That thou reherce of al her life the great,
After these old authours listen for to treat,
For who so shall so many a story tell,
Sey shortly or he shall to long dwell:
And with that worde my bookes gan I take,
And right thus on my legende gan I make.

¶ Thus endeth the Prologue.

¶ Here beginneth the legende of Cleopatras Queene of Egipt.

AFter the death of Ptholome the King,
That all Egipt had in his gouerning,
Reigned his Queene Cleopatras,
Till on a time befel there such a caas,
That out of Rome was sent a senatour,
For to conqueren realmes and honour,
Vnto the toune of Rome, as was vsaunce,
To haue the world at her obeisaunce,
And soth to say, Antonius was his name,
So fil it, as fortune him ought a shame,
When he was fallen in prosperite:
Rebel vnto the toune of Rome is he,
And ouer al this, the suster of Cesare
He left her fallely, er that she was ware,
And would algates han another wife,
For which he toke with Rome, & Cesar strife.

Natheless, forsoth this ilke Senatour,
Was a full worthy gentil werriour,
And of his deth it was ful great damage,
But loue had brought this man in such a rage
And him so narow bounden in his laas,
And all for the loue of Cleopatras,
That al the world he set at no value,
Him thought there was nothing to him so due,
As Cleopatras, for to loue and serue,
Him thought that in armes for to serue,
In the defence of her, and of her right.

This noble queene, eke loued so this knight,
Through his desert, and for his chevalrie,
As certainly, but if that bokes lie,
He was of person, and of gentilnesse,
And of discretion, and of hardinesse,
Worthy to any wight that liuen may,
And she was faire, as is the rose in May:
And for to maken shorte is the best,
She wore his wife and had him as her lest.

The wedding and the feast to deuise,
To me that haue it take such empryse,
And so many a story for to make,
It were to long, lest that I should slake
Of thing that beareth more effect & charge,
For men may ouerlade a ship or barge,
And for thy, to effect then woll I skippe,
And al the remnaunt I woll let it slippe.

Octauian, that wood was of this dede,
Shope him an hoste on Antony to lede,
Al vtterly for his distruction,
With stoute Romaines, cruell as Lion
To ship they went, and thus I let hem saile.

Antonius was ware, and woll nat faile
To meten with these Romaines, if he may,
Took eke his rede, and both vpon a day
His wife and he, and all his host forth went
To ship anone, no lenger they ne stent,
And in the see it happed hem to mete,
Vp goeth the trumpe, & for to shoute & shete
And painen hem to set on with the sunne,
With grisly sown out goeth the great gunne,
And hertely they hurtlen in all at ones,
And fro the top doune cometh the great stones,
In goeth the grapenel so full of crokes,
Among the ropes ran the shering hokes,

In with the polaxe preaseth he and he,
Behind the maste beginneth he to flee,
And out againe, and driueth him ouer borde,
He sticketh him vpon his speares orde,
He rent the saile with hookes like a sith,
He bringeth the cup, and biddeth hembe blith,
He poureth peesen vpon the hatches slider,
With pots full of lime, they gone togider,
And thus the long day in sight they spend,
Till at the last, as euery thing hath end,
Antony is shent, and put him to the flight,
And all his folke to go, that best go might,
Fleeth eke the quene, with all her purple saile,
For strokes which ỳ went as thicke as haile,
No wonder was, he might it nat endure:
And when that Antony saw that auenture,
Alas (qd. he) the day that I was borne,
My worship in this day thus haue I lorne,
And for dispaire out of his wit he start,
And rofe himselfe anon throughout the hart,
Ere that he ferther went out of the place:
His wife, that could of Cesar haue no grace,
To Egipt is fled, for drede and for distresse,
But herkeneth ye that spoken of kindnesse,
Ye men that falsely swearen many an oth,
That ye woll die, if that your loue be wroth,
Here may ye seene of women such a trouth.
This woful Cleopatra had made such routh,
That there nis tong none that may it tell,
But on the morow she woll no lenger dwell,
But made her subtill werkmen make a shrine
Of all the rubies and the stones fine
In all Egipt, that she could espie,
And put full the shrine of spicerie,
And let the corse enbaume, and forth she fette
This dead corse, and in the shrine it shette,
And next the shrine a pit than doth she graue,
And all the serpents that she might haue,
She put hem in that graue, and thus she seide:
Now loue, to whom my sorowfull hart obeid,
So ferforthly, that fro that bitterest hour
That I you swore to ben all freely your,
I meane you, Antonius my knight,
That neuer waking in the day or night,
Ye nere out of mine harts remembraunce,
For wele or wo, for carole, or for daunce,
And in my selfe this couenaunt made I tho,
That right such as ye felten wele or wo,
As ferforth as it in my power lay,
Unrepreuable vnto my wifehood aye,
The same would I felen, like or death,
And thilke couenaunt while me lasteth breath
I woll fulfill, and that shall well be seene,
Was neuer vnto her loue a truer queene:
And with ỳ word, naked with full good hart,
Among the serpents in the pit she start,
And there she chese to haue her burying.
Anone the neders gonne her for to sting,
And she her death receiueth with good chere,
For loue of Antony that was her so dere.
And this is stondall, sooth it is no fable,
Now ere I find a man thus true and stable,
And woll for loue his death so freely take,
I pray God let our heads neuer ake.

¶ The legend of Tisbe of Babilon.

AT Babiloine whylome fill it thus,
The which toun the queen Semiramus
Let dichen all about, and wals make
Full hie, of harde tiles well ibake:
There were dwelling in this noble toun,
Two lords, which that were of great renoun,
And woneden so nigh vpon a grene,
That there nas but a stone wal hem betwene,
As oft in great tounes is the wonne:
And sothe to saine, that one man had a sonne,
Of all that lond, one of the lustiest,
That other had a doughter, the fairest
That estward in ỳ world was tho dwelling,
The name of euericke, gan to other spring,
By women that were neighbours aboute,
For in that countre yet withouten doute,
Maidens ben kept for iclousie,
Ful straite, lest they diddon some folie.
This yong man was cleped Piramus,
Thisbe hight the maide (Naso saith thus)
And thus by report, was her name ishoue,
That as they wore in age, so wore her loue:
And certaine, as by reason of her age,
Ther might haue ben betwixt hem mariage,
But that her fathers nolde it nat assent,
And bothe in loue like sore they brent,
That none of all her frends might it lette,
But priuely some time yet they mette
By sleight, and spaken some of her desire,
As wote the glede, and hotter is the fire,
For bid a loue, and it is ten times so wode.
This wal, which ỳ betwixt hem both stode,
Was clouen atwo, right fro the top adoun,
Of old time, of his foundatioun,
But yet this clift was so narrow and lite
It was nat seene, dere inough a mite,
But what is that, that loue cannot espie?
Ye louers two, if that I shall nat lie,
Ye founden first this little narrow clift,
And with a sound, as soft as any shrift,
They let her words through the clift pace,
And tolden, while that they stode in the place,
All her complaint of loue, and all her wo,
At euery time when they durst so.
On that one side of the wall stood he,
And on that other side stood Tisbe,

The ſweet ſoune of other to receiue,
And thus her wardeins would they diſceiue,
And euery day this wall they would threte,
And wiſh to God that it were doun ibete,
Thus wold they ſain, alas thou wicked wall,
Through thine enuie, thou vs letteſt all,
Why nilt thou cleaue, or fallen all atwo,
Or at the leaſt, but thou wouldeſt ſo,
Yet wouldeſt thou but ones let vs mete,
Or ones that we might kiſſen ſwete,
Then were we cured of our cares cold,
But natheleſſe, yet be we to thee hold,
In as much as thou ſuffreſt for to gone,
Our words through thy lime & eke thy ſtone,
Yet ought we with thee ben well apaid.
And when theſe idle words weren ſaid,
The cold wall they woulden kiſſe of ſtone,
And take her leaue, & forth they wolden gone,
And this was gladly in the euentide,
Or wonder erly, leaſt men it eſpide.
And long time they wrought in this manere,
Till on a day, when Phebus gan to clere,
Aurora with the ſtremes of her hete
Had dried vp the dew of herbes wete,
Unto this clift, as it was wont to be,
Come Piramus, and after come Tisbe,
And plighten trouth fully in her faie,
That ilke ſame night to ſteale awaie,
And to beguile her wardeins euerychone,
And forth out of the Citie for to gone,
And for the fields ben ſo brode and wide,
For to meet in o place at o tide:
They ſet markes, her meetings ſhould be
There king Ninus was grauen, vnder a tree,
For old paſnems, that idolies heried,
Uſeden tho in fields to ben buried.
And faſt by his graue was a well,
And ſhortely of this tale for to tell,
This couenaunt was affirmed wonder faſt,
And long hem thought that the ſunne laſt,
That it were gone vnder the ſee adoun.
This Tisbe hath ſo great affectioun,
And ſo great liking Piramus to ſee,
That when ſhe ſaw her time might be,
At night ſhe ſtale away full priuely,
With her face twimpled ſubtelly,
For all her friends (for to ſaue her trouth)
She hath forſake alas, and that is routh,
That euer woman would be ſo trew,
To truſten man, but ſhe the bet him knew:
And to the tree ſhe goeth a full good pace,
For loue made her ſo hardy in this caſe,
And by the well adoun ſhe gan her dreſſe,
Alas, then commeth a wild Lioneſſe
Out of the wood, withouten more arreſt,
With bloody mouth, of ſtrangling of a beaſt,
To drinken of the well there as ſhe ſat,
And when that Tisbe had eſpied that,
She riſt her vp, with a full dreery hart,
And in a cauc, with dreadfull foot ſhe ſtart,
For by the Moone ſhe ſaw it well withall,
And as ſhe ran, her wimple let ſhe fall,
And toke none hede, ſo fore ſhe was awhaped,
And eke ſo glad that ſhe was eſcaped,
And thus ſhe ſat, and lurketh wonder ſtill:
When that this Lioneſſe hath dronke her fill,
About the well gan ſhe for to wind,
And right anon the wimple gan ſhe find,
And with her bloody mouth it all to rent,
When this was done, no lenger ſhe ne ſtent,
But to the wood her way thē hath ſhe nome.
And at the laſt this Piramus is come,
But all too long (alas) at home was hee,
The Moone ſhone, men might well iſee,
And in his way, as that he come full faſt,
His eyen to the ground adoun he caſt,
And in the ſonde, as he beheld adoun,
He ſaw the ſteppes brode of a Lioun,
And in his hart he ſuddainly agroſe,
And pale he wext, therwith his hart aroſe,
And nere he came, & found the wimple torne,
Alas (qd. he) the day that I was borne,
This o night will both vs louers ſlee,
How ſhould I aſken mercy of Tisbee,
When I am he that haue you ſlaine, alas,
My bidding hath you ſlaine in this caas,
Alas, to bidde a woman gone by night
In place there as perill fallen might,
And I ſo ſlow, alas I ne had be
Here in this place, a furlong way ere ye,
Now what Lion that is in this forreſt,
My body mote he rent, or what beaſt
That wild is, gnawen mote he mine hart,
And with that word he to the wimple ſtart,
And kiſt it oft, and wept on it full ſore,
And ſaid wimple alas, there nis no more,
But thou ſhalt feele as well the blood of me,
As thou haſt felt the bleeding of Tisbe:
And with that word he ſmote him to the hart,
The blood out of the wound as brood ſtart,
As water, when the conduit broken is.
Now Tisbe, which that wiſt nat this,
But ſitting in her drede, ſhe thought thus,
If it ſo fall that my Piramus
Be comen hither, and may me nat iſind,
He may me holden falſe, and eke vnkind,
And out ſhe commeth, & after him gan eſpien,
Both with her hart, and with her eien,
And thought, I will him tellen of my drede,
Both of the Lioneſſe and of my dede.
And at the laſt her loue then hath ſhe found,
Beating with his heeles on the ground,
All bloody, and therewithall aback ſhe ſtart,
And like the waues quappe gan her hart,
And pale as boxe ſhe wexe, and in a throw
Auiſed her, and gan him well to know,

That

That it was Piramus her hart dere.
Who could write which a deadly chere
Hath Tisbe now, and now her haire she rent,
And how she gan her selfe to turment,
And how she lieth & swouneth on the ground,
And how she wept of teares full his wound,
How medleth she his blood with her cõplaint,
How with her blood her selfen gan she paint,
How clippeth she the ded corse, alas,
How doth this wofull Tisbe in this cas,
How kisseth she his frosty mouth so cold:
Who hath don this? & who hath ben so bold
To sleen my lefe? o speake Piramus,
I am thy Tisbe, that thee calleth thus,
And therwithall she liseeth vp his head.
This wofull man that was nat fully dead,
When that he herd the name of Tisbe crien,
On her he cast his heauy deadly eyen,
And doun againe, and yeeldeth vp the ghost.
Tisbe rist vp, without noise or bost,
And saw her wimple and his empty sheath,
And eke his sword, ꝑ him hath done to death,
Then spake she thus, thy wofull hand (qd. she)
Is strong ynough in such a werke to me,
For loue shal yeue me strength and hardinesse,
To make my wound large ynough I gesse,
I woll thee followen dead, and I woll be
Felaw, and cause eke of thy death (qd. she)
And though that nothing saue the death only,
Might thee fro me depart trewly,
Thou shalt no more depart now fro me
Than fro the death, for I woll go with thee.
And now ye wretched icelous fathers our,
We that weren whylome children your,
We praien you, withouten more enuie,
That in o graue we moten lie,
Sens loue hath brought vs this pitous end,
And right wise God, to euery louer send,
That louyth trewly, more prosperite
Than euer had Piramus and Tisbe,
And let no gentill woman her assure,
To putten her in such an auenture,
☞ But God forbid but a woman can
Ben as true and loving as a man,
And for my part I shall anon it kithe:
And with ꝑ word, his sword she tooke swithe,
That warme was of her loues blood, & hote,
And to the hart she her selfen smote.
And thus are Tisbe and Piramus ago,
Of true min I find but few mo
In all my bookes, saue this Piramus,
And therfore haue I spoken of him thus,
For it is deintie to vs men to find
A man that can in loue be true and kind.
Here may ye seene, what louer so he be,
A woman dare, and can as well as he.

¶ The legend of Dido, Queene of Cartage.

GLorie and honour Virgile Mantuan,
Be to thy name, and I shall as I can
Follow thy lanterne, as thou goest before me,
How Eneas to Dido was forswore,
In thine Eneide, and Naso woll I take
The tenour and the great effects make,
When Troy brought was to distruction
By Grekes sleight, and namely by Sinon,
Fayning the horse offred vnto Minerue,
Through which ꝑ many a Troian must sterue,
And Hector had after his death apered,
And fire so wood, it might nat ben stered,
In all the noble toure of Ilion,
That of the citie was the cheefe dungeon,
And all the country was so low ybrought,
And Priamus the king fordone and nought,
And Eneas was charged by Venus
To flien away, he tooke Ascanius
That was his son, in his right hand, and fled,
And on his backe he bare and with him led
His old father, cleped Anchises,
And by the way his wife Creusa he lees,
And mokell sorrow had he in his mind,
Ere that he could his fellawship find:
But at the last, when he had hem found,
He made him redy in a certaine stound,
And to the sea full fast he gan him hie,
And sailed forth with all his companie
Toward Italie, as would destinee:
But of his auentures in the see,
Nis nat to purpose for to speke of here,
For it accordeth nat to my matere,
But as I said, of him and of Dido
Shall be my tale, till that I haue do.
So long he sailed in the salt see,
Till in Libie vnneth arriued he,
So was he with the tempest all to shake,
And when that he the hauen had itake,
He had a knight was called Achates,
And him of all his fellowship he chees,
To gone with him, the country for tespie,
He tooke with him no more companie,
But forth they gon, and left his ships ride,
His feere and he, withouten any guide.
So long he walketh in this wildernesse,
Till at the last he met an huntaresse,
A bow in hond, and arrowes had she,
Her clothes cutted were vnto the knee,
But she was yet the fairest creature
That euer was ifourmed by nature,
And Eneas and Achates she gret,
And thus she to hem spake, when she hem met.

Saw

Saw ye(qd.she)as ye han walked wide,
Any of my sustren walke you beside,
With any wild Boze or other beast,
That they haue hunted to in this forest,
Itucked vp with arrowes in her caas?
Nay soothly Lady(qd.this Eneas)
But by thy beautie,as it thinketh me,
Thou mightest neuer yearthly woman be,
But Phebus sister art thou,as I gesse,
And if so be that thou be a goddesse,
Haue mercy on our labour and our wo.
I nam no goddesse soothly(qd.she)tho,
For maidens walken in this country here,
With arrows and with bow,in this manere:
This is the realme of Libie, there ye been,
Of which that Dido lady is and queen,
And shortly told all the occasion
Why Dido came into that region,
Of which as now me listeth nat to rime,
It nedeth nat,it nere but losse of time,
For this is all and some, it was Venus
His owne mother,that spake with him thus,
And to Cartage she bade he should him dight,
And vanished anon out of his sight.
I could follow word for word Vergile,
But it would lasten all too long while.
This noble queen, that cleped was Dido,
That whylom was the wife of Sichco,
That fairer was than the bright sunne,
This noble toun of Cartage hath begunne,
In which she reigneth in so great honour,
That she was hold of all Quenes flour,
Of gentilesse, of freedome,and of beaute,
That well was him,that might her ones se,
Of kings and Lords so desired,
That all the world her beautie had ifired,
She stood so well in euery wights grace.
When Eneas was come vnto the place,
Unto the maister temple of all the toun,
There Dido was in her deuotioun,
Full prively his way then hath he nome:
When he was in the large temple come,
I cannot saine,if that it be possible,
But Venus had him maked inuisible,
Thus saieth the booke,withouten any lees.
And when this Eneas and Achates
Hadden in this temple ben ouer all,
Then found they depainted on a wall,
How Troy and all the land destroyed was,
Alas that I was borne(qd.Eneas)
Through the world our shame is kid so wide,
Now it is painted vpon euery side:
We that weren in prosperite,
Ben now disclaundred,and in such degre,
No lenger for to liuen I ne kepe,
And with that word he brast out for to wepe
So tenderly,that routh it was to seene.
This fresh lady,of the citie Queen,
Stood in the temple,in her estate reiall,
So richely,and eke so faire withall,
So yong,so lustie,with her eyen glade,
That if that God that heauen & yearth made,
Would haue a loue,for beauty and goodnesse,
And womenhede,trouth,and semelinesse,
Whom should he louen but this lady swete?
There nis no woman to him halfe so mete:
Fortune,that hath the world in gouernaunce,
Hath sodainly brought in so new a chaunce,
That neuer was there yet so frened a caas,
For all the company of Eneas,
Which that we wend haue lorne in the see,
Arriued is nought ferre fro that citee,
For which the greatest of his lords, some
By auenture ben to the citie come
Unto that same temple for to seke
The Queene,and of her socour her beseke,
Such renome was ther spрог of her goodnes.
And when they had told all her distresse,
And all her tempest and all her hard caas,
Unto the Queene appeared Eneas,
And openly beknew that it was he,
Who had ioy then, but his meine,
That hadden found her lord,her gouernour.
The Queen saw they did him such honour,
And had heard oft of Eneas,ere tho,
And in her hart had routh and wo,
That euer such a noble man as he
Shall ben disherited in such degre,
And saw the man,that he was like a knight,
And suffisaunt of person and of might,
And like to ben a very gentilman,
And well his words he beset can,
And had a noble visage for the nones,
And formed well of brawne and of bones,
And after Venus had such faireneesse,
That no man might be halfe so faire I gesse,
And well a lord him semed for to be,
And for he was a straunger,somewhat she
Liked him the bet,as God doe bote,
To some folke often new thing is sote,
Anon her hart hath pitie of his wo,
And with pitie,Loue came also,
And thus for pitie and for gentilnesse,
Refreshed must he ben of his distresse.
She saied,certes,that she sorry was,
That he hath had such perill and such caas,
And in her friendly speech,in this manere
She to him spake,and saied as ye may here.
Be ye nat Venus sonne and Anchises,
In good faith,all the worship and energes
That I may goodly doen you,ye shall haue,
Your ships and your meine shall I saue,
And many a gentle word she spake him to,
And commaunded her messengers to go
The same day withouten any faile
His ships for to seeke,and hem vitaile,

Full

Full many a beast she to the ships sent,
And with the wine she gan hem to present,
And to her roiall paleis she her sped,
And Eneas alway with her she led.
What nedeth you the feasts to discriue,
Ne neuer better at ease was in his liue,
Ful was the feast of deinties and richesse,
Of instruments, of song, and of gladnesse,
And many an amorous looking and deuise.
This Eneas is come to Paradise
Out of the swolowe of hell, and thus in ioy
Remembreth him of his estate in Troy,
To dauncing chambers full of paraments,
Of rich beds, and of pauements,
This Eneas is ledde after the meat,
And with the queene when that he had seat,
And spices parted, and the wine agon,
Unto his chamber was he lad anon
To take his ease, and for to haue his rest
With all his folke, to doen what so him lest.
There nas courser well ibridled none,
Ne stede for the Justing well to gone,
Ne large palfrey, easie for the nones,
Ne iewell fret full of rich stones,
Ne sackes full of gold, of large wight,
Ne Rubie none that shineth by night,
Ne gentill hauten faukon heronere,
Ne hound for Hart, wild Boze, or Dere,
Ne cup of gold, with flozeins new ibette,
That in the lond of Libie may ben gette,
That Dido ne hath Eneas it sent,
And all is paied, what that he hath spent.
Thus can this honorable queene her gests call,
As she that can in freedome passen all.
Eneas soothly eke, without lees,
Hath sent to his shippe by Achates
After his sonne, and after rich things,
Both sceptre, clothes, brooches, and eke rings,
Some for to weare, and some to present
To her, that all these noble things him sent,
And bad his sonne how that he should make
The presenting, and to the queene it take.
Repaired is this Achates againe,
And Eneas full blisfull is and faine,
To seene his yong sonne Ascanius,
For to him it was reported thus,
That Cupido, that is the god of Loue,
At prayer of his mother high aboue,
Had the likenesse of the child itake,
This noble queene enamoured for to make
On Eneas: but of that scripture
Be as be may, I make of it no cure,
But soth is this, ỹ queen hath made such chere
Unto this child, that wonder was to here,
And of the present that his father sent,
She thanked him oft in good entent.
Thus is this queen in pleasaunce and ioy,
With all these new lustie folke of Troy,
And of the deeds hath she more enquired
Of Eneas, and all the story leired
Of Troy, and all the long day they tway
Entendeden for to speake and for to play,
Of which there gan to breden such a fire,
That silly Dido hath now such desire
With Eneas her new guest to deale,
That she lost her hew and eke her heale.
Now to the effect, now to the fruit of all,
Why I haue told this story, and tellen shall.
Thus I begin, it fell vpon a night,
When that the Mone vprisen had her light,
This noble Queene vnto her rest went,
She sighed sore, and gon her selfe tourment,
she walketh, waloweth, & made many braied,
As doen these louers, as I haue heard saied,
And at the last, vnto her suster Anne
She made her mone, & thus spake she thã.
Now dere suster mine, what may it be
That me agasteth in my dreame (qd. she)
This ilke new Troian is so in my thought,
For that me thinketh he is so well iwrought,
And eke so likely to ben a man,
And therwith so mikell good he can,
That all my loue and life lieth in his cure,
Haue ye nat heard him tell his auenture.
Now certes Anne, if that ye rede me,
I woll faine to him iwedded be,
This is the effect, what should I more feine,
In him lieth all, to do me liue or deine.
Her suster Anne, as she that coud her good,
Said as her thought, & somdele it withstood,
But hereof was so long a sermoning,
It were too long to make rehearsing:
But finally, it may not be withstonde,
Loue woll loue, for no wight woll it wonde,
The dawning vp rist out of the see,
This amorous Quene chargeth her meine,
The nettes dresse, and speres brode and kene,
In hunting woll this lustie fresh Quene,
So pricketh her this new iolly wo,
To horse is all her lustie folke igo,
Unto the court the hounds ben ibrought,
And vp on courser swift as any thought,
Her yong knights heuen all about,
And of her women eke an huge rout,
Upon a thicke palfray, paper white,
With saddle redde, enbrouded with delite,
Of gold the barres, vp enbossed high,
Sate Dido, all in gold and perrey wrigh,
And she is faire, as is the bright morrow,
That healeth sicke folkes of nights sorrow:
Upon a courser, startling as the fire,
Ywen might tourne him with a little wire.
But Eneas, like Phebus to deuise,
So was he fresh arrayed in his wise,
The fomie bridle, with the bitte of gold,
Gouerneth he right as himselfe hath would,

And

And forth this noble Queene, this lady ride
On hunting, with this Troian by her side,
The herd of Harts founden is anon,
With hey go bet, prike thou, let gon, let gon,
Why nill the Lion comen or the Beare,
That I might hun ones mete with this spear,
Thus came this yong folke, and vp they kill
The wild Harts, and haue hem at her will.

Emong all this, to rombien gan the heuen,
The thunder rored with a grilly steuen,
Doune come the rain, with haile & sleet so fast,
With heauens fire, that made so sore agast
This noble Queene, and also her meine,
That ech of hem was glad away to flie,
And shortly, fro the tempest her to saue,
She fled her selfe into a little caue,
And with her went this Eneas also,
I not with hem if there went any mo,
The authour maketh of it no mention:
And here began the deepe affection
Betwixt hem two, this was the first morrow
Of her gladnesse, and ginning of her sorrow,
For there hath Eneas tkneled so,
And told her all his hurt and all his wo,
And sworne so deepe to her to be true,
For wele or wo, and chaunge for no new,
And as a false louer, so well can plaine,
That silly Dido rewed on his paine,
And tooke him for husbond, & became his wife
For euermore, while that hem last life,
And after this, when that the tempest stent,
With mirth out as they came, home they wēt.
The wicked fame vp rose, and that anon,
How Eneas hath with the Queene igon
Into the caue, and demed as hem list:
And when ỹ king (that Yarbas hight) it wist,
As he that had her loued euer his life,
And woed her to haue to his wife,
Such sorrow as he hath maked, & such chere,
It is a routh and pitie for to here,
But as in lone, alday it happeth so,
That one shall laughen at anothers wo.
Now laugheth Eneas, and is in ioy,
And more richesse than euer was in Troy.

O silly woman, full of innocence,
Full of pitie, of truth, and continence,
What maked you to men to trusten so?
Haue ye such routh vpon her fained wo,
And haue such old ensamples you before?
See ye nat all how they ben forsworne,
Where see ye one, that he ne hath lait his leke,
Or ben vnkind, or doen her some mischefe,
Or pilled her, or bosted of his dede,
Ye may as well it seene, as ye may rede.
Take hede now of this great gentilman,
This Troian, that so well her please can,
That faineth him so true and obeising,
So gentill, and so priuie of his doing,
And can so well doen all his obeysaunce
To her, at feasts and at daunce,
And when she goeth to temple, & home again,
And fasten till he hath his lady seen,
And beaten in his deuises for her sake,
Not I nat what, and songs would he make,
Iusten, and doen of armes many things,
Send her letters, tokēs, broches, and rings.

Now herkneth how he shal his lady serue:
There as he was in perill for to sterue
For hunger and for mischefe in the see,
And desolate, and fled fro his countree,
And all his folke with tempest all to driuen,
She hath her body and eke her realme yeuen
Into his hond, there she might haue been
Of other land than of Cartage a Queen,
And liued in ioy inough, what would ye more.

This Eneas, that hath thus deepe iswore,
Is wearie of his craft within a throw,
The hote earnest is all ouerblow,
And priuely he doeth his ships dight,
And shapeth him to steale away by night.

This Dido hath suspection of this,
And thought well that it was all amis,
For in his bed he lieth a night and liketh,
She asketh him anon, what him misliketh,
My dere hart, which that I loue most.

Certes (qd. he) this night my fathers ghost
Hath in my slepe me so sore tormented,
And eke Mercury his message hath presented,
That needs to the conquest of Italie
My destinie is soone for to saile,
For which me thinketh, brosten is mine hart:
Therwith his false teares out they start,
And taketh her within his armes two.

Is that in earnest (qd. she) woll ye so,
Haue ye nat sworne, to wife me to take,
Alas, what woman woll ye of me make?
I am a Gentlewoman, and a Queen,
Ye woll not fro your wife thus foule fleen,
That I was borne alas, what shall I do?

To tellen in short, this noble Queen Dido
She seeketh hallowes, and doth Sacrifise,
She kneeleth, crieth, that routh is to deuise,
Coniureth him, and profereth him to be
His thrall, his seruaunt, in the best degre,
She falleth him to foot, and sowneth there,
Discheuile with her bright gilt heere,
And saieth, haue mercy, let me with you ride,
These lords, which that wonnen me beside,
Woll me distroyen only for your sake:
And ye woll me now to wife take,
As ye haue sworne, then woll I yeue you leue
To slaen me with your sword now sone at eue,
For then yet shall I dien as your wife,
I am with child, and yeue my child his life,
Mercy lord, haue pitie in your thought,
But all this thing auaileth her right nought,

And

And as a traitour forth gan to saile
Toward the large countrey of Italie,
And thus hath he left Dido in wo and pine,
And wedded there a ladie hight Lauine,
A cloth he left, and eke his sword standing,
When he fro Dido stale in her sleeping,
Right at her beds head, so gan he hie,
When that he stale away to his naue.
Which cloth, when silly Dido gan awake,
She hath it kist full oft for his sake,
And said, O sweet cloth, while Iupiter it lest,
Take my soule, vnbind me of this vnrest,
I haue fulfilled of fortune all the course,
And thus alas, without en his socourse,
Twentie time iswounded hath the than,
And when that she vnto her suster Anne
Complained had, of which I may not write,
So great routh I haue it for to endite,
And bad her nourice and her sustren gone
To fetchen fire, and other things anone,
And saied that she would sacrifie,
And when she might her time well aspie,
Upon the fire of Sacrifice she start,
And with his sword she rofe her to the hart:
But as mine authour saith, yet this she seide,
Or she was hurt, before or she deide,
She wrote a letter anon, and thus began.
Right so (qd. she) as the white Swan
Ayenst his death beginneth for to sing,
Right so to you I make my complaining,
Not that I trow to getten you againe,
For well I wote it is all in vaine,
Sens that the gods ben contrarious to me,
But sin my name is lost through you (qd. she)
I may well lese a word or you or letter,
Albeit I shall be neuer the better,
For thilke wind that blew your ship away,
The same wind hath blow away your say,
But who so woll all this letter haue in mind,
Rede Ouide, and in him he shall it find.

¶ The Legend of Hipsiphile and Medea.

Thou root of false louers, Duke Jason,
Thou fleer, deuourer, and confusion
Of gentlewomen, gentle creatures,
Thou madest thy reclaiming and thy lures
To Ladies of thy feathliche apparaunce,
And of thy words farsed with pleasaunce,
And of thy fained trouth, and thy manere,
With thine obeisaunce and humble chere,
And with thine counterfeited paine and wo,
There other fallen one, thou falsed two,
O oft swore thou that thou wouldest die
For loue, when thou ne feltest maladie,
Saue foule delite, which thou callest loue,
If that I liue, thy name shall be shoue
In English, that thy deceit shall be know,
Haue at thee Jason, now thine honor is blow,
But certes, it is both routh and wo,
That Loue with false louers werketh so,
For they shall haue well better loue and chere,
Than he that hath bought loue full dere,
Or had in armes many a bloodie bore,
For euer as tender a Capon cateth the Fore,
Though he be fals, & hath the foule betraied,
As shall the good man that therefore paied,
Although he haue to the Capon skill & right,
The false Fore woll haue his part at night.
On Jason this enlample is well seene,
By Hipsiphile and Medea the Queene.
In Thessalie, as Ouide teileth vs,
There was a knight, that hight Peleus,
That had a brother, which that hight Eson,
And when for age he might vnnethes gon,
He gaue to Peleus the gouerning
Of al his reign, and made him lord and king,
Of which Eson, this Jason getten was,
That in his time in all that land there nas
Nat such a famous knight of gentillesse,
Of freedome, of strength, and of lustinesse,
After his fathers death he bare him so,
That there nas none that list ben his fo,
But did him all honour and companie,
Of which this Peleus hath great enuie,
Imagining, that Jason might be
Enhaunsed so, and put in such degre,
With loue of lords of his regioun,
That from his reigne he may be put adoun,
And in his wit a night compassed he
How Jason might best destroyed be,
Without slaunder of his compasment:
And at the last he tooke auisement,
That to send him into some ferre countre,
There as this Jason may destroyed be,
This was his wit, all made he to Jason
Great chere of looke, and of affection,
For drede least his lords it espide,
So fell it, as fame renneth wide,
There was such riding ouer all, and such loos,
That in an Ile, that called was Colcos,
Beyond Troy Eastward in the see,
That there was a Ram, that men might see,
That had a flees of gold, that shone so bright,
That no where was there such another sight,
But it was kept alway with a Dragoun,
And many other maruailes vp and doun,
And with two Buls, maked all of Bras,
That spitten fire, and much thing there was,
But this was eke the tale nathelees,
That who so would winnen thilke Flees,
He must both, or he it winnen might,

With the Buls and the Dragon sight.
And king Otes lord was of that Ile,
This Pelcus bethought vpon this while,
That he his nephew Jason would exhort,
To sailen to that lond, him to disport,
And saied, nephew, if it might bee,
That such worship might fall thee,
That thou this famous treasure might win,
And bring it my region within,
It were to me great pleasaunce and honour,
Then were I hold to quite thy labour,
And all thy coasts I woll my selfe make,
& chose what folke thou wolt with thee take,
Let see now, darste thou taken this voyage.
Jason was yong, and lustie of corage,
And vndertooke to doen this like empryse,
Anon Argus his ships gan deuise.
With Jason went the strong Hercules,
And many another, that he with him ches,
But who so asketh, who is with him gon,
Let him rede Argonauticon,
For he woll tell a tale long ynough.
Philoctetes anon the saile vp drough,
When the wind was good, and gan him hie
Out of his countrey, called Thessalie,
So long they sayled in the salt see,
Till in the Isle of Lemnon arriued hee,
All be this nat rehearsed of Guido,
yet saieth Ouide in his Epistles so,
And of this Isle lady was and Quene,
The faire yong Hipsiphile the shene,
That whylom Thoas doughter was ỹ king.
Hipsiphile was gone in her playing,
And roming on the cleuis by the see,
Under a banke anone espied she
Where lay the ship, that Jason gan arriue:
Of her goodnesse adoune she sendeth blue,
To weten, if that any straunge wight
With tempest thider were iblow anight,
To doen him succour, as was her vsaunce,
To furtheren euery wight, & done pleasaunce,
Of very bountie, and of courtesie.
This messenger adoune him gan to hie,
And found Jason and Hercules also,
That in a cogge to lond were igo,
Hem to refresben, and to take the aire.
The morning attempre was and faire,
And in her way this messenger hem mette,
Full cunningly these lords two he grette,
And did his message, asking hem anon
If that they were broken, or ought wo begon,
Or had need of lodesmen or vitaile,
For succour they should nothing faile,
For it was vtterly the Queenes will.
Jason answerde meekely and still:
My lady (qd. he) thanke I hartely
Of her goodnesse, vs needeth truly
Nothing as now, but that we weary be,
And come for to play out of the see,
Till that the wind be better in our way.
This lady rometh by the cliffe to play
With her meine, endlong the strond,
And findeth this Jason and this other stond
In speaking of this thing, as I you told.
This Hercules and Jason gan beholde
How that the queen it was, a faire her grete,
Anone right as they with this lady mete,
And she tooke heed, and knew by her manere,
By her array, by words, and by chere,
That it were gentill men of great degree,
And to the castle with her leadeth she
These straunge folke, & doth hem great honour,
And asketh hem of trauaile and of labour
That they haue suffred in the salt see,
So that within a day two or three
She knew by the folke that in his ships be,
That it was Jason full of renomee,
And Hercules, that had the great loos,
That soughten the auentures of Colcos,
And did hem honour more than before,
And with hem dealed euer longer the more,
For they ben worthy folke withouten les,
And namely most she spake with Hercules,
To him her hart bare, he should be
Sadde, wise, and true, of words auise,
Withouten any other affection
Of loue, or any other imagination.
This Hercules hath this Jason praised,
That to the Sunne he hath it vp raised,
That halfe so true a man there nas of loue
Under the cope of heauen, that is aboue,
And he was wise, hardie, secret, and riche,
Of these iii. points, there nas none him liche,
Of freedome passed he, and lustie head,
All tho that liuen, or ben dead,
Thereto so great a gentill man was he,
And of Thessalie likely king to be,
There nas no lacke, but that he was agast
To loue, and for to speake shamefast,
Him had leuer himselfe to murder and die,
Than that men should a louer him espie,
As would God that I had ipeue
My blood and flesh, so that I might liue
With the bones, ỹ he had aught where a wife
For his estate, for such a lustie life
She shoulden lede with this lustie knight.
And all this was compassed on the night
Betwixe him Jason, and this Hercules,
Of these two here was a shrewd lees,
To come to house vpon an innocent,
For to bedote this Queene, was her entent:
And Jason is as coy as is a maid,
He looketh pitously, but naught he saied,
But freely yaue he to her counsailers
Yefts great, and to her officers,
As would God that I leiser had and time,

By

By processe,all his wrong for to rime:
But in this house,if any false louer be,
Right as himselfe now doeth,right so did he,
With fayning,and with euery subtill dede,
Ye get no more of me,but ye woll rede
Thoriginall,that telleth all the caas.
The sooth is this,that Jason wedded was
Unto this queene,and tooke of her substaunce
What so him list,vnto his purueyaunce,
And vpon her begate children two,
And drough his saile,and saw her neuer mo:
A letter sent she him certaine,
Which were too long to writen and to saine,
And him reproueth of his great vntrouth,
And praieth him on her to haue some routh,
And on his children two,she saied him this,
That they be like of all thing iwis
To Jason,saue they couth nat beguile,
And praied God,or it were long while,
That she that had his hart ireft her fro,
Must finden him vntrue also:
And that she must both her children spill,
And all tho that suffreth him his will:
And rue to Jason was she all her life,
And euer kept her chast,as for his wife,
Ne neuer had she ioy at her hart,
But died for his loue of sorrowes smart.
To Colcos come is this duke Jason,
That is of loue deuourer and dragon,
As Natire appeteth forme alway,
And from forme to forme it passen may,
Or as a well that were bottomles,
Right so can Jason haue no pees,
For to desiren through his appetite,
To doen with gentlewomen his delite,
This is his lust,and his felicitie,
Jason is romed forth to the citie,
That whylome cleped was Jasonicos,
That was the master toune of all Colcos,
And hath told the cause of his comming
Unto Otes,of that countrey king,
Praying him that he must doen his assay
To get the Fleese of gold,if that he may,
Of which the king assenteth to his boone,
And doeth him honour,as it is to doone,
So forforth,that his doughter and his heire
Medea,which that was so wise and faire,
That fairer saw there neuer man with ie,
He made her doen to Jason companie
At meat,and sitte by him in the hall.
Now was Jason a seemely man withall,
And like a Lord,and had a great renoun,
And of his looke as royall as a Lioun,
And godly of his speech,and familiere,
And coud of loue all the craft and art plenere
Withouten booke,with euriche obseruaunce,
And as fortune her ought a foule mischaunce,
She wore enamoured vpon this man.
Jason(qd.she)for ought I see or can,
As of this thing,the which ye ben about,
Ye and your selfe ye put in much dout,
For who so woll this auenture atcheue,
He may nat wele asterten,as I leue,
Withouten death,but I his helpe be,
But natheless,it is my will(qd.she)
To forthren you,so that ye shall nat die,
But turnen sound home to your Thessalie.
My right lady(qd.this Jason)tho,
That ye haue of my death or my wo
Any regard,and doen me this honour,
I wot well,that my might,ne my labour,
May nat deserue it my liues day,
God thanke you,there I ne can ne may,
Your man am I,and lowely you beseech
To ben my helpe,without more speech,
But certes for my death shall I not spare.
Tho gan this Medea to him declare
The peril of this case,fro point to point
Of his bataple,and in what disioint
He more stonde,of which no creature
Saue onely she,ne might his life assure:
And shortly,right to the point for to go,
They ben accorded fully betwixe hem two,
That Jason shall her wedde,as true knight,
And terme yset to come soone at night
Unto her chambre,and make there his othe
Upon the goddes,that he for lese or lothe
Ne shulde her neuer falsen night ne day,
To ben her husband whyle he liue may,
As she that from his deth him saued here,
And herupon at night they mette yfere,
And doth his othe,a gode with her to bedde,
And on the morow vpward he him spedde,
For she hath taught him how he shall nat faile
The fleees to winne,and stinten his bataile,
And saued him his life,and his honour,
And gate him a name,as a conquerour,
Right through the sleight of her enchantment;
Now hath Jason the fleese,and home is went
With Medea,a treasours full great wonne,
But vnwist of her father she is gonne
To Thessalie,with duke Jason her lefe,
That afterward hath brought her to mischefe,
For as a traytour he is from her go,
And with her left yong children two,
And falsely hath betraied her,alas,
And euer in loue a chefe traytour he was,
And wedded yet the thirde wife anon,
That was the doughter of king Creon.
This is the meede of louing and guerdon,
That Medea receiued of duke Jason
Right for her trouth,and for her kindnesse,
That loued him better than her selfe I gesse,
And left her father,and her heritage,
And of Jason this is the vassalage,
That in his dayes nas neuer none yfound

So falſe a louer, going on the ground,
And therfore in her letter thus ſhe ſaid,
Firſt when ſhe of his falſeneſſe him vpbraid:
Why liked me thy yellow haire to ſee,
More than the bounds of mine honeſtie?
Why liked me thy youth and thy fairenеſſe,
And of thy tong the infinite graciouſneſſe?
O haddeſt thou in thy conqueſt dead ybe,
Ful mikel vntrouth had there died with thee.
Well can Ouide her letter in verſe endite,
Which were as now too long for to write.

¶ The Legende of Lucrece of Rome.

NOw mote I ſaine the exiling of kings
Of Rome, for her horrible doings
Of the laſt king Tarquinius,
As ſaith Ouid, and Titus Liuius,
But for that cauſe tell I nat this ſtorie,
But for to prayſen, and drawen in memorie
The very wife, the very Lucrelle,
That for her wifehood, and her ſtedfaſtneſſe,
Nat only that theſe painems her commend,
But that cleped is in our Legend
The great Auſtyn, that hath compaſſioun
Of this Lucrece that ſtarfe in Rome toun,
And in what wiſe, I woll but ſhortly treat,
And of this thing I touch but the great.

When Ardea beſieged was about
With Romanes, that full ſterne were & ſtout,
Full long lay the ſiege, and little wroughten,
So ỹ they were halfe idle, as hem thoughten,
And in his play Tarquinius the yong,
Gan for to pape, for he was light of tong,
And ſaid, that it was an idle life,
No man did there more than his wife,
And let vs ſpeke of wiues that is beſt,
Bzaile euery man his owne as him leſt,
And with our ſpeech let vs eaſe our hert.

A knight (that hight Collatin) vp ſtert,
And ſayd thus, nay ſir it is no nede
To trowen on the word, but on the dede:
I haue a wife (qd. he) that as I trow
Is holden good of all that euer her know,
Go we to Rome to night, and we ſhull ſee.
Tarquinius anſwerde, that liketh mee.
To Rome they be comen, and faſt hem dight
To Colatins houſe, and downe they light,
Tarquinius, and eke this Colatine,
The huſbond knew the eſters well and fine,
And full priuely into the houſe they gone.
Nor at the gate porter was there none,
And at the chamber dore they abide:
This noble wife ſate by her beds ſide
Diſcheueled, for no mailice ſhe ne thought,
And ſoft wooll ſayth Lucie that ſhe wrought,
To keepen her from ſlouth and idleneſſe,
And bad her ſeruaunts doen her buſineſſe,
And aſketh hem, what tidings heren ye?
How ſayth men of the ſiege, how ſhall it be?
God would the wals were fallen adoun,
Mine huſbond is too long out of this toun,
For which drede doth me ſore to ſmert,
Right as a ſword it ſtingeth to mine hert,
When I thinke on this or of that place,
God ſaue my lord, I pray him for his grace:
And therwithall ſo tenderly ſhe gan weepe,
And of her werke ſhe tooke no more keepe,
But meekely ſhe let her eyen fall,
And thilke ſemblant ſate her well withall,
And eke her teares full of beauineſſe,
Embelliſſed her wifely chaſtneſſe,
Her countenaunce is to hert digne,
For they accorden in deed and ſigne,
And with that word her huſbond Collatin,
Or ſhe of him was ware, came ſtertling in,
And ſaid, drede thee nat, for I am here,
And ſhe anone vp roſe, with bliſſfull chere,
And killed him, as of wiues is the wonne.

Tarquinius, this proud kings ſonne
Conceiued hath her beautie and her chere,
Her yellow haire, her bountie, & her manere,
Her hew, her words, ỹ ſhe hath complained,
And by no craft her beautie was nat fained,
And caught to this lady ſuch deſire,
That in his hert he brent as any fire,
So woodly, that his wit was all forgotten,
For well thought he ſhe ſhould nat be gotten,
And aye the more he was in diſpaire,
The more coueiteth, and thought her faire,
His blind luſt was all his coueiting.
On morrow, when the bird began to ſing,
Unto the ſiege he commeth full priuely,
And by himſelfe he walketh ſoberly,
The image of her recording alway new,
Thus lay her hair, & thus freſh was her hew,
Thus ſate, thus ſpan, this was her chere,
Thus fair ſhe was, and this was her manere:
All this conceit his heart hath new itake,
And as the ſee, with tempeſt all to ſhake,
That after when the ſtorme is all ago,
Yet woll the water quappe a day or two,
Right ſo, though that her forme were abſent,
The pleaſaunce of her forme was preſent,
But natheleſſe, nat pleaſaunce, but delite,
Or an vnright full talent with diſpite,
For maugre her, ſhe ſhall my lemman be:
Hap helpeth hardy man alway (qd. he)
What end that I make, it ſhall be ſo,
And girt him with his ſword, and gan to go,
And he forthright, till to Rome he come,

And

And all alone his way that he hath nome,
Unto the house of Colatin full right,
Doun was ỹ sunne, & day hath lost his light,
And in he come, vnto a priuie halke,
And in the night full theefely gan he stalke,
When euery wight was to his rest brought,
Ne no wight had of treason such a thought,
Whether by window or by other gin,
With sword ydraw, shortly he commeth in
There as she lay, this noble wife Lucresse,
And as she woke, her bed she felt presse:
What beast is that (qd. she) that wayeth thus.
I am the kings sonne Tarquinius
(Qd. he) but and thou crie, or any noise make,
Or if thou any creature awake,
By thilke God, that formed man of liue,
This sword through thine hart shall I riue,
And therwithall vnto her throte he stert,
And set the sword all sharpe on her hert:
No word she spake, she hath no might therto,
What shall she saine, her wit is all ago,
Right as when a wolfe seeth a lamb alone,
To whom shall she complaine or make mone:
What, shall she fight with an hardy knight,
Well wote men a woman hath no might:
What, shall she crie, or how shall she astert?
ỹ hath her by the throte, with sword at hert,
She asketh grace, and said all that she can.
Wolt thou nat (qd. this cruell man)
As wisely Jupiter my soule saue,
I shall in thy stable slea thy knaue,
And lay him in thy bed, and loud crie,
That I thee find in such auoutrie,
And thus thou shalt be dead, and also lese
Thy name, for thou shalt nat chese.
This Romans wiues loueden so her name
At thilke time, and dreden so the shame,
That what for fere of slander, & drede of death
She lost both at ones wit and breath,
And in a swough she lay, and wote so dead,
Men mighten smite off her arme or head,
She feleth nothing, neither foule ne faire.
Tarquinius, that art a kings heire,
And shouldest as by linage and by right
Done as a lord, and a very knight,
Why hast thou done dispite to chualrie?
Why hast thou done thy lady villanie?
Alas, of thee this was a villanous dede,
But now to the purpose, in the story I rede,
When he was gon, & this mischaunce is fall,
This lady sent after her friends all,
Father, mother, and husbond, all ifere,
And discheueled with her haire clere,
In habite such as women vsed tho
Unto the burying of her friends go,
She sate in hall, with a sorowfull sight,
Her friends asken what her aylen might,
And who was dead, and she sate aye weeping,
A word for shame ne may she forthbring,
Ne vpon hem she durst nat behold,
But at the last of Tarquiny she hem told
This rufull case, and all this thing horrible,
The wo to tell were impossible
That she and all her friends make at ones,
All had folkes harts ben of stones,
It might haue maked hem vpon her rew,
Her hart was so wifely and so trew.
She said, that for her gilt ne for her blame
Her husbond should nat haue the foule name,
That would she nat suffren by no way:
And they answerde all vnto her fay,
That they forgaue it her, for it was right,
It was no gilt, it lay nat in her might,
And saiden her ensamples many one,
But all for naught, for thus she said anone:
Be as be may (qd. she) of forgiuing,
I will nat haue no forgift for nothing,
But priuely she cought forth a knife,
And therwithall she raft her selfe her life,
And as she fell adowne she cast her looke,
And of her clothes yet heed she tooke,
For in her falling yet she had a care,
Least that her feet or such things lay bare,
So well she loued cleannesse, and eke trouth,
Of her had all the towne of Rome routh,
And Brutus hath by her chast blood swore,
That Tarquin should ybanished be therefore,
And all his kinne, and let the people call,
And openly the tale be told hem all,
And openly let carry her on a bere
Through all ỹ town, that men may see & here
The horrible deed of her oppression,
Ne neuer was there king in Rome toun
Sens thilke day, and she was holden there
A saint, and euer her day yhallowed dere,
As in her law: and thus endeth Lucresse
The noble wife, Titus beareth witnesse:
I tell it, for she was of loue so trew,
Ne in her will she chaunged for no new,
And in her stable hart, sadde and kind,
That in these women men may all day find
There as they cast her hare, there it dwelleth,
For well I wote, that Christ himselfe telleth,
That in Israel, as wide as is the lond,
That so great faith in all the lond he ne fond,
As in a woman, and this is no lie,
And as for men, looke ye such tyrannie
They doen all day, allay hem who so list,
The truest is full brotell for to trist.

¶ The legend of Ariadne of Athens.

Iudge infernall Minos, of Crete king,
Now commeth thy lot, thou commest on the ring,

Nat for thy sake only written is this storie,
But for to clepe ayen vnto memorie,
Of Theseus the great vntrouth of loue,
For which the gods of heauen aboue
Ben wroth & wrath haue take for thy sinne,
Be red for shame, now I thy life beginne.

Minos, that was the mighty king of Crete,
That had an hundred cities strong and grete,
To schoole hath sent his sonne Androgeus
To Athens, of the which it happed thus,
That he was slaine, learning Philosophie,
Right in that citie, nat but for enuie.

The great Minos, of the which I speke,
His sonnes death is come for to wreke,
Alcathoe he besieged hard and long,
But nathelesse, the wals be so strong,
And Nisus, that was king of that cite,
So chiualrous, that little dredeth he,
Of Minos or his hoast tooke he no cure,
Till on a day befell an auenture,
That Nisus doughter stood vpon the wall,
And of the siege saw the manner all:
So happed it, that at scarmishing,
She cast her hart vpon Minos the king,
For his beautie, and his chiualrie,
So sore, that she wend for to die.
And shortly of this processe for to pace,
She made Minos winnen thilke place,
So that the citie was all at his will,
To sauen whom him list, or els spill,
But wickedly he quit her kindnesse,
And let her drench in sorrow and distresse,
Nere that the gods had of her pite,
But that tale were too long as now for me,
Athenes was this king Minos also,
As Alcathoe, and other townes mo,
And this the effect, that Minos hath so driuen
Hem of Athenes, that they mote him yeuen
Fro yere to yere her owne children dere
For to be slaine, as ye shall after here.

This Minos hath a monster, a wicked best,
That was so cruell, that without arrest,
When ỳ a mã was brought into his presence,
He would him eat, there helpeth no defence:
And euery third yeare withouten dout,
They casten lotte, as it came about,
On rich and poore, he must his sonne take,
And of his child he must present make
To Minos, to saue him or to spill,
Or let his beast deuour him at his will.
And this hath Minos done right in dispite,
To wreke his sonne was set all his delite,
And make hem of Athenes his thrall
Fro yere to yere, while he liuen shall.
And home he saileth when this toun is won,
This wicked custome is so long yron,
Till of Athenes king Egeus
Mote senden his owne sonne Theseus,
Sens that the lotte is fallen him vpon
To ben deuoured, for grace is there non.
And forth is ladde this wofull yong knight
Unto ỳ country of king Minos full of might,
And in a prison kettred fast is he,
Till the time he should yfreten be.

Well maist thou wepe, O wofull Theseus,
That art a kings sonne, and damned thus,
Me thinketh this, that thou art depe yhold
To whom that saued thee fro cares cold,
And now if any woman helpe thee,
Well oughtest thou her seruaunt for to bee,
And ben her true louer yere by yere,
But now to come ayen to my matere.

The toure, there this Theseus is throw,
Down in the bottome derk, and wonder low,
Was ioyning to the wall of a foreine,
Longing vnto the doughtren tweine
Of Minos that in her chambers grete
Dwelten aboue the maister strete
Of the towne, in ioy and in sollas:
Not I nat how it happed peraas,
As Theseus complained him by night,
The kings doughter, that Ariadne hight,
And eke her suster Phedra, herden all
His complaint, as they stood on the wall,
And looked vpon the bright moone,
Hem list nat to go to bed so soone:
And of his wo they had compassion,
A kings sonne to be in such prison,
And ben deuoured, thought hem great pite:
Then Ariadne spake to her suster free,
And said: Phedra leue suster dere,
This wofull lords sonne may ye nat here,
How pitously he complaineth his kin,
And eke his poore estate that he is in?
And guiltelesse, certes now it is routh,
And if ye woll assent, by my trouth,
He shall ben holpen, how so that we do.

Phedra answerde, iwis me is as wo
For him, as euer I was for any man,
And to his helpe the best rede I can,
Is, that we done the gailer prively
To come and speke with vs hastely,
And done this wofull man with him to come,
For if he may this monster ouercome,
Then were he quit, there is none other boot,
Let vs well test him at his hart root,
That if so be that he a weapon haue,
Where that he his life dare kepe or saue,
Fighten with this fiend, and him defend,
For in the prison, here as he shall descend,
Ye wote well, that the beast is in a place
That is not derke, & hath roume and eke space
To welde an axe, or swerde, staffe, or knife,
So that me thinketh he should saue his life,
If that he be a man, he shall do so:
And we shall make him balles eke also

Of were and towe, that when he gapeth fast,
Into the beestes throte he shall hem cast,
To slake his honger, and encomber his teth,
And right anon when that Theseus seeth
The beest acheked, he shall on him leepe
To sleen him, or they comen more to heepe:
This weapen shal the gailer, or that tide,
Full preuely within the prison hide:
And for the house is crencled to and fro,
And hath so queint waies for to go,
For it is shapen as the mase is wrought,
Thereto haue I a remedy in my thought,
That by a clewe of twine, as he hath gon,
The same way he may returne anon,
Folowing alway the threde, as he hath come,
And when this beest is ouercome,
Then may he flien away out of this stede,
And eke the gailer may he with him lede,
And him anaunce at home in his countre,
Sens that so great a Lords sonne is he.
This is my rede, if that ye dare it take.
What shold I lenger sermon of it make,
The gailer cometh, and with him Theseus,
When these things ben accorded thus.
Downe sate Theseus vpon his knee,
The right lady of my life (qd. he)
I sorowfull man, ydamned to the deth:
Fro you, whiles that me lasteth breth,
I wol nat twinne, after this auenture,
But in your seruice, thus I woll endure,
That as a wretch vnknow, I woll you serue
For euermore, till that mine hart sterue,
Forsake I woll at home mine heritage,
And as I said, ben of your court a page,
If that ye vouchsafe that in this place,
Ye graunt me to haue soche a grace,
That I may haue nat but my meate & drinke,
And for my sustinaunce yet woll I swinke,
Right as you list, that Minos ne no wight,
Sens that he saw me neuer with eyen sight,
Ne no man els shall me espie,
So slily, and so well I shal me gie,
And me so wel disfigure, and so low,
That in this world ther shal no mā me know,
To haue my life, and to haue presence
Of you, that done to me this excellence,
And to my father shall I sende here,
This worthy man, that is your gaylere,
And him so guerdon, that he shall well be
One of the greatest men of my countre,
And if I durst saine, my lady bright,
I am a kings sonne and eke a knight
As wold God, if that it might be,
Ye weren in my countrey all thre,
And I with you, to beare you companie,
Then shuld ye seene if that I thereof lie,
And if that I profer you in lowe manere,
To ben your page, and seruen you right here,
But I you serue as lowly in that place,
I pray to Mars to yeue me soch grace,
That shames death on me there mote fall,
And death and pouerte to my frends all,
And that my spirite by night mote go,
After my death, and walke to and fro,
That I mote of traitour haue a name,
For which my spirit mote go, to do me shame,
And if I clayme euer other degree,
But ye vouchsafe to yeue it mee,
As I haue said, of shames death I dey,
And mercy Lady, I can naught els sey.
A semely knight was this Theseus to see,
And yonge, but of twenty yere and three,
But who so had seene his countenaunce,
He wold haue wept, for routh of his penaunce:
For which this Ariadne in this manere,
Answerde to his profre and to his chere.
A kings sonne, and eke a knight (qd. she)
To ben my seruaunt in so lowe degree,
God shilde it, for the shame of women all,
And lene me neuer soch a case befall,
And sende you grace, and sleight of hert also
You to defend, & knightly to sleen your foe,
And lene hereafter I may you find
To me, and to my suster here so kind,
That I ne repent nat to yeue you life,
Yet were it better I were your wife,
Sith ye ben as gentill borne as I,
And haue a realme nat but fast by,
Than that I suffred your gentillesse to sterue,
Or that I see you as a page serue,
It is no profite, as vnto your kinrede,
But what is that, ỹ man woll nat do for dred,
And to my suster sith that it is so,
That she mote gone with me, if that I go
Or els suffre death as wel as I,
That ye vnto your sonne as trewly,
Done her be wedded, at your home coming,
This is the finall end of all this thing,
Ye swere it here, vpon all that may be swore.
Ye Lady mine (qd. he) or els to tore
Mote I be with the Minotaure or to morow,
And haueth here of mine hert blood to borow,
If that ye woll, if I had knife or speare,
I would it letten out, and thereon sweare,
For then at erste, I wot ye would me leue,
By Mars, that is chefe of my beleue,
So that I might liuen, and nat faile
To morow for to taken my batalle,
I nolde neuer fro this place flie,
Till that ye should the very profe se,
For now, if that the soth I shall you say,
I haue loued you full many a day,
Though ye ne wist nat, in my countre,
And aldermost desired you to see,
Of any earthly liuing creature,
Upon my truth I sweare and you assure,

This seuen yere I haue your seruaunt be,
Now haue I you, and also haue ye me.
My dere hert, of Athenes duchesse.
This Lady smileth at his stedfastnesse,
And at his hartely wordes, and at his chere,
And to her suster said in this manere:
And sothly suster mine (qd. she)
Now be we duchesses both I and ye,
And sikerde to the regals of Athenes,
And both hereafter likely to be Quenes,
And saued fro his death a kings sonne,
As euer of gentill women is the wonne.
To saue a gentil man, enforth her might,
In honest cause, and namely in his right,
We thinketh no wight ought vs herof blame,
We bearen vs therefore an yuel name,
And shortly of this mater for to make,
This Theseus of her hath leaue ytake,
And euery point was performed in dede,
As ye haue in this couenaunt herde me rede,
His wepen, his clewe, his thing ŷ I haue said,
Was by the gailer in the house ylaid,
There as the Minotaure hath his dwelling,
Right fast by the dore, at his entring.
And Theseus is lad vnto his dethe,
And forth vnto this Minotaure he gethe,
And by the teaching of this Adriane,
He ouercame this beest, and was his bane,
And out he cometh by the clewe againe
Ful priuely, when he this beest hath slaine,
And the gailer gotten hath a barge,
And of his wines treasure gan it charge,
And toke his wife, and eke suster free
And by the gailer, and with hem al three
Is stole away out of the land by night,
And to the countre of Enupie him dight,
There as he had a frende of his knowing,
There feesten they, there daunsen they & sing,
And in his armes hath his Adriane,
That of the beest hath kept him fro his bane,
And get him there a noble barge anone,
And of his countrey folke a ful great wone,
And taketh his leaue, & homeward saileth hee,
And in an yle, amidde the wilde see,
There as there dwelt creature none,
Saue wild beestes, and that full many one,
He made his shippe a londe for to sette,
And in that yle halfe a day he lette.
And said, that on the londe must him rest,
His mariners haue done right as him lest.
And for to tell shortly in this caas,
When Ariadne his wife a slepe was,
For that her suster fayrer was than she,
He taketh her in his honde, & forth goeth he
To ship, and as a traitour stale away,
While that this Ariadne a slepe lay,
And to his countrey warde he sailed bliue,
A twenty diuel way, the winde him dryue,
And found his father drenched in the see,
We liste no more to speke of him parde,
These false louers, poison be her bane.
But I wol turne againe to Adriane,
That is with slepe for werinesse ytake,
Ful sorowfully her hart may awake.
Alas, for thee mine herte hath pite,
Right in the dawning awaketh she,
And gropeth in the bed, & fond right nought:
Alas (qd. she) that euer I was wrought,
I am betrayed, and her heere to rent,
And to the stronde barefote fast she went,
And cried: Theseus min hert swete,
Where be ye, that I may nat with you mete
And might thus with beestes den yslaine.
The halow rockes answerde her againe,
No man she saw, and yet shone the moone,
And hie vpon a rocke she went soone,
And sawe his barge sayling in the see,
Colde wore her hert, and right thus said she:
Wether then ye find I the beestes wilde,
Hath he nat sinne, that he her thus begilde,
She cried, O turne againe for routhe & sinne,
Thy barge hath nat all his meine in,
Her kercheke on a pole sticked she,
Ascaunce he should it well yse,
And him remembre that she was behind,
And turne againe, & on the stronde her find.
But all for naught, his way he is gone,
And downe she fel a swowne on a stone,
And vp she riste, and kissed in all her care
The steppes of his feete, there he hath fare,
And to her bed right thus she speketh tho:
Thou bed (qd. she) that hast receiued two,
Thou shalt answere of two, and not of one,
Where is the greater parte, away gone.
Alas, wher shal I wretched wight become
For though so be that bote none here come,
Home to my countrey dare I nat for drede,
I can my selfe in this case nat rede.
What should I tell more here complaining,
It is so long, it were an heauy thing
In her epistle, Naso telleth all,
But shortly to the end tell I shall,
The goddes haue her holpen for pite,
And in the signe of Taurus men may see,
The stones of her crowne shine clere,
I will no more speake of this matere,
But thus this false louer can begile
His trew loue, the diuel quite him his wile.

¶ The legende of Philomene.

Thou peuer of the formes, that hast wrought
The fayre world, and bare it in thy thought
Eternally, er thou thy werke began,

Why madest thou vnto the slaunder of man,
Or all be that it was not thy doing,
As for that end to make soch a thing,
Why suffredest thou that Tereus was borne,
That is in loue so false and so forswore,
That fro this world vp to the first heuen,
Forrumpeth, whē that folke his name neuē?
And as to me, so grisly was his dede,
That when that I this foule storie rede,
Mine yen weren foule, and sore also,
Yet lasteth the venime of so longe ago,
That enfecteth him that wolde behold
The storie of Tereus, of which I told,
Of Trace was he lord, and kin to Marte
The cruel God that stante with blody darte,
And wedded had he with blisfull chere
King Pandionis faire doughter dere,
That hight Progne, flour of her countre,
Though Juno list not at the feast be,
Ne Himeneus, that god of Wedding is,
But at the feast ready ben twis,
The furies three, with all her mortall bronde,
The Oule all night aboue the balkes wonde,
That Prophete is of wo, and of mischaunce.
This reuell, full of song, and full of daunce,
Last a fourtenight, or little lasse,
But shortly of this storie for to passe,
(For I am weary of him for to tell)
Fine pere his wife and he togither dwell,
Till on a day she gan so sore long
To seene her suster, that she saw not long,
That for desire she nist what to say,
But to her husbond gan she for to pray
For Gods loue, that she mote ones gone
Her suster for to seene, and come ayen anone,
Or els but she mote to her wend,
She praied him ỹ he would after her send:
And this was day by day all her prayere,
With al humblesse of wifehood, word & chere.
This Tereus let make his ships pare,
And into Greece himselfe is forth fare,
Unto his father in law gan he pray,
To vouchsafe, that for a moneth or tway,
That Philomene his wiues suster might
On Progne his wife but ones haue a sight,
And she shall come to you again anon
My selfe with her, I will both come and gon,
And as my harts life I will her kepe.
This old Pandion, this king gan wepe
For tenderneste of hart, for to leue
His doughter gon, and for to peue her leue,
Of all this world he loued nothing so,
But at the last, leaue hath she to go,
For Philomene with salt teares eke
Gan of her father grace to beseke,
To seene her suster, that her longeth so,
And him enbraceth, with her armes two,
And there also yong and faire was she,
That when that Tereus saw her beaute,
And of array, that there was none her liche,
And yet of beautie was she to so riche,
He cast his fierie hart vpon her so,
That he woll haue her, how so that it go,
And with his wiles kneled, and so praied,
Till at the last Pandion thus saied.
Now sonne (qd. he) that art to me so dere,
I thee betake my yong doughter dere,
That beareth the key of all mine harts like,
And grete well my doughter, and thy wife,
And peue her leaue some time for to ply,
That she may seen me ones or I deie.
And sothly he hath made him riche feast,
And to his folke, the most and eke the least,
That with him came: & paue him yefts great,
And him cōueieth through the master streat
Of Athenes, and to the sea him brought,
And tourneth home, no malice he ne thought.
The Ores pulleth forth the vessell fast,
And into Trace arriueth at the last,
And vp in to a Forest he her led,
And to a caue priuely he him sped,
And in this darke caue, if her lest
Or list nought, he bad her for to rest,
Of which her harte agrose, and saied thus:
Where is my suster, brother Tereus?
And therewithall she wept tenderly,
And quoke for feare, pale and pitiously,
Right as the lābe, that of the Wolfe is bitten,
Or as the Culuer, that of the Egle is smitten,
And is out of his clawes forth escaped,
Yet it is aferde, and a waped,
Lest it be hent eftsones: so fare she,
But vtterly it may none other be,
By force hath this traitour doen a deede,
That he hath reft her of her maidenhede,
Maugre her head, by strength & by his might.
Lo here a deede of men, and that aright.
She crieth suster, with full loude steuen,
And father dere helpe me God in heuen:
All helpeth not, and yet this false theefe,
Hath doen this Lady yet a more mischefe,
For feare lest she should his shame crie,
And doen him openly a villanie,
And with his sweard her tong of kerfe he,
And in a Castell made her for to be,
Full priuely in prison euermore,
And kept her to her vsage and to his store,
So that she ne might neuer more astarte.
O sely Philomene, wo is in thine hart,
Huge been thy sorowes, and wonder smart,
God wreke thee, and sende thee thy bone,
Now is time I make an end sone.
This Tereus is to his wife icome,
And in his armes hath his wife inome,
And pitiously he wept, and shoke his hedde,
And swore her, that he found her suster dedde,

For

For which this felie Progne hath soch wo,
That nigh her sorowfull hart brake a two.
And thus in teares let I Progne dwell,
And of her suster forth I woll you tell.
This wofull Lady learned had in youth,
So that she worken and enbrauden couth,
And weauen in stole the rade vore,
As it of women hath be woued yore,
And sothly for to saine, she hath her till
Of meate and drinke, of clothing at her will,
And couthe eke rede well inough and endite,
But with a penne she could not write,
But letters can she weaue to and fro,
So that by the yere was all ago,
She had wouen in a stames large,
How she was brought fro Athens in a barge,
And in a caue how that she was brought,
And all the thing that Tereus wrought,
She waue it wel, and wrote the storie aboue,
How she was serued for her susters loue,
And to a man a ring she paue anon,
And praied him by signes for to gon
Unto the queene, and bearen her that clothe,
And by signe swore many an othe,
She should him yeue what she getten might.
This man anon vnto the quene him dight,
And toke it her, and all the maner told,
And when ỹ Progne hath this thing behold,
No worde she spake, for sorow eke for rage,
But fained her to gon on pilgrimage
To Baccus temple, and in a little stound
Her dombe suster sitting hath she found
Weeping in the castell her selfe alone,
Alas the wo, constraint, and the mone
That Progne vpō her dombe suster maketh,
In armes eurich of hem other taketh,
And thus I let hem in her sorow dwell,
The remnaunt is no charge to tell,
For this is all and some, thus was she serued
That neuer agilt, ne deserued
Unto this cruell man, that she of wist
Ye may beware of men if that you list,
☞ For all be that he woll not for shame
Doen as Tereus, to lese his name,
Ne serue you as a murtherer or a knaue,
Full little while shull ye trewe him haue,
That wol I sain, al were he now my brother,
But it so be that he may haue another.

¶ The Legende of Phillis.

BY proue, as wel as by auctho-
rite,
☞ That wicked fruicte commeth
of a wicked tree,
That may ye find, if that it li-
keth you,
But for this end, I speake this as now,
To tell you of false Demophon,
In loue a falser heard I neuer non,
But it were his father Theseus,
God for his grace fro soch one kepe vs,
Thus these women praien, that it here,
Now to the effect tourne I of my matere.
Destroied is of Troie the Citee,
This Demophon came saylyng in the see
Toward Athenes, to his paleis large,
With him came many a ship, & many a barge
Full of folke, of which full many one
Is wounded sore, and sicke, and wo begone,
And they haue at the siege long laine,
Behind him came a winde, and eke a raine,
That shoke so sore, his saile might not stonde,
Him were leuer than all the world a londe,
So hunteth him the tempest to and fro,
So darke it was, he could no where go,
And with a waue brusten was his stere,
His ship was rent so lowe, in such manere,
That Carpenter could it not amende,
The see by night as any Torche brende,
For wood, and posseth him vp and doun,
Till Neptune hath of him compassioun,
And Thetis, Thorus, Triton, and they all,
And maden him vp a londe to fall,
Wherof that Phillis Lady was and Queene,
Lycurgus doughter, fairer vnto seene
Than is the floure again the bright Sonne,
Unneth is Demophon to londe iwonne,
Weake and eke werie, and his folke forpined
Of werinesse, and also enfamined,
And to the death he was almost idriuen,
His wise folke counsaile haue him yeuen,
To seken helpe and succour of the Queene,
And loken what his grace might bene,
And maken in that lande some cheuesaunce,
And kepen him fro wo, and mischaunce,
For sicke he was, and almost at the death,
Unneth might he speake, or draw breath,
And lieth in Rhodopeia him for to rest,
Whē he may walke, him thought it was best
Unto the countrey to seeken for succour,
Men knew him wele, and did him honour,
For at Athenes Duke and Lord was he,
As Theseus his father hath ibe,
That in his time was great of renoun,
No man so great in all his regioun,
And like his father of face and of stature,
And false of loue, it came him of nature,
As doeth the Fore Renarde, the Fores sonne,
Of kind he could his old father wonne
Without lore, as can a Drake swimme
When it is caught, and caried to the brimme:
This honorable queene Phillis doth hī chere,
Her liketh well his sporte and his manere,
But I am agroted here before,
To write of hem that in loue been forsworne,

And

And eke to haste me in my Legende,
Which to perfourme, God me grace sende,
Therfore I passe shortly in this wise,
Ye haue well heard of Theseus the gise,
In the betraiyng of faire Adriane,
That of her pite kept him fro his bane,
At shortt wordes, right so Demophon,
The same way, and the same pathe hath gon
That did his false father Theseus,
For vnto Phillis hath he sworne thus,
To wedden her, and her his trouth plight,
And piked of her all the good he might,
When he was hole & sound, and had his rest,
And doth with Phillis, what so that him lest,
As well I could, if that me list so,
Tellen all his doing to and fro.

He saied to his countrey mote him saile,
For there he would her wedding apparaile,
As fill to her honour, and his allo,
And openly he tooke his leaue tho,
And to her swore he would not soiourne,
But in a moneth again he would retourne,
And in that londe let make his ordinaunce,
As very Lorde, and tooke the obeisaunce,
Well and humbly, and his shippes dight,
And home he goeth the next way he might,
For vnto Phillis yet came he nought,
And that hath she so harde and sore thought,
Alas, as the storie doeth vs record,
She was herowne death with a corde,
When that she saw that Demophō her traied.
But first wrote she to him, and fast him praied
He would come, and deliuer her of pain,
As I rehearse shall a worde or twain,
He liste not vouchsafe on him to swinke,
Dispenden on him a penne full of ynke,
For false in loue was he, right as his sire,
The Deuill set her soules both on a fire,
But of the letter of Phillis woll I write,
A worde or twain, although it be but lite.

Thine hostesse (qd. she) O Demophon,
Thy Phillis, which that is so wo begon,
Of Rhodopeie, vpon you mote complain,
Ouer the terme set betwixt vs twain,
That ye ne holden forward, as ye saied:
Your ancre, which ye in our hauen laied,
Hight vs, that ye would comen out of doubt,
Or that the Moone ones went about,
But times fower, the Mone hath hid her face
Sens thilke day ye went fro this place,
And fower times light the world again,
But for all that, yet shall I sothly sain,
Yet hath the streme of Scython not brought
From Athens the ship, yet came it nought,
And if that ye the terme reken would,
As I or other true louers doe should,
I plain not (God wot) before my day,
But all her letter writen I ne may,
By order, for it were to me a charge,
Her letter was right long and therto large,
But here and there, in rime I haue it laied
There as me thought that she hath wel saied.

She saied, the sailes cometh not again,
Ne to the worde, there is no fey certain,
But I wot why ye come not (qd. she)
For I was of my loue to you so fre,
And of the Goddes that ye haue swore,
That her vengeaunce fall on you therfore,
Ye be not suffisaunt to beare the pain,
To moche trusted I, well may I sain,
Vpon your image, and your faire tong,
And on your teares salty out wrong,
How could ye wepe so by craft? (qd. she)
May there soche teares fained be?

Now certes, if ye would haue in memory,
It ought be to you but little glory,
To haue a selie maide thus betrayed,
To God (qd. she) pray I, and oft haue prayed,
That it be now the greatest price of all,
And most honour, that euer you shall befall,
And when thine old auncetors painted bee,
In which men may her worthinesse see,
Then pray I God, thou painted be also,
That folke may reden, forth by as they go.

Lo this is he, that with his flattery
Betraied hath, and doen her villany,
That was his true loue, in thought & dede.

But sothly of o point yet may they rede,
That ye been like your father, as in this,
For he begiled Ariadne iwis,
With such an arte, and such subtelte,
As thou thy selues hast begiled me:
As in that point, although it be not feire
Thou folowest certain, and art his heire.
But sens thus sinfully ye me begile,
My body mote ye sene, within a while
Right in the hauen of Athenes fleeting,
Withouten Sepulture and buriyng,
Though ye been harder then is any stone.

And whē this letter was forth sent anone,
And knew how vtterli and how fals he was,
She for dispaire fordidd her selfe, alas,
Such sorow hath she, for she beset her so.
Beware ye women of your subtill so,
Sens yet this day men may ensample se,
And trusteth now in loue no man but me.

¶ The legende of Hypermestre.

IN Greece whilom were brethren two,
Of which that one was called Danao,
That many a sonne hath of his body wonne,
As soch false louers ofte conne.

Emong

Emong his sonnes all there was one,
That aldermost he loued of euerychone,
And when this child was borne, this Danao
Shope him a name, and called him Lino,
That other brother called was Egiste,
That was of loue as false as euer him list,
And many a daughter gate he in his life,
Of which he gate vpon his right wife,
A doughter dere, and did her for to call,
Hypermestra, yongest of hem all,
The which child of her natiuite,
To all good thewes borne was she,
As liked to the Goddes or she was borne,
That of the sheke she should be the corne,
The werdes that we clepen destine,
Hath shapen her, that she must needes be
Pitous, sad, wise, true as stele,
And to this woman it accordeth wele,
For though that Venus yaue her great beute,
With Iupiter compowned so was she,
That conscience, trouth, and drede of shame,
And of her wifehode for to kepe her name,
This thought her was felicite as here,
And reed Mars, was that time of the yere
So feble, that his malice is him raft,
Repressed hath Venus his cruell craft,
And what with Venus, and other oppression
Of houses, Mars his venime is a don,
That Hypermestre dare not handle a knife,
In malice, though she should lese her life,
But natheless, as heauen gan tho turne,
Two bad aspectes hath she of Saturne,
That made her to die in prison,
And I shall after make mencion,
Of Danao and Egistes also,
And though so be that they were brethē two,
For thilke tyme nas spared no linage,
It liked hem to maken mariage
Betwixt Hypermestre, and him Lino,
And casten soth a day it shall be so,
And full accorded was it vtterly,
The aray is wrought, the tyme is fast by,
And thus Lino hath of his fathers brother,
The doughter wedded, & eth of hē hath other,
The torches brennen, and the lampes bright
The Sacrifice been full ready dight,
Thensence out of the fire reketh soote,
The floure, the leke, is rent vp by the roote,
To maken garlandes and crounes hie,
Full is the place of sound of Minstralcie,
Of songes amourous of mariage,
As thilke tyme was the plain vsage,
And this was in the paleis of Egiste,
That in his hous was lord, right as him liste
And thus that day they driuen to an end,
The frendes taken leue, and home they wend,
The night is come, the bride shall go to bed,
Egiste to his chamber fast him sped,
And priuely let his doughter call,
When that the house voided was of hem all,
He looketh on his doughter with glad chere,
And to her spake, as ye shall after here.
My right doughter, tresour of mine hert,
Sens first that day, þ shapen was my shert,
Or by the fatall suster had my dome,
So nie mine hart neuer thing ne come,
As thou Hypermestre, doughter dere,
Take hede what thy father saieth thee here,
And werke after thy wiser euer mo,
For alderfirst doughter I loue thee so,
That all the world to me nis halfe so leke,
Ne nolde rede thee to thy mischeke,
For all the good vnder the cold Mone,
And what I meane, it shall be said right sone,
With protestacion, as saine these wise,
That but thou doe, as I shall thee deuise,
Thou shalt be ded, by him þ al hath wrought,
At short wordes thou ne scapest nought
Out of my paleis, or that thou be deed,
But thou consent, and werke after my reed,
Take this to the fearfull conclusioun.
This Hypermestre cast her yen doun,
And quoke as doeth the leefe of athe grene,
Deed wext her hew, and like asken to sene,
And saied: Lord and father all your will,
After my might, God wote I will fulfill,
So it be to me no confusion.
I nill (qd. he) haue none excepcion,
And out he caught a knife, as rasour kene,
Hide this (qd. he) that it be not isene,
And when thine housbond is to bed go,
While that he slepeth cut his throte atwo,
For in my dreme it is warned me,
How that my neuewe shall my bane be,
But which I not, wherfore I will be siker,
If thou say nay, we two shall haue a biker,
As I haue saied, by him that I haue swore.
This Hipermestre hath nigh her wit forlorn,
And for to passen harmelesse out of that place,
She graūted hī, ther was none other grace:
And withall a costrell taketh he tho
And saied, hereof a draught or two,
Yeue him drinke, when he goeth to rest,
And he shal slepe as long as euer thee lest,
The narcotikes and apies been so strong,
And go thy way, lest that him thinke to long.
Out cometh the bride, & with full sobre chere,
As is of maidens oft the manere,
To chamber brought, with reuel & with song,
And shortly, lette this tale be to long,
This Lino and she beth brought to bed,
And euery wight out at the doore him sped,
The night is wasted, and he fell aslepe,
Full tenderly beginneth she to weepe,
She rist her vp, and dredfully she quaketh,
As doth the braunch, that Zephirus shaketh,

And

And husht were all in Aragone that citee,
As colde as any Frost now wexeth shee,
For pite by the harte strained her so,
And drede of death doeth her so moche wo,
That thrise doune she fill, in soche a were,
She riste her vp, & slakereth here and there,
And on her hands fast looketh she,
Alas, shall mine hands bloudie be,
I am maide, and as by my nature,
And by my semblaunt, and by my vesture,
Mine hands been not shapen for a knife,
As for to reue no man fro his life,
What Deuill haue I with the knife to do?
And shall I haue my throte corue a two?
Then shall I blede alas, and be shende,
And nedes this thing mote haue an ende,
Or he or I mote nedes lese our life,
Now certes (qd. she) sens I am his wife,
And hath my faith, yet is it bette for me
For to be dedde, in wifely honeste,
Than be a traitour, liuing in my shame,
Be as be may, for earnest or for game,
He shall awake, and rise and go his way
Out at this gutter er that it be day:
And wept full tenderly vpon his face,
And in her armes gan him to embrace,
And him she ioggeth, and awaketh soft,
And at the window lepe he fro the loft,
When she hath warned him, & doen him bote
This Lino swift was, and light of foote,
And from her ran, a full good paas.
This selie woman is so weake, alas
And helplesse, so that er she ferre went,
Her cruell father did her for to hent,
Alas Lino, why art thou so vnkind,
Why ne hast thou remembred in thy mind,
And taken her, and led her forth with thee,
For when she saw that gone away was hee,
And that she might not so fast go,
Ne folowen him, she sate doune right tho,
Untill she was caught, and fettred in prison
This tale is saied for this conclusion.

¶ Here endeth the Legende of good Women.

¶ A goodly Balade of Chaucer.

Mother of norture, best beloued of all,
And freshe floure, to whom good thrift God sende,
Your childe, if it luste you me so to call,
All be I vnable myselfe so to pretende,
To your discrecion I recommende
Mine harte and al, with euery circumstaunce,
All wholly to be vnder your gouernaunce.

Most desire I, and haue, and euer shal,
Thing, which might your harts ease amend:
Haue me excused, my power is but small,
Nathelesse of right ye ought to commend
My good will, which faine would entend
To do you seruice, for all my suffisaunce
Is holly to be vnder your gouernaunce.

Meulx vn, in hart, which neuer shall apall,
Aie freshe and new, and right glad to dispend
My time in your seruice, what so befall,
Beseching your excellence to defend
My simplenesse, if ignoraunce offend
In any wise, sith that mine affiaunce,
Is holly to been vnder your gouernaunce.

Daisie of light, very ground of comfort,
The Sunnes doughter (ye hight) as I rede,
For when he Westreth, farwell your disport,
By your nature anone right for pure drede,
Of the rude night, ẏ with his boistous wede
Of darkenesse, shadoweth our emispere,
Then closen ye, my liues Ladie dere.

Dauning the day, to his kind resort (rede,
And Phebus your Father, with his streames
Adorneth the morrow, consuming the sort
Of mistie cloudes, that woulden ouerlede
True humble harts, with her mistie hede,
Nere comfort a daies, when iyen clere,
Disclose and sprede my liues Ladie dere.

Ie vouldray: but great God disposeth
And maketh casuell by his prouidence,
Soch thing, as mans freie wit purposeth,
All for the best, if that your conscience
Not grutche it, but in humble pacience
It receiue; for God sayeth without fable,
A faithful hart euer is acceptable.

Cautels who so vseth gladly, gloseth,
To eschewe soch it is right high prudence,
What ye saied ones, mine hart opposeth,
That my writing yapes in your absence,
Pleased you moch better than my presence:
Yet can I more, ye be not excusable,
A faithfull harte euer is acceptable.

Quaketh my penne, my spirite supposeth,
That in my writing ye find woll some offence,
Min hart welkneth thus sone, anon it riseth,
Now hotte, now colde, and eft in feruence:
That misse is, is caused of negligence,
And not of malice, therefore beth merciable,
A faithfull harte euer is acceptable.

¶ Lenuoye.

Forth complaint, forth lacking eloquence,
Forth little letter, of enditing lame,
I haue besought my ladies Sapience,
Of thy behalfe, to accept in game,
Thine inabilitie, doe thou the same:
Abide, haue more yet: I serue Iouesse,
Now forth, I close thee in holy Venus name,
Thee shall vnclose my harts gouernesse.

BOECIVS DE CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIE.

In this booke are handled high and hard obscure points: *viz.* The purueyance of God: The force of destinie: The freedome of our wils: and the infallible prescience of the Almighty: and that the contemplation of God himselfe is our *Summum bonum*.

Carmina qui quondã studio florenti peregi
Flebilis heu mestos cogor inire modos.

ALas, I weeping am constrayned to begin verse of sorrowfull matter, that whilom in flourishing studie made delitable ditees. For lo, rending mates of poets, enditen to me things to be written, and dreric teares. At laste no drede ne might ouercome tho mates, that they ne werren fellowes, and folowden my way, that is to say: when I was exiled, they that werẽ of my youth, whilom weelfull and grene, comforten now sorowful wierdes, of me old man: for elde is commen vnwarely vpon me, hasted by the harmes that I haue, and sorrow hath commaunded his age to be in me. Heeres hore aren shad ouertimeliche vpon my head: and the slacke skinne trẽbleth of mine empted body. Thilke death of menne is welefull, that ne commeth not in peres that be swet, but commeth to wretches often icleped: Alas, alas, with how deafe an eare death cruell turneth away frõ wretches, and naieth for to close weeping yen. While Fortune vnfaithfull, fauoured me with light goodes, that sorowful houre, that is to say, the death, had almost dreint mine hedde: but now for Fortune cloudie, hath chaunged her deceiuable chere to mewarde, mine vnpitous life draweth along vngreable dwellings. O ye my frendes, what, or whereto auaunced yee me to been wilfull? For he that hath fallen, stode in no stedfast degree.

Hæc dum mecum tacitus ipse reputarem, querimoniamque lacrimabilem stili officio designarem: astitisse mihi supra verticem visa est mulier reuerendi admodum vultus, oculis ardentibus, & vltra communem, &c.

IN the meane while, that I stil recorded these thynges with my self, and marked my wepely complainte, with office of pouncell: I sough stondyng abouen the hight of mine hed a woman of full great reuerence, by semblant. Her yen brennyng, and clere, seyng ouer the common might of men, with a liuely colour, & with soch vigour and strẽgth that it ne might not been nempned, all were it so, that she were full of so great age, that menne woulden not trowen in no manere, that she were of our eld.

The stature of her, was of doutous iudgement, for sometime she constrained & shronke her selue, like to the cõmon measure of men: And sometime it seemed, that she touched the heauẽ, with the hight of her hedde. And when she houe her hedde higher, she perced the selfe heauen, so that the sight of men looking was in idell: her clothes were maked of right delie threds, & subtell craft of perdurable mattier. The which clothes shee had wouen with her owne hands, as I knew well after, by her selfe declaring, & shewyng to me the beauty: The which clothes a darkenesse of a forleten and dispised elde, had dusked and darked, as it is wonte to darke by smoked Images.

In the nethereft hemme or border of these clothes, men redde iwouen therein, a Grekish A. that signifieth the life Actiue: & aboue that letter, in the hiest bordure, a Grekish T. that signifieth the lyke Contẽplatife. And betwene these two letters, there were seen degrees nobly wrought, in maner of ladders, by which degrees men might climben from the nethereft letter, to the vppereft: natheleſſe handes of some men, hadden kerue that cloth, by violence or by strength, and eueriche man of hem, had borne away such peces as he might getten. And forlothe this foresaid woman, bare small bookes in her right hand, and in her left hand she bare a Scepter. And when she sawe these Poeticall mates, approching about my bed,

bed, and endityng wordes to my wepinges, she was a litle amoued, and glowed with cruell iyen. Who (qd. she) hath suffred approchen to this sicke man, these commen strompets, of which is the place that men callen Theatre, the whiche onely asswagen not his sorrowes with remedies, but they would feden and norish him with swete venime? Forsoth, that been tho that with thornes, & prickings of talentes of affections, which that been nothing fructuous nor profitable, distroyen the Corne, plentuous of fruictes of reason. For they holden hartes of men in vsage, but they ne deliuer no folke fro malady. But if the muses had withdrawen fro me with your flatteries, any an vnconnyng & vnprofitable man, as been wont to finde commenly emong the people, I would well suffre the lasse greuously. For why, in soche an vnprofitable man, myne ententes were nothyng endammaged. But ye withdrawen fro me this man, that he hath been nourished in my studies or scoles of Eleaticis, and of Achademicis in Grece. But goeth now rather away yee Mermaydens, which that been swete, till it be at the last, and suffreth this man to be cured and healed by my muses, that is to say, by my notefull Sciences. And thus this company of muses iblamed, casten wrothly their chere, douneward to the yearth, and shewing by rednesse her shame, they passeden sorowfully the threshold. And I of whom the sight plounged in teares was darked, so that I ne might not know what that woman was, of so Imperiall aucthoritie, I woxe all abashed and astonied, and cast my sight doune to the yearth, and began still for to abide, what shee would doen afterward. Then came she nere, and set her doune vpon the vtterest corner of my bed, and she beholding my chere, that was cast to the yearth, heauy & greuous of weping, complained with these wordes (that I shall saine) the perturbation of my thought.

Heu quam precipiti mersa profundo. Mens habet, & propria luce relicta. Tendit ad externas ire tenebras. Terrenis quoties flatibus acta. Crescit in immensum noxia cura. Hic quondam cœlo liber aperto.

ALas, how the thought of this manne, dreinte in ouerthrowing depenesse, dulleth and foreleteth his proper cleerenesse, mintyng to gone into forayne darkenesse, as ofte as his anoious besinesse wexeth without measure, that is driuen with worldly Windes. This manne that whilome was free, to whome the heauen was open and knowen, and was wont to gone in heauenly pathes, & sawe the lightnesse of the redde Sunne, and beheld the Sterres of the cold Moone, & which Sterre in heauen vseth wandering recourses iflit by diuers spheres. This man ouercomer had cōprehended all this thing, by nomber of accōpting in Astronomie. And ouer this, hee was wont to seken the causes whens the sowning windes mouen, and besien the smothe water of the Sea. And what Spirite tourneth the stable heauen. And why the Sterre riseth out of the red East, to fallē in the westeren waues. And what attempreth the lustie houres of the first Sommer season, and highteth and apparayleth the yearth with rosie floures. And who maketh the plumtuous Autumpne, in full yeeres fleeten with heauie Grapes. And eke this manne was wonte, to tell the diuers causes of nature that were hidde. Alas, how lightly is empted the light of his thought, & his necke is pressed with heauy chaines, and beareth his chere enclined adoune for the gret weight, & is constrained to looken on the foolish yearth.

Sed magis medicinæ (inquit) tempus est quam querelæ. Boe. Tum vero totis in me intenta luminibus. Philo. Tu ne ille es (ait) qui nostro quondam lacte nutritus, nostris educatus alimentis, in virilis animi robur euaseras, &c.

BUt time is now of Medicine (qd. she) more than complaint. Forsooth then shee entending to mewarde, with all the lookyng of her iyen, saied. Art not thou he (qd. she) that whilom I nourished with my milke, and fostred with my meats, were escaped and commen to the courage of a parfite man? Certes, I yaue thee soche armours, that if thou thy self ne haddest first cast hem away, they shoulden haue defended thee in sikernesse, that may not be ouercomen. Knowest thou not me? Why art thou still? Is it for shame, or for astoniyng? It were me leuer it were for shame, but it seemeth me that astoniyng hath oppressed thee. And when she sawe me not onely still, but rather without office of tongue, and all dombe, she layed her hand softely vpon my breast, and saied: Here is no perill (qd. she) he is fallen into a litarge, which that is a common sicknesse, to hartes that been deceiued. He hath a little foryeten himselfe. But certes he shall lightly remembren himself, if so be that he hath knowen me er now. And that he may doen so, I will wipe

his iyen a little, that be darked by the cloud of mortall things. These wordes saied she, and with the lappe of her garment, iplited in a frounce, she dried mine iyen, that weren full of the waues of my wepings.

Tunc me discussa liquerunt nocte tenebre, Luminibusque prior redit vigor. Vt cum præcipiti glomerantur sidera choro. Nimbosisque polus stetit imbribus. Sol latet, ac non dum cœlo venientibus astris, &c.

Thus whē that night was discussed away, Darkenesse forlete me, & to my iyen repaired againe her first strength. And right as by ensample, as the Sunne is hidde when the Sterres been couerd with cloudes, by a swift wind that hight Chorus, and the Firmament stant dercked by weate plungy clouds: And ẏ the Sterres not apperen vpon the heauen, so that the night semed sprad vpon the yearth. If then the wind that hight Boreas, isent out of the Caue, of the Countrey of Trace, beateth this night, that is to saine, chaseth it away, & discouereth the closed day, then shineth Phebus, ishaken with sodaine light, and smiteth with his beames in marueyling iyen.

Haude aliter tristiciæ nebulis dissolutis, hausi cœlum, & ad cognoscendam medicantis faciem, menten recepi. Itaque vbi in eam deduxi oculos, intuitumq; defixi, respicio nutricem meam, in cuius ab adolescentia, &c.

Right so and none otherwise, the Cloudes of sorrowe dissolued, and doen awaie, I tooke heauen, and receyued mynd to knowen the face of my Phisicien: so that I sette myne iyen vpon her and fastened my looking. I beheld my Nourice Philosophie, in whose house I had conuersed fro my youth, and I saied thus. O thou Maistresse of all vertues, discended from the soueraine seate, why art thou commen into this solitarie place of myne exile? Art thou commen, for thou art made coulpable with me of false blames. O (qd. she) my nourice, should I forsake thee now, and should I not parten with thee by commen trauayle, the charge that thou haste suffered for enuie of my name? Certes it were not lefull ne sitting to Philosophie, to leten without companie, the way of him that is innocent: Shold I then redout my blame, and agrise though there were befallen a new thing? For trowest thou that Philosophie, be now alderfirst assayled in perilles, by folke of wicked maner? Haue I not striuen with full grate strife, in old time, before the age of my Plato, ayenst the foolehardinesse of ioly? And eke the same Plato liuyng, his Maister Socrates, deserued victorie of vnrightfull death in my presence. The heritage of the which Socrates, the heritage, is to saine the Doctrine, of the which Socrates in his opiniō of felicite, that I cleape welefulnesse: when that the people of Epicuriens and Stoiciens, & many other, enforced them to go rauish, euery man for his parte, that is to saine, ẏ euerich of hem would drawen, to the defence of his opinion, the wordes of Socrates. They as in partie of their praie, to droune me criyng and debating there ayenst, and coruen & renten my clothes, that I had wouen with mine owne handes. And with tho clothes that they had araced out of my clothes, they wenten away, wening that I had gone with hem euery dele. In which Epicuriens & Stoiciens, for as moch as there semed some traces and steppes of my habite. The folie of wenyng tho Epicuriens and Stoiciens, my familiers, peruerted some, through the errour of the wicked multitude of hem: This is to sain, for they semed Philosophers they weren pursued to the death and slaine. So if thou haste not knowen the exiling of Anaxagoras, ne the enpoysoning of Socrates, ne the tourments of Zeno, for they weren straungers, yet mightest thou haue knowen the Senecas, the Canios, and the Soranos: Of which folke, the renome is neither ouer olde ne vnsolempne. The whiche men nothing els ne brought to the death, but onely for they were enformed of my maners, and semeden most vnlike to the studies of wicked folke. And for thy, thou oughtest not to wondren, though that I in the bitter Sea, be driuen with tempests blowing about. In the whiche this is my moste purpose, that is to saine, to displeasen wicked men. Of whiche shrewes, all be the hoste neuer so great, it is to dispise, for it is not gouerned with no leader of reason, but it is rauished onely by fletyng errour, folily and lightly. And if they sometyme make an hooste ayenst vs, assaile vs as strenger: our leader draweth together his richesses into his Toure, and they been ententife, about sarpleris or sachelles, vnprofitable for to taken. But we then been high abouen, siker from all tumulte and woode noyse, warenestored and enclosed in soche a Paleis, whither as the clatering or anoiyng folie may not attaine, we scorne soch raueners, and henters of foulest things.

Quisquis

Quisquis composito serenus euo, Fatum sub pedibus egit superbum: Fortunamque tuens vtramq; rectus, Inuictum potuit tenere vultum &c.

WHo so it be that cleare of vertue, sadde, & well ordinate of liuing. that hath put vnder foote the proude wierdes, and looketh vpright vpon eyther Fortune, hee may holden his chere vndiscomfited.

The rages ne the manaces of the sea, commouing and chasing vnware, heate from the bottome, ne shall not moue that man, ne the vnstable Mountaigne that hight Uesenus, that wrytheth out through his brokē Chimeneis, smoking Fires, ne the way of Thonder leite, that is wonte to smiten high Toures, ne shall not moue that man. Whereto then wretches drede ye Tyrants, that been wood, and felonnous with any strength? Hope after nothing, ne drede thou not: and so shalt thou disarmen the ire of thilke vnmighty Tiraunt. But who that quaking dredeth, or desireth thing that is not stable of his right, that man that so doeth, hath cast away his shilde, and is remoued fro his place, and enlaseth him in the chaine, with the which he may be drawen.

Sentis ne (inquit) hæc? Atque animo illabuntur tuo? Expers ne es lyræ? Quid fles? Quid lachrimis manas? Si operam medicantis expectas, oportet vt vulnus detegas tuum, &c.

FElest thou (quod shee) these things? And entren they aught in thy courage? Art thou like an Asse to the Harp? Why wepest thou? Why spillest thou teares? If thou abidest after helpe of the Leche, thee behoueth discouer thy wound? Tho I had gathered strēgth in my courage, and aunswered and saied: And needeth it (qd. I) of rehearsing, or of amonicion, and sheweth it not inough by himselfe, the sharpenes that werreth woode against mee. Me moueth it not thee to see the face, or the maner of this place? Is this the Librarie that thou haddest chosen for a right certaine liege, to thee in mine hous there as thou disputest oft with me of the Science of thinges, touching diuinite, and touching mankinde? Was then mine habite soche as it is now. was my face or chere, soche as is now, when I sought with the secretes of nature, when thou enformedest my maners, and the reason of al my lyfe, to the ensample of thorder of heauen? Is not this the guerdone that I referre to thee, to whom I haue be obeysaunt? Certes, thou enformedest by the mouth of Plato this sentence, that is to saine: That comen things or communalties weren blissfull, if they that had studied all fully to wisedome, gouerneden thilke thinges: or els if it so befell, that the gouernours of communalties, studien to get wisedome. Thou saidest eke by the mouth of the saied Plato, that it was a necessarie cause, wisemen to taken and desiren the gouernaunce of comen thinges, for that the gouernaunce of Citees, left in the handes of felonous tourmentors, citezeins ne shoulden not bringen in pestilence and distruccion to good folke. And therefore I followyng thilke authours, desired to put forth in execucion and in act, of cōmen administracion thilke things, that I had learned of thee emong my secrete resting whiles, thou and GOD, that put in the thoughts of wise folke, been knowen with me, that nothing ne brought me to maistrie or dignitie, but the common studie of all goodnesse. And therfore commeth it, that betweene wicked folke and me, haue been greuous discordes, that ne mighten not bee released by Prayers: for this libertie hath the freedome of conscience, that the wrathe of more mighty folke, hath alway been dispised of me, for sauacion of right. How oft haue I resisted & withstand, that man ỹ hight Canigast, that made alway thassaut, ayenst the prosper fortunes of poore feeble folke? How oft eke haue I put of or cast out him Triguill, Prouost of the kings hous, bothe of the wrongs that he had begon to doen, and eke fully performed. How often haue I couered and defended by the auctoritie of me, put ayenst perils, that is to saine, put myne auctoritie in perill, for the wretched poore folke, that the couetise of straungers vnpunished, turmenteden alway with misease, and greuaunces out of number? Neuer man yet drowe me fro right to wrong. When I sawe the Fortunes and the richesses of the people of the Prouinces, been harmed and amenused, eyther by priuy rauenes, or by commen tributes or cariages, as sory was I as they that suffreden the harme. Glose. When Theoderike king of Gothes in a dearth yeare had his garners full of corne, and commaunded that no man should buye no corne, till his corne were sold, and at a greuous dere price: Boece withstood that ordinaunce, & ouercame it, knowing al this the king Theodorike himselfe. Coempcion is to say, commen achate or buiyng together, that were established vpon the people, by soch a maner of imposicion, as who so bought a bushell of Corne, he must yeuen the king the fifteth parte. Textus. When

it was in the soze hongry time, there was established greuous and vnprofitable coempcion, that men seen well, it should greatly tourmenten and endomagen all the Prouince of Campaine. I tooke strife ayenst the Prouost of the Pretorie, for the common profite. And the knowyng of it, I ouercame it, so that the coempcion was not asked, ne tooke effect.

Pauline a Counsailour of Roome, the richesses of the whiche Pauline, the hondes of the Paleis, that is to say, the officers wouldden haue deuoured by hope and couetise: yet drowe I out of the iowes, of hem that gapeden. And for as moch as the payne of the accusacion adiudged before, ne should not sodainly henten, ne punishen wrongfully Albine a Counsailour of Roome, I putte me ayenst the hates and indignacions of the accusour, Cypzian. Is it not then inough lens that I haue purchased great discords ayenst my self? But I ought bee more assured ayenst other folke, that for the loue of rightwisenesse I neuer reserued nothing to my selfe, to hemwarde of the kings hall, by which I were the more liker. But through the same accusours accusing, I am condempned. Of the nomber of which accusours, one Basilius that whilome was chased out of the Kinges seruice, is now compelled in accusing of my name, for neede of forayne money.

Also, Opilion and Gaudencius, haue accused mee: All be it, so that the Justice Regall had whilome demed theim bothe, to gone into exile, for her tretcheries and fraudes without number. To which iudgement they nolden not obey, but defended hem by the liberte of holy houses, that is to saine, fledden into Seintewarie: And then when this was apperceyued by the King, he commaunded, but if they auoyded the Citee of Rauenne, by certayne day assigned, that men should marken hem on the forehedde, with an hote yron, and chasen hem out of the roun. Now what thing seemeth might be likened to this crueltie, for certes, this same day was receyued the accusing of my name, by thilke same accusoures? What may bee saied hereto? Hath my studie and my conning deserued thus, or els the foresaied dampnacion of me, made them rightful accusours or no? Was not Fortune a shamed of this? Certes, all had not Fortune ben a shamed, that innocence was accused, yet ought she haue had shame of the filth of mine accusours. But aske thou in some, of what gilte I am accused. Men saine that I would sauen the company of the Senatours. And desirest thou to heren, in what maner I am accused, that I should haue distourbed the accusour to bearen Letters, by whiche hee should haue made the Senatours gilte ayenst the Kings royall Maieste. O Haustrelle, what demest thou of this? Shal I forsake this blame, that I ne be no shame to thee? Certes, I haue would it (that is to say) the sauacio of the Senate, ne I shall neuer let to wilne it, and that I confesse and am a knowe but the entente of the accusour to been distourbed, shall cease. Shall I clepe that a felony or a sinne, that I haue desired the sauacion of the order of the Senate. And certes, had thilke same Senate, doen through her decretes & her iudgements, as though it were a sinne and a felony, that is to wilne the sauacion of them. But folie that lieth alway to himselfe, may not chaunge the merite of things, ne I trow not by the iudgement of Socrates, that it were lefull to mee to hide the sooth, ne assent to leasings: but certes, howsoeuer it be of this, I putte it to gessen or prisen, of the iudgement of thee, and of wise folke, of which thing all the ordinaunce and the sooth (for as much as folke that ben to comen after our dayes, shall knowen it) I haue putte it in Scripture, and in remembraunce. For touchyng the Letters falsely made, by which Letters I am accused, to haue hoped the freedome of Rome, what appertaineth me to speaken therof. Of which Letters, the fraud had been shewed apertly, if I had had libertie for to haue vsed and been at confession of mine accusours, the which thing in all needes hath great strength. For what other freedom may men hopen? Certes, I would that some other freedome might be hoped, I would then haue answered by the wordes of a man, that hight Canus: for when he was accused of Canus, Cesar Germanes sonne, that he was knowing and consenting, of a conuration made ayenst him: This Canius aunswered thus: If I had wist it, then haddest not wist it. In which thing, sorrow hath not so dulled my witte, that I plaine onely, that shrewd folke apparailen Felonies against vertue, but I wonder greatly, how that they may performe thynges that they haue hoped for to doen, for why ne will ne shrewdnesse that commeth peraventure of our defaut. But it is like a Monster and a marualle, how that in the present sight of GOD may been atcheued and performed such thynges, as euery Fellonous manne hath conceyued in his thought against innocents. For which thing, one of thy familiers, not vnskilfull, asked thus: If GOD is, whence commen wicked things. But all had it been lefull, that fellonous folke, that now desiren the blood and the death of all good menne, and eke of the Senate, haue

wilned

wilned to gone distroyen me, whom they haue seen alway batailen and defenden good men, and eke all the Senate, that had not deserued of the fathers (that is to saine, of the Senatours) that they shoulden will my destruction. Thou remembrest well as I gesse, that when I would doen or saine any thing, thou thy selfe alway present ruledest me.

At the citie of Uerone, when that the king, gredie of common slaughter, cast him to transporten vpon all the order of the Senate the guilt of his royall Maiestie, of the whith gilt, that Albin was accused: with how great sikernesse of perill to me, defended I all the Senat: Thou wotest well that I say sooth, ne I ne auaunted mee neuer in prayling of my selfe: For alway, when any wight receiueth precious renome, in auaunting of himselfe or his werkes, he amenuseth the secree of his conscience.

But now thou mayest well seene, to what end I am comen for mine innocencie, I receiue paine of false Fellonie, for guerdoun of very vertue. And what open confession of fellonie had euer Judges, so accordaunt in crueltie, that is to saine, as mine accusing hath, that eyther errour of mans wit, or els condition of Fortune, that is vncertaine vnto all mortall folke, ne submitted some of hem, that is to say, that it ne enclined some Judge to haue pitie or compassion. For although I had been accused, that I would brenne holy houses, and strangle Priests with wicked swearde, or that I had greithed death to all good men, algates the sentence should haue punished me present confessed and conuict.

But now I am remoued from the Citie of Rome almost fiue hundred thousand paas, I am without defence dampned, to proscription and to death, for the studies and bounties that I haue doen to the Senate. But o well been they worthy of merite: as who sayeth, nay, there might yet neuer none of hem be conuict of suth a blame as mine is, of which trespace, mine accusours seene full well the dignitie, for they would darken it with meddling of some fellonie. They baren me on hond, and saied, that I had pollute and defouled my conscience with Sacriledge, for couetise of dignitie: and certes, thou thy selfe, that art planted in me, chasedest out of the siege of my courage all couetise of mortall things, ne Sacriledge, ne had no leaue to haue a place in me before thine eyes. For thou droppedest euery day in mine eares, and in my thought, thilke commaundement of Pythagoras, that is to say: Wenne shall seruen to God, and not to goddes. Ne it was not conuenient, ne none need, to taken helpe of the foulest spirits, I that thou hast ordained, and set in such excellence, that thou madest me like to God, and ouer this, the right cleane secret chamber of mine house, that is to say, my wife, and the companie of mine honest friends, and my wiues father, as well holy as worthy to be reuerenced for his deeds, defenden me from all such suspection of such blame. But oh mallice. For they that accusen me, taken of the Philosophy fauth of so great blame, for they trowen, that I haue had affinitie to malice or enchauntment, because that I am replenished and fulfilled with thy teachings, and enformed of thy maners. And thus it sufficeth not only, that thy reuerence ne auaile me naught, but if thou of thy free will rather bee blemished with mine offencion. But certes, to the harms that I haue, there betideth yet this encrease of harme, that the guelling and the iudgement of much folke, ne looken nothing to the deserts of things, but only the auenture of fortune, and iudgen that only such things ben purueyed of God, which that temporall wilfulnesse commaundeth. Glosa. As thus, that if a wight haue prosperitie, he is a good man, and worthy to haue that prosperitie: and who so hath aduersitie, he is a wicked mã, and God hath forsake him, and he is worthy to haue that aduersitie. This is the opinion of some folke, and thereof commeth that good gelling, first of all thing forsaked wretches. Certes, it greeueth me to think right now, in diuers sentences that the people sayth of me: and thus much I say, That the last charge of contrarious Fortune, is this, that when any blame is laied vpon a caitife, men wenen, that he hath deserued that he suffereth. And I that am put away from good men, and dispoyled of dignities, and defouled of my name by gelling, haue suffred turments for my good deeds. Certes, me seemeth, that I see the fellonous couines of wicked men habounden in ioy and gladnesse, and I see, that euery lozell shapeth him to find new fraudes for to accuse good folke, and I see that good folke be ouerthrowne, for drede of my perill, and euery luxurious tourmentour dare doen all fellonie vnpunished, and be excited thereto by yefts, and innocents be not only dispoiled of sikernesse, but of defence, and therto me list to crien to God in this manner.

O stelliferi conditor orbis, Qui perpetuo nixus solio, Rapido cœlum turbine versas, Legemque pati sidera cogis, Vt nunc pleno lucida cornu. Totis fratris obuia flammis. Condat stellas luna minores: Nunc obscuro pallida cornu Phebo proprior lumina perdat, &c.

THou maker of the wheele, that beareth the sterres, which that art fastened to thy perdurable chaire, & turnest the heauen with a rauishing sweigh, and constrainest the sterres to sucker thy Law: so that the Moone sometime shining with her ful hornes, meeting with all the beames of the Sun her brother, hideth the sterres that been lesse. And somtime, when the Moon pale, with her darke hornes, approcheth the Sun, leseth her lights: and that the cumsterre Hesperus, which that in the first time of the night, bringeth first her cold arising, commeth eft ayen her vsed course, and is pale by ỹ morrow at rising of the Sun, and is then icleped Lucifer. Thou restrainest the day by shorter dwelling, in the time of the cold Winter, that maketh the leaues fall. Thou diuidest the swift tides of the night, when the hote Summer is commen. Thy might attempreth the variaunt seasons of the yeare, so that Zepherus, the debonaire wind, bringeth ayen in the first Summer season, the leaues that the wind that hight Boreas, hath reft away in Autumne, that is to say, the last end of Summer: and the seeds that the sterre that hight Arcturus sew, be worē high corne, when the sterre Sirius enchaseth hem. There is nothing vnbounden from this old Law, ne forletteth the werke of his proper estate.

O thou gouernour, gouerning all things by certaine end, why refusest thou only to gouern the werkes of men by due manner: Why suffrest thou, that sliding fortune turneth so great enterchaunges of things, so that annoyous paine that should duly punish Fellons, punisheth Innocents: And folke of wicked maners sitten in high chaires, and ennoying folke, treden (and that vnrightfully) on the necks of holy men. And vertue clere and shining naturally, is hid in derke derkenesses, and the rightful man beareth the paine and the blame of the fellons. Ne the forswearing, ne the fraud couerde and kempt with a false colour, ne annoieth not to shrewdnesse, the which shrewdnesse, when hem list vsen her strength, they reioycen hem to put vnder hem the soueraigne kings, which that the people without number dredē. O thou, whatsoeuer thou be, that knittest all bondes of thinges, looke on these wretched earths, we men that ben not a foule partie, but a faire part of so great a werke, we been tormented in this see of fortune. Thou gouernor withdraw and restraine the rauishing floods, and fasten and ferme these earths stable, with thilke bond, with which thou gouernest heauen, that is so large.

Hec vbi continuato dolore delatraui: illa vultu placido nihilque meis querimonijs mota. Phi. Cum te (inquit) mestum, lacrimantemque vidissem: illico miserum exulemque cognoui. Sed quam id longinquum esset exilium.

WHen I had with a continuall sorrowe sobbed, or broken out these things, she with her chere pesible and nothing amooued with my complaints, said thus. When I saw ther (qd. she) sorrowfull and weeping, I wist anon that thou were a wretch and exiled: But I wist neuer how ferre thine exile was, if thy tale ne had yshewed it me. But certes, all be thou ferre fro thy countrey, thou nart not putte out of it, but thou hast fayled of thy way, and gone amisse. And if thou hast leuer for to wene that thou be put out of thy countrey, then hast thou put out thy selfe, rather than any other wight hath: for no wight (but thou thy selfe) ne might neuer haue done that to thee. For if thou remember thee of what countrey thou art borne, it nis nat gouerned by Emperours, ne by gouernement of multitude, as weren the countries of hem of Athens: but one Lord, and one king, and that is God, that is Lord of thy country, which that reioyseth him of the dwelling of his citizens, and not for to put hem in exile. Of the which Lord, it is a freedome to be gouerned by the bridle of him, and obey to his iustice. Hast thou forgotten thilke old law of thy citie, in the which citie it is ordained and established, That what wight hath leuer found therein his seat or his house, than elswhere, he may nat be exiled by no right from that place? For who so that is contained within the pales of thilke city, there is no drede that he may deserue to bee exiled. But who that letteth the will tenhabit there, he forletteth also to deserue to be a citezein of thilke citie. So that I say, that the face of this place ne mooueth me not so mikell, as thine owne face. Ne I ne aske not rather the wals of thy librarie, apparailed and wrought with yuorie and with glasse, than after the seat of thy thoght, in which I put nat whilom bookes, but I put that that maketh bookes worthy of price, or precious, that is to say, sentence of my bookes. And certainly, of thy deserts bestowed in common good, thou hast said sooth, but after the multitude of thy good deeds, thou hast said few. And of the honestie or of the falsenesse of things that ben opposed against thee, thou hast remembred things that be knowne to all folke. And of the felonies and frauds of thine accusours, it seemeth thee to haue touched it, forsooth

forsooth rightfully and shortly, all mighten the same things better and more plentuously been couth in the mouth of the people, that knoweth all this. Thou haste eke blamed greatly and complained of the wrongfull deed of the Senate. And thou hast sorrowed for my blame, and thou hast wopen for the dommage of thy renoun that is apaired, and thy last sorrow enchased ayen fortune, complaynest the guerdons, ne be not cunnly yolden to ꝑ deserts of folke. And in thy latter ende of thy wood muse, thou prayedest, that thilke peace that gouerneth the heauen, should gouerne the earth. But for that many tribulations of affections haue assailed thee, and sorrow and ire and weping to drawe thee diuerfly, as thou art nowe feeble of thought, mightier remedies ne shullen not yet touchen thee, for which wee willen somdele yeen lighter medicines, so that thilke passions that bee waxen hard in swelling, by perturbacōs flowing into thy thoght, mowen wexe eafie and soft, to receiue the strength of a more mightie and more eagre medicine, by an easier touching.

Cum phebi radiis graue Cancri fidus inæstuat,
Tum qui larga negantibus, Sulcis semina credidit,
Elusus Cereris fide, Quarnas pergat at arbores.
Nunquam purpurem nemus lecturus violas petas, &c.

When that the heauie sterre of the Cancre enchaseth by the beams of Phebus, that is to sayne, When that Phebus the sunne is in the signe of Cancre, who so preueth then largely his seeds to the fields, that refusen to receiue hem, let him gone beguiled of trust that he had to his corne, to Achornes of Okes. If thou wilt gather Violets, ne goe thou nat to the purple wood, when the field chirkinge, agriseth of colde, by the felnesse of the winde, that hight Aquilone. If thou desirest or wilt yeen grapes, ne seeke thou nat a gluttons honde to straine and presse the stalkes of the vine in the first summer season. For Bacchus the god of wine, hath rather yeuen his pettes to Autumne, the latter ende of summer. God tokeneth and assygneth the times, abling hem to her proper offices, ne he suffereth not the bounds, which that himselfe hath deuided and constrayned to beene imedled togider: and for thy, he that forletteth certaine ordinaunce of dooing by ouerthrowing way, he ne hath no glad issue or ende of his werkes.

Primum igitur, pateris ne me pauculis rogacionibus statum tuæ mentis attingere, atque tentare? vt quis modus sit tuæ curacionis intelligam, &c.

FIrst wouldest thou suffer mee to touch & assay the estate of thought by a few demaunds, so that I may understand by, the manner of thy curation? Aske me (qd. I) at thy will, that thou wolt, and I shall answer. Thus saied she thus: Whether weenest thou (qd. she) that this world be gouerned foolishly by haps and fortunes, or els weenest thou, that there be in it any gouernement of reason? B. Certes (qd. I) I ne trowe nat in no manner, that so certaine things should bee mooued by Fortunous fortune. But I wote well, that God, maker and maister, is gouernour of his werk, ne was neuer yet day that might put me out of the soothnesse of that sentence. ℙ. So is it (qd. shee) for the same thing sang thou a little here before, and bewailedest and wepteft, that onely men were put out of the cure of God, for of all other things thou ne doubtest nat, that they were gouerned by reason. But ough, I wonder certes greatly why that thou art sicke, sens that thou art put in so holsome a sentence: But let vs seeken deeper. I conjecte, that there lacketh I not what. But say me this. Sens that thou ne doubtest not that this world be gouerned by God, with which gouernaile, takest thou heed that it is gouerned? Unneth (qd. I) know I the sentence of thy question, so that I ne may not yet answeren to thy demands. I was not deceiued (qd. she) that there ne failed somewhat by which the maladie of perturbation is crept into thy thought, so as the strength of thy palets shining is opē: but say me this. Remembrest thou what is the end of things, and whider the entention of all kind tendeth? I haue heard told it some time (qd. I) but drerinesse hath bulked my memorie. Certes (qd. she) thou wotest well whence all things be commen and proceden. I wote well (qd. I) and answerde, that God is beginning of all. And how may this be (qd. she) that sens thou knowest the beginning of thinges, that thou knowest nat what is the end of thinges, but suche beene the customes of perturbation, and this power they han, that they may moue a man from his place, that is to say, from the stableneffe and perfection of his knowing: but certes, they may nat all arace him, ne alien him in all: but I would that thou woldest answere to this. Remembrest thou that thou art a man? B. Why should I not remember that (qd. I.) ℙ hi. Wayst thou not tell me then (qd. she)

she) what thing is a man? Askest thou not me (qd. I) whether that I be a reasonable mortall beast, I wote well and confesse that I am it. Wist thou neuer yet that thou were any other thing (qd. she.) No (qd. I.) Now well know I (qd. she) other cause of thy malady, and that right great: Thou hast left for to knowen thy selfe what thou art, through which I haue plainely founden the cause of thy maladie, or els the entre of recouering of thy heale. For why? For thou art confounded with foryetting of thy selfe: For thou sorowdest that thou art exiled of thy proper goods. And for thou ne wist what is the end of things, for thy, demest thou that fellonous and wicked men be mightie and welefull: and for thou hast foryetten by which gouernements the world is gouerned, for thy, wenest thou that these mutations of fortune fleten without gouernour. These ben the causes not only to malady, but certes gret causes to death: But I thanke the actour and the maker of heale, that nature hath not all forleten thee. I haue great norishing of thine heale, and that is the sooth sentence of gouernaunce of the world, that thou beleeuest, that the gouerning of it is not subiect ne vnderput to the folly of these haps auenturous, but to the reason of God: and therfore doubt thee nothing, for of this little sparke thine heat of life shall shine. But for as much as it is not time yet of faster remedies, and the nature is of thoughts thus deceiued, that as oft as they cast away sooth opinions, they clothen hem in false opinions. Of the which false opinions, the derkenesse of perturbation wexeth vp, that confoundeth the very insight. And that darkenesse shall I somewhat aslay to maken thinne and weak, by light and meaneliche remedies, so that after that the darkenesse of deceyuing things be done away, thou may know the shining of very light.

Nubibus atris condita nullum fundere possunt sydera lumen. Si mare voluens turbidus auster misceat estum: Vitrea dudum, Parque serenis, &c.

The sterres couered with black clouds ne mow yeten adowne no light, if the troubled wind that hight Auster, turning and wallowing the sea, medeleth the heat, that is to saine, the boyling vp from the botome. The waues that were whylome cleare as glasse, and like to the faire bright dayes, withstant anon the sights of men, by the filth and ordure that is resolued. And the fleeting streame that reileth doun diuersly from high mountaignes, is arrested and resisted oft time by the encountering of a stone, that is departed and fallen from some roche. And for thy, if thou wilt looken and deeme sooth with cleare light, and holden the way with a right path, weiue thou ioy, driue fro drede, fleme thou hope, ne let no sorow approch, that is to saine, Let none of these foure passions ouercome or blend thee. For cloudie and derke is thilke thought, and bound with bridles, where as these things reignen.

Explicit liber primus.

¶ Post hæc paulisper obticuit, atque vbi attentionem meam modesta taciturnitate collegit, sic exhorsa est. Si penitus egritudinis tue causas, habitumque, &c.

After this shee stint a little, and after that she had gadered by a temper stylnesse mine attencion, as who so might saine thus: After these thynges shee stint a little, and when she apperceiued by a temper stilnesse, that I was ententiue to hearen her, she began to speake in this wise. If I (qd. she) haue vnderstonden and knowen vtterly the causes and the habite of thy maladye, thou languishest, and art defected for desire and talent of thy rather fortune. Shee that ilke Fortune onely, that is chaunged as thou fainest to thee ward, hath peruerted the clerenesse and the estate of thy courage. I vnderstonding the felle or manyfold colours and deceites of thilke maruailous monster Fortune, and how she vseth full flattering familiaritie with hem that she enforceth to beguile, so long, till that she confound with vnsufferable sorrow hem that shee hath left in despaire, vnpurueyed. And if thou remembrest well the kinde, the manners, and the deserte of thilke Fortune, thou shalt well knowe, that as in her thou neuer ne haddest ne haste yloste anie fayre thing: But (as I trowe) I shall not greatly trauailen to done thee remembren on these thinges. For thou were wont to hurtelen and despisen her with manly wordes, when she was blandishing and present, and pursudest her with sentences that weren drawen out of mine entre, that is to say, of mine enformacion: but no suddaine mutacion ne betideth not without a manner chaunging of courages. And so it is befall,

befall, that thou art a little departed fro the peace of thy thought, but now is time that thou drinke and taast some soft and delitable things, so that when they bee entered within thee, it mowen make way to stronger drinkes of medecines. Come now forth therefore the suasion of sweetnesse rethorien, which that goeth onely the right way, while she forsaketh not mine estatutes. And with Rhetorike, come forth Musicke, a damosell of our house, that singeth now lighter moods or prolacions, and now heauier. What eyleth thee man? What is it that hath cast thee into mourning and into weeping? I trow that thou hast seen some new thing and vncouth? Thou wenest that fortune be chaunged ayen me, but thou wenest wrong, if that thou wene alway tho been her manners. She hath rather kept as to thee ward her proper stablenesse in the chaunging of her selfe: right such was she, when she flattered thee and deceiued thee with vnlefull likings and false wilfulnesse. Thou hast now knowen and atteint the doubtous or double vilage of thilke blind goddesse Fortune. She that yet couereth and wimpleth her to other folke, hath shewed her selfe euerydele to thee: If thou approuest her, and thinkest that she is good, vse her manners, and plain thee nat, and if thou agrisest her false trecherie, despise and cast away her that plaieth so harmfully, for she that is now cause of so much sorrow to thee, shuld be to thee cause of peace and of ioy. She hath forsaken thee forsoth, the which that neuer man may be liker, that she ne shal forsaken him. Glose. But natheless, some bookes haue the text thus. Forsooth she hath forsaken thee, ne there nis no man liker, that she ne hath not forsaken. Holdest thou then thilk welefulnesse precious to thee that shall passen? and is present fortune dere worth to thee, which that nis not faithfull for to dwell, and when she goth away, that she bringeth a wight in sorow? For sens she may not bee withholden at a mans will, she maketh him a wretch when she departeth fro him. What other thing is fleeting fortune, but a manner shewing of wretchednesse that is to come. Ne it sufficeth not only to looken on thing that is present before the eyen of a man, but wisedome looketh and measureth the end of things, and the same changing from one to another, that is to saine, from aduersitie into prosperitie, maketh that the menaces of fortune ne been not for to dreden, ne the flattering to be desired. Thus at last it behoueth thee to suffren with euen will in patience, all that is done within the floore of fortune, that is to say, in this world, sith thou hast ones put thy necke vnder the yoke of her. For if thou wolt writen a law of wending and of dwelling to Fortune, which that thou hast chosen freely to ben thy lady: Art thou nat wrongfull in that, and makest Fortune wroth and asper by thine impacience, and yet thou mayest nat chaungen her?

If thou committest and betakest thy sailes to the wind, thou shalt be shouen, nat thider that thou wouldest, but whider that the wind shoueth thee. If thou casteste thy seedes in the fields, thou shouldest haue in mind, that the yeares been amongs other while plentuous, and other while barrein. Thou hast betaken thy selfe to the gouernaunce of Fortune, and for thy, it behoueth thee to been obeysaunt to the maners of thy lady. Enforcest thou thee to arresten or withholden the swiftnesse and the sweigh of her tourning wheele? O thou foole of all mortal fooles, if Fortune began to dwell stable, she ceased then to ben Fortune.

Hæc cum superba verterit vices dextra, Exæstantis more fertur Euripi. Dudum tremendos sæua proterit reges, Humiliemque victi subleuat fallax vultum. Non illa dura miseros audit, haud curat fletus. &c.

When Fortune with a proud right hand with tourned her chaunging stounds, she fareth like the maners of the boiling Euripe.

Glosa. Euripe is an arme of the sea, that ebbeth and floweth, and somtime the streme is on o side, and somtime on that other.

Text. She cruell Fortune casteth adowne kings, that whylome weren yprade, and she deceiuable, enhaunseth vp the humble chere of him that is discomfited: ne she neither heareth ne recketh of wretched weepings. And she is so hard, that she laugheth and scorneth the weeping of hem, the which shee hath maked to weepe with her free will. Thus shee playeth and thus she proueth her strengths, and sheweth a great wonder to all her seruants, if that a wight is seene welefull, and ouerthrowne in an houre.

Vellem autem pauca tecum, Fortunæ ipsius verbis agitare. Tu igitur anius postulet animaduerte. P. Quid tu ô homo ream me agis cotidianis querelis, &c.

Certes, I would pleaden with thee a few things, vsing the words of Fortune: take heede nowe thyselfe, if that she aske right. O thou man, wherefore makest thou me giltie by thine euerydayes plainings?

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What wrong haue I done thee? what goods haue I beraft thee, that were thine? Steiue or plete with me before what iudge that thou wilt, of the possession, of richesses, or of dignities, and if thou maiest shewen me, that euer any mortall manne hath receyued any of tho things, to ben his in proper, then will I grant freely, that thilke things were thine, which that thou askest. When that nature brought thee forth out of thy mothers wombe, I receyued thee naked and needie of all things, and I nourished thee with all my richesses, and was ready and entencife through my fauour to sustaine thee: and that maketh thee nowe impatient ayenst me. And I enuironned thee with all haboundaunce and shining of all goodes, that been in my right: now it liketh mee to withdraw mine hond. Thou hast had grace as he that hath vsed forrain goods. Thou hast no right to plain thee, as though thou haddest vtterly forlorne all thy things. Why plainest thou then? I haue done to thee no wrong: richesses, honours, and such other things ben of my right: my seruaunts knowen me for her lady: they come with me, and departen when I wend. I dare well affirme hardely, that if tho things, of which thou plainest that thou hast forlorne, had been thine, thou ne haddest not forlorn hem. Shall I then be defended only to vse my right? Certes, it is lefull to the heauen to make cleare daies, and after that, to ouercome tho same daies with derke nights. The yeare hath eke leaue to apparaile the visage of the earth, now with floures, and now with fruit, & to confound hem sometime with raines and with cold.

The see hath eke his right, to ben sometime caulme and blandishing, with smooth water, and sometime to be horrible, with waues and with tempests. But couetise of men, that may not be staunched, shall it bind me to be stedfast, sithen that stedfastnesse is vncouth to my manners. Such is my strength, and such play I play commonly. I turne the whirling wheele with the turning circle, I am glad to changen the lowest to the highest, and the highest to the lowest. Worth vp if thou wolt, so it be by this law, ẏ thou ne hold nat that I do thee wrong, though thou discend adowne, when the reason of my play asketh it. Wost thou not how Cresus, king of Lidians, of which king Cyrus was full sore agast, a little beforne that this Cresus was caught of Cyrus, and ledde to the fire to be brend, but that a rain discended from heauen, that rescowed him? And it is out of mind, how that Paulus, Consull of Rome, when he had taken the king of Perciens, weped pitously for the captiuitie of the selfe king? What other thing bewaylen the cryings of tragedies, but only the deeds of fortune, that with an aukwarde stroke ouer-tourneth the realmes of great nobley. Glose. Tragedie is to saine, a ditee of a prosperitie for a time, that endeth in wretchednesse. Lernedest not thou in Grece when thou were yong, that in the entre or in the seeler of Iupiter, ther ben couched two tonnes, that one is full of good, that other is full of harme? What right hast thou to plaine, if thou hast taken more plentously of the good side, that is to sain of richesse & prosperite? And what eke if I be not al departed fro thee? what eke if my mutabilitie, yeueth thee rightfull cause of hope to haue yet better things? natheles, dismay thee not in thy thought. And thou that art put in the cõmune realme of all, ne desire not to liuen by thine owne proper right.

Si quantas rapidis flatibus incitus Pontus versat arenas. Aut quot stelliferis edita noctibus Cœlo sidera fulgent: Tantas fundat opes, nec retrahat manum Pleno copia cornu: Humanum miseras haud ideo genus cesset flere querelas; &c.

Though Plentie, goddesse of riches, hylde adowne with a full horne, and withdrawe not her hand, as many richesse as the see turneth vpward sands, when it is moued with rauishing blasts, or els, as many richesses, as there shinen bright sters in the heauen on the sterrie nights: yet for all that, mankinde nolde not cease to weepe wretched plaints. And all be it so, that God receyued her prayers, and yeueth hem as full large much gold, and apparaileth couetous folke with noble or clere honors: yet seemeth him haue gotten nothing. But alway cruell rauine deuouring all that they haue gotten, sheweth other gapings, that is to say, gapen and desiren yet after mo richesses. What bridles might withholden to any certaine end the disordinat couetise of men, when euer the rather that it fleteth in large yefts, the more brenneth in hem the lust of hauing? Certes, He that quaking and dredefull weneth himselfe needy, he ne liueth neuermore rich.

His igitur, si pro se tecum, verbis fortuna loqueretur, quid profecto contrahisceres, non haberes. At si quid est, quo querelam tuam iure tuearis, proferas opportet.

Therfore if that fortune speake with thee for her self in this manner, forsooth thou ne hadst nat what thou mightest answere. And if thou hast

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any thing, wherewith thou mayest rightfully defenden thy complaint, it behoueth thee to shewen, and I woll yeuen to thee space to tellen it. Boecius. Certainely (qd. I then) these been faire thinges, and annoynted with honey sweetnesse of Rhethorike and Musick, and only while they been heard and sowne in eares, they been delicious. But to wretches it is a deeper kelyng of harme, this is to sayne, that wretches feelen the harmes that they suffer more greuously, than the remedies or the delights of these words may gladden or conforten hem: So that when these thinges stinten for to sown in eares, that sorrow that is inset, greueth the thought. P. Right so it doth (qd. he.) For these ne been yet no remedies of the maladie, but they ben a manner nourishing of thy sorrowes, that rebell ayenst thy curation. For when time is, I shall moue and aiust such thynges, that perceen hem full deepe. But nathelesse, that thou shalt not wilne to leten thy selfe a wretch, hast thou forgeten the number and the manner of thy welefulnesse, I speake not how that the soueraigne men of the Citie tooke thee in cure and keeping, when thou were orphelyn of father and of mother, and were chosen in affinitie of princes of the citie. And thou begannest rather to be lefe and deare, than for to be a neyghbour, the which thyng is the most precious kinde of anye propinquitie or alliaunce that may been. Who is it that ne sayed tho, that thou ne were right welefull, with so great nobley as thy fathers in law, and with the chastitie of thy wife, and with the opportunity and noblesse of thy masculine children, that is to sayne, thy sonnes? And ouer all this (nee list to passen of common thynges) how thou haddest in thy youth dignities, that were warned to old men: but it delyteth me now to commen to the singular vp-heaping of thy welefulnesse. If any fruite of mortall thynges may haue any wight or price of welefulnesse, mightest thou euer forgeten for any charge of harme whiche might befall, the remembraunce of thilke day, that thou saw thy two sonnes made counsailours, and ladde together from thy house vnder so great assemble of Senatours, and vnder the blithnesse of the people? And when thou saw hem set in the court in high chaires of dignities. Thou Rhetorien or pronouncer of kings praisings, deseruedest glory of wit and of eloquence, when thou sitting betweene thy two sonnes, counsaylours, in the place that hight Circo, and fulfilledest the bidding of the multitude of people that was spradde about thee with so large praysing and laud, as men sing in victories. Tho yaue thou to Fortune, as I trowe, that is to say, tho feffedest thou Fortune with glorious wordes, and deceyuedest her, when she acoyed and nourished thee as hir owne delices. Thou bare away of Fortune a yeft, that is to say, such guerdon that she neuer yaue to priuate man. Wilt thou therefore lay a reckning with Fortune? She hath now first twinckled vpon thee with a wicked eye. If thou consider the number and the manner of thy blisses and of thy sorrowes, thou maiest nat forsaken, that nart yet blisfull. For if therefore thou weenest thy selfe not welefull for tho things that seemeden ioyfull, ben passed, there nis not why thou shouldest seeme thy selfe a wretch, for things that semed now sorry, passen also. Art thou now commen a suddain gheste into the shaddow or tabernacle of this life? or troweth thou that any stedfastnesse be in mans thinges? When oft a swifte houre dissolueth the same man, that is to say, when the soule departed from the body. For although, that selde is there any faith that fortunous things would dwellen: yet nathelesse, the last day of a mans life is a manner death to Fortune, and also to thilke that hath dwelt. And therefore what weenest thou doth recke, if thou forlet her in dying, or els that the Fortune forlete thee in flyen away.

Cum polo Phebus, roseis quadrigis Lucem spergere cœperit, Pallet albentes hebetata vultus Flammis stella permentibus, &c.

When Phebus the Sunne beginneth to spreade his clearenesse with Rosen charriots, then the sterre dimmed, paleth her white cheres by the flames of the sunne that ouercommeth the sterre light: that is to sayne, when the sunne is risen, the day-sterre weyeth pale, and leseth her light. For the great lightnesse of the sunne, when the wood weyeth rodie of rosen flours in the first Summer season, through the breath of the winde Zepherus, that weyeth warme: if the cloudie wynde Auster blowe fell liche, then goeth away fairenesse of thynges. Oft the see is clere and caulme with mouing floodes, and oft the horrible wind Aquilon moueth boyling tempest, and ouerwhelueth the sea. If the forme of this worlde is so selde stable, and if it turneth by so many enterchaunges, wilt thou then trusten in the tumblynge fortunes of men? Wilt thou trowen on fleeting goods? It is certaine, and established by law perdurable, that nothing that is engendred, is stedfast ne stable.

Tum ego, vera inquam, commemoras ó virtutum omnium nutrix: nec inficiati poſſum proſperitatis meæ velociſsimum curſum. Sed hoc eſt, quid, &c.

THen ſaied I thus: O nourice of all vertues, thou ſayeſt full ſooth, ne I may not forſake the right ſwifte courſe of my proſperitye, that is to ſaine, that the proſperitie ne be commen to me woonder ſwiftly and ſoone. But this is a thing that greatly ſmarteth me, when it remembreth me: For in all aduerſities of Fortune, the moſt vnſelie kind of contrarious Fortune, is to haue been welefull. Philo. But that thou abieſt thus (qd. ſhe) the tourment of thy falſe opinion, that mayeſt thou not rightfully blamen, ne arretten to things, as who ſayeth, that thou haſt yet many haboundaunces of things. Tertius. For all be it ſo, that the idle name of aduenturous welefulneſſe moueth thee now, it is lefull, that thou reckon with me of how many thynges thou haſt yet plentie. And therfore, if that thilk thing that thou haddeſt for more precious, in all thy richeſſe of Fortune, be kept to thee, yet by the grace of God, vnwemmed and vndefouled: mayeſt thou then plaine rightfully vpon the miſcheefe of Fortune, ſithen thou haſt yet thy beſt thinges? Certes, yet liueth in good point thilke precious honor of mankind, Symachus thy wiues father, which ꝑ is a man made of all Sapience and Vertue, the whych man thou wouldeſt buy with the price of thine owne life, he bewayleth the wrongs that men doen to thee, and not for himſelf: For he liueth in ſikerneſſe of any Sentence put ayenſt him. And yet liueth thy wife, that is attempre of wit, and paſſing other women in cleanneſſe of chaſtitie: and for I would cloſen ſhortly her bounties, ſhe is like her father: I tell thee that ſhe liueth, loth of this life, and keepeth to thee onely her ghoſt, and is all mate and ouercome by weeping and ſorrow, for deſire of thee. In the which thing onely, I mote graunten thee, that thy welefulneſſe is amenuſed. What ſhall I ſayne eke of thy two ſonnes, counſaylours, of which, as of childrē of her age, there ſhineth the likeneſſe of the wit of her father, and of her elde father? And ſithen the ſoueraine cure of all mortall folke, is to ſauen her own liues, if thou know thy ſelfe, thy goods make thee more welefull. For yet ben there things dwelled to thee ward, that no man doubteth, that they ne been more deere worth to thee, than thine owne life. And for thy, drie teares, for yet is not euery Fortune hatefull to thee warde: ne ouergreat tempeſt ne hath not yet fallen vpon thee, when thine ankers cleuen faſt, that neither woll ſuffren the comfort of this time preſent, ne the hope of time comming, to paſſen ne to failen. Bo. And I pray (qd. I) that faſt mote they holde: for the whiles that they holden, howſoeuer that thinges beene, I ſhall well fleten forth and eſcapen. But thou mayeſt well ſeene, how great apparailes and array that me lacked, that be paſſed away fro me. Phi. I haue ſomwhat aduaunced and furthered thee (qd. ſhe) if that thou annoy not, or forthink not of all thy fortune, as who ſayth, I haue ſomewhat comforted thee, ſo that thou tempeſt not thee thus with all thy fortune, ſithen thou haſt yet thy beſt thynges. But I may not ſuffren thy delices, that plaineſt ſo weeping and anguiſhous, for that there lacketh ſome what to thy welefulneſſe. For what man is he that is ſo ſad, or of great perfite welefulneſſe, that he ne ſtriueth and playneth on ſome halfe ayen the qualitie of his eſtate? For why, Full anguiſhous thing is ꝑ condicion of mans goods. For eyther it commeth not all together to a wight, or elſ it ne laſteth not perpetuell. For ſome man hath great richeſſe, but he is aſhamed of his vngentill linage. And ſome man is renomed of nobleſſe of kinrede, but he is encloſed in ſo great anguiſh of need of things, ꝑ him were leuer that he were vnknowe. And ſome man haboundeth both in richeſſe and nobleſſe, but yet he bewayleth his chaſt life, for hee ne hath no wife. And ſome man is, and ſelily maried, but he hath no children, and nouriſheth his richeſſes to ſtraunge folke. And ſome man is gladded with children, but he weepeth full ſore for the treſpace of his ſonne, or of his doughter. And for this there ne accordeth no wight lightly to that condicion of his fortune. For alway, to euery man there is in ſomwhat that vnaſſayed, he ne wote nought, or elſ he dreadeth that he hath aſſayed. And adde this alſo, that euery welefull man hath a full delicate feeling: ſo that but if all thinges befallen at his own will, he is impacient, or is not vſed to haue none aduerſitie, anone he is throwen adowne for euery little thing: and full little things been tho, that withdrawen the ſumme or the perfection of bliſſfulneſſe, fro hem that beene moſt fortunate. Howe many men troweſt thou, would deemen hemſelfe to ben almoſt in heauen, if they mighten attaine to the leaſt partie of the remenaunt of thy fortune? This ſame place, that thou cleepeſt exile, is countrey to them that enhabiten here. And for thy, nothing wretched, but when thou weneſt it: as who ſaith, thou thy ſelf, ne no wight elſ nis a wretch, but when he weneth himſelfe

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he is a wretch, by reputation of his courage. And ayenward, all fortune is blissfull to a man, by the agreeabilitie or by the egalitie of him that suffereth it. What man is that, that is so welefull, that nolde chaungen his estate when he hath lost his patience? The sweetnesse of mans welefulnesse, is spraynt with many bitternesses. The which welefulnesse, although it seeme sweet and ioyfull to him that vseth it, yet may it not been withholden, that it ne goeth away when it woll. Then it is well seene, howe wretched is the blissfulnesse of mortall things, that neither it dureth perpetuell with hem, that euery fortune receiuen agreeably or egally, ne it deliteth not in all to hem that ben anguishous. O ye mortall folke, what seeke ye then blissfulnesse out of your owne selfe, which is put in your selfe? Errour and folly confoundeth you. I shall shew thee shortly the point of soueraigne blissfulnesse.

Is there any thing to thee more precious than thy life? Thou wilt aunswere, nay. Then, if it so bee, that thou art mightie ouer thy selfe, that is to saine, by tranquilitie of thy soule, then hast thou thing in thy power, that thou noldest neuer lesen: ne Fortune may not bynemme it thee. And that thou mayest know that blissfulnesse ne may not stand in thynges that been fortunous and tempozell, now vnderstand and gather it together thus. If blissfulnesse be the soueraigne good of nature, that liueth by reason: ne thilke thing is not soueraigne good, that may be taken away in any wise.

For more worthie thing is, and more digne thilke thing, that may not bee taken away. Then sheweth it well, that the vnstableneſse of Fortune may nat attayne to receyue verye blissfulnesse. And yet moreouer, what manne that this tumbling welefulnesse leadeth, eyther he wote that it is chaungeable, or els he wote it not? And if he wote it not, what blissful fortune may there been in the blindnesse of ignorance? And if he wote that it is chaungeable, he mote alway ben adrad, that he ne lese that thing, that he ne doubteth not, but that he may lesen it. As who sayth, he mote alway be agast, least he lese that, that he woteth right well hee may lese. For which, the continuall dread that he hath, ne suffereth him not to be welefull. Or els if he lese it, he wencth to bee dispised and foreleten. Certes, eke that is a full little good, that is borne with euen hart, when it is lost, that is to saine, that men doe no more force of the losse, than of the hauing. And for as much as thou thy selfe art he, to whom it hath be shewed, and preued by full many demonstrations, as I wote well, that the soules of men ne mowen not dien in no wise. And eke sens it is cleare and certaine, that fortunous welefulnesse endeth by the death of the body: it may not be doubted, that if death may take away blissfulnesse, that all the kind of mortall thing ne descendeth into wretchednesse, by the end of death. And sithen we know well, that many a man hath sought the fruite of blissfulnesse, not onely with suffering of death, but eke with suffering of paines and tourments: how might then this present life make men blissfull, sens that thilke selfe life ended, it ne maketh folke no wretches.

Quisquis volet perennem
Cautus ponere sedem.
Stabilisque nec sonori
Sterni flatibus Euri,
Et fluctibus minantem.
Curat spernere pontum
Montis cacumen alti,
Bibulas vitet arenas, &c.

What manner of folke, ware and stable, that woll founden hem a perdurable seat, and ne will not bee cast downe with the lowde blasts of the wind Eurus, and will despise the Sea menasing with floudes: let him eschew to builden on the coppe of the Mountaine, or in the moist Sands. For if the fell wind Auster tourmenteth the coppe of the Mountaines with all her strengths, and the lose sands, refusen to bear the heauy weights. And for thy, if thou wolt flien the perillous aduenture, that is to say, of the world: haue minde certainely to set thine house of a merie seate in a lowe stone. For although the winde troubling the sea, thunder with ouerthrowing, thou that art put in quiete, and welefull, by strength of thy palleis, shalt lead a cleare age, scorning the woodnesse and the ires of the aire.

Sed quoniam racionum iam in te mearum fomenta discendunt, paulo validioribus vtendum puto. Age enim. Si iam caduca ac momentaria fortunæ, &c.

But for as much, as the nourishings of my reason discenden nowe into thee, I trow it were time to vsen a little stronger medicines. Now vnderstand here, all were it so, that the yefts of Fortune ne were not brittle, ne transitorie, what is there in hem, that may bee thyne

in any time? Or els, that it ne is foule, if that it be looked and considered perfitly. Richesses, been they precious by the nature of hemselfe, or els by the nature of thee? What is most worthy of richesse? Is it not gold, or might of money assembled? Certes, that gold and that money shineth, and yeueth better renome to them that dispenden it, than to thilke folke that muckeren it: for auarice maketh alway muckerers to ben hated, and largesse maketh folke clere of renome. For sith that such things as ben transferred from one man to another, ne may not dwell with no man: Certes, then is that money precious, when it is translated into other folke, and stinten to be had by vsage of large yeuing, of him that hath yeuen it. And also, if all the money that is ouer all, in all the world, were gadered toward one man, it shold make all other mē to be needie, as of that. And certes, a voice all hole, that is to sain, without amenuising, fulfilleth together the hearing of much folke. And when they ben apalled, needs they maken hem poore, that forgone tho richesses.

O, strait and needy clepe I these richesses, sens that many folke ne may not haue it all, ne all ne may it not commen to one man, without pouertie of all other folke. And the shining of gemmes, that I call precious stones, draweth it not the eyen of folke to hemward, that is to saine, for the beautie? But certes, if there were beautie or bountie in shining of stones, thilke clearenesse is of the stones hemselfe, and not of men. For which I wonder greatly, that men marualen on such things. For why, what thing is it, that if it wanteth moouing, and iopncture of soule and bodye, that by right might seemen a fair creature to him that hath a soule of reason. For all be it so, that gemmes drawen to hemselfe a little of the last beautie of the world, through thentent of her creatour and the distinction of hemself: yet for as mikell as they ben put vnder your excellence, they ne haue not deserued by no way, that ye should marualen on hem. And the beautie of fieldes, delighteth it not mikell vnto you?

B. Why should it not delighten vs, sith that it is a right faire porcion of the right fayre werke, that is to sayne, of this world? And right so been we gladded sometime of the face of the sea, when it is cleare: And also marualen wee on the Heauen, and on the Starres, and on the Sunne and on the Moone. Phi. Appertayneth (qd. she) any of thilke things to thee? Why darest thou glorifie thee in the shining of anye suche thynges? Art thou distingued and embelised by the springing floures of the first Summer season? Or swelleth thy plentie in fruits of Summer? Why art thou rauished with idle ioies? Why embracest thou straunge goods, as they were thine? Fortune ne shall neuer make, that suche thynges been thine, that nature of things hath maked foraine fro thee. Sooth it is, that without doubt the fruites of the yearth owen to bee to the nourishing of beasts. And if thou wolt fulfill thy need, after that it suffiseth to nature, then is it no need that thou seeke after the superfluitie of fortune. For with full few things and with full little things, nature hath her apaied. And if thou wolt achoken ꝑ fulfilling of nature with superfluities, certes, thilk things that thou wolt thresten or pouren into nature, shullen ben vnioyfull to thee, or els annoyous. Weenest thou eke, that it bee a faire thing, to shine with diuers clothings? Of which clothing, if the beauty be agreeable to looken vpon, I woll marualen on the nature of the matter of thilke clothes, or els on the workeman that wrought hem. Doeth also a long rout of meine make thee a blisfull man? The which seruaunts, if they ben vicious of conditions, it is a great charge, and destruction to the hous, and a great enemie to the lord himselfe: And if they ben good men, how shall strange and foraine goodnesse be put in the number of thy richesses? So that by all these forsaid things it is clearely shewed, that neuer one of thilke things, that thou accomptedest for thy goods, nas not thy good. In which things, if there be no beautie to be desired, why shouldest thou be sorrie to lese them? Or why shouldest thou reioyce thee to hold hem? For if they been faire of their owne kind, what appertaineth that to thee? For also wel shoulden they haue ben fair by hemselfe, though they were departed from thy richesses. For why, faire ne precious were they not, for that they commen among thy richesses: but for they seemed fair and precious, therfore thou hadst leuer recken hem amongs thy richesses. But what desirest thou of Fortune, with so great afare? I trow thou seekest to driue away need, with abūdance of things: but certes, it tourneth you all into the contrarie. For why, certes it needeth full many helpings to keepen the diuersitie of precious hostilements. And sooth it is, That of manye things they haue need, ꝑ many thynges haue: And ayenward, of little thing needeth him, that measureth his fill after the need of kinde, and not after outrage of couetise. It is so then, that ye menne haue no proper good set in you, for such ye moten seeke outward, in foraine and subiect things. So is then the condition of things tourned vp so doune, ꝑ a man that is a diuine creature, by merite of his reason, thinketh

keth that himſelfe nis neither faire ne noble, but if it be through poſſeſſion of hoſtilments, that ne han no life: and certes all other things ben apaied of her owne beauties: but ye men, that be ſemblable to God by your reaſonable thought, deſiren to apparailen your excellent kinde with the loweſt thinges. Ne ye vnderſtanden not howe great a wrong is dooen to your creatour. For he would that mankinde were moſt worthie, and noble of any yearthly thing: and ye threſten down your dignities beneathen the loweſt thinges. For if that all the good of euery thing be more precious, than is thilke thing, whoſe that the good is, ſith ye deemen, that the fouleſt thynges been your goods, then ſubmitten ye, and put your ſelues vnder the fouleſt thinges by your eſtimation. And certes, this betideth not without your deſert. For certes, ſuch is the condition of all mankinde, that onely when he hath knowing of it ſelfe, then paſſeth it in nobleſſe all other thyngs. And when it forletteth the knowing of it ſelfe, then it is brought beneathen all beaſtes. For why, all other liuing creatures han of kind to knowen not himſelfe. But when that men letten the knowing of hemſelfe, it commeth hem of vice. But how brode ſheweth the errour and the follie of you men, that wenen that any thing may been apparailed with ſtraunge apparailements? But forſooth that may not be done. For if a wight ſhineth with thynges that been put to him, as thus: If thilke things ſhinen, with which a manne is apparailed, certes, thilke things been commended and prayſed, with which he is apparailed: but natheleſſe, the thing that is couered and wrapped vnder that, dwelleth in his filthe. And I denie that thilke thing be good, that annoyeth him that hath it. Gabbe I of this? Thou wolt ſay nay. Certes, richeſſes haue annoyed full oft hem that han had tho richeſſe: Sith that euery wicked ſhrew is the more gredie after other folks richeſſes. Wherſoeuer it be in any place, be it gold or precious ſtones, he weneth him only moſt worthie, that hath hem. Thou then that ſo buſie dredeſt now the ſwerd and the ſpeare, if thou haddeſt entred in the path of this life, annoyed wayfaring man, then wouldeſt thou ſing before the theefe, as who ſaith, A poore man that beareth no richeſſe on him by the way, may boldly ſing before theeues, for he hath not whereof to be robbed. O precious and right cleare is the bliſſulneſſe of mortall richeſſe, that when thou haſt gotten it, then haſt thou lorne thy ſikerneſſe.

Fœlix nimium prior ætas, Contenta fidelibus aruis. Nec inerti perdita luxu. Facilique ſera ſolebat Ieiunia ſoluere glande. Nec bacchia munera norat liquido confundere melle. Nec lucida vellera ſerum, &c.

BLiſſful was the firſt age of me, they helden hem apayed with the meats that the true fields broughten forth: they ne deſtroyed nor deceyued not hemſelfe with outrage: they weren woont lightly to ſlaken her hunger at euen, with Acornes of Okes: they ne coude not medell the yefte of Bacchus to the cleare honey, that is to ſaine, they could make ne piemente or clarre: Ne they could not medell the bright fleeces of the Countrey of Syrians with the venime of Tirie: this is to ſaine, they coude not dyen white fleeces of Syrian countrey, with the blood of a manner Shell-fiſh, that men finden in Tirie, with which blood men dyen Purple.

They ſlepten holſome ſleeps vpon the graſſe, and dronken of the renning waters, and lien vnder the ſhadows of the high Pine trees. Ne no gheſte or ſtraunger carke yet the high ſea with oares or with thippes: ne they ne hadden ſeine yet no new ſtronds to leaden Marchandiſe into diuers Countries. Tho weren the cruell clarions full huſt, and full ſtill. Ne blood yſhad by eagre hate, had deied yet armures. For whereto would woodneſſe of enemies firſt mouen armes, when they ſawen cruell wounds, ne none medes of blood yſhad? I would that our times ſhould tourne ayen to the old manners. But the anguiſhous loue of hauing, in folke, burneth more cruelly than the mountaine of Ethna, that aye brenneth. Alas, what was he that firſt dalfe vp the gobbettes or the weights of gold, couered vnder earth, and the precious ſtones that woulden haue be hid? He dalfe vp precious perils that is to ſain, he that hem firſt vp dalfe, he dalfe vp a precious perill, for why, for the preciouſneſſe of ſuch thing hath many man ben in perill.

Quid autem de dignitatibus, potentiaque diſſeram quas vos, vere dignitatis, ac poteſtatis inſcij, cœlo exæquatis? Quæ ſi inimprobiſsimum quemq; ceciderint, &c.

BVt what ſhall I ſay of dignities and powers, the which yee men, that neyther knowen very dignitie ne verie power, areiſen as high as the heauen? The whiche dignities and

powers, if they commen to any wicked man, they doen as great dammages and destructions, as doth the flame of the mountaine Ethna, when the flame walloweth vp, ne no deluuy ne doth so cruell harms. Certes, ye remember well (as I trow) that thilke dignitie, that men cleape the Imperie of counsaylours, the which whylome was beginning of freedome, your elders coueited to haue doen away, for the pride of the counsailours. And right for that same, your elders before that time had dooen away out of the Citie of Roome the Kings name, that is to sayne, they nolde haue no lenger no king. But now, if so be that dignities and powers ben yeuen to good men, the which thing is ful seid, what agreable things is there in tho dignities and powers, but onely the goodnesse of folke that vsen hem? And therefore is it thus, that honour commeth not to vertue, because of dignitie: but ayenward, honour commeth to dignitie for cause of vertue. But whiche is thilke your deere-worth power, that is so cleare, and so requirable? O yee yearthly creatures, consider yee not ouer which thing, it seemeth that ye haue power? Now if thou saw a mouse emong other mice, that challenged to himselfeward right and power ouer all other Mice, how great scorne wouldest thou haue of it? Glosa. So fareth it by men, the body hath power ouer the body: for if thou look well vpon the body of a wight, what thyng shalt thou find more frayle, than is mankinde? The which menne full oft bee slain by biting of Flies, or els with entring or creeping wormes into the priuities of mans bodie. But where shall men finden any man, that may exercisen or hanten any right vpon another man, but onely on his body, or els vpon thyngs, that beene lower than the bodye, the whiche I cleape Fortunes possessions? Mayest thou haue euer any commaundement ouer a free courage? Maiest thou remeue fro thestate of his proper rest a thought ẏ is cleauing together in himselfe by stedfast reason? As whylome a tyraunt wened to confound a free man of courage, and wend to constrayne him by tourments, to maken him discoueren and accusen folke, that wisten of a coniuracion, which I clepe a confederacie, that was cast ayenst this tyraunt: but this freeman bote off his owne tongue, and cast it in the visage of thilke wood Tyraunt. So that the torments that this wood Tyraunt wend to haue made matter of crueltie, this wise man made matter of vertue. But what thing is it that a man may doe to another man, that he ne may receiuen the same thing of other folke in himselfe? or thus: What may a man doen to folke, that folke ne may doen to him the same? I haue heard tolde of Busirides, that was woont to slean his ghestes that harbouren in his house: and he was slaine himselfe by Hercules, that was his ghest.

Regulus had taken in battaile many men of Affrick, and cast hem into fetters: but soone after he must yeuen his handes to bee bound with the cheines of hem, that he had whylome ouercommen. Wenest thou then, that he be mightie, that hath no power to doen, that other, ne may doen in him, that he can doe to other? And yet moreouer, if so were, that these dignities of powers hadden any proper or naturall goodnesse in hem, neuer nolde they commen to shrewes. For contrarious thinges ne been woont to been ifellowshipped togethers. Nature refuseth that contrarious things ben ioyned. And so as I am in certaine that wicked folke haue dignities oft time, then sheweth it well, that dignities and powers ne been not good of her owne kind, sens that they sufferen hemselfe to cleauen or ioynen hemselfe to shrewes. And certaine the same thing may I most dignely iudgen, and saine of all the yefts of Fortune, that most plenteously commen to shrewes, of which yefts I trowe, it ought bee considered, that no man doubteth that hee is strong, in whom he seeth strength: & in whom swiftnesse is, sooth it is that he is swift.

Also Musick maketh Musiciens, and Phisicke maketh Physiciens, and Rhetoricke eke Rhetoriciens. For why, the nature of euerie thing maketh his property, ne it is not entermedled with the effect of contrarious thyngs. But certes, richesses may not restraine auarice vnstaunched. Ne power ne maketh not a man mightie ouer himself, which that vicious lusts holden distrained with chains, that ne mowen not be vnboundē. And dignities, that be yeuen to shreud folke, not onely ne maketh hem not digne, but sheweth rather all openly, that they been vnworthy and indigne. And it is thus. For certes, yee haue ioy to cleape things with false names, that bearen hem in all the contrary, the which names ben full oft reprooued by the effect of the same thinges. So that these ilke richesses ne oughten not by right to bee cleped richesses, ne such power ne ought not to be cleped power, ne such dignitie ne ought not to be cleaped dignitie. And at last I may conclude the same thing of all the yefts of fortune: In which there nis nothing to bee desired, ne that hath in himselfe naturall bountie, as it is well iseene, for neither they ioynen hem not alway to good men, ne maken hem alway good, to whom they been ioyned.

Nouimus,

Nouimus, quantas dederit ruinas. Vrbe flammata, patribuſque cæſis. Fratre qui quondam ferus interempto, matris effuſo maduit cruore. Corpus & viſu gelidum pererrans, ora non tinxit lachrimis: ſed eſſe Cenſor extincti potuit decoris, &c.

WE haue well knowen, how many great harmes & diſtinctions, were doen by the Emperour Nero. He let brennen the Citee of Roome, and made ſlea the Senatours, and he cruell whilome ſlough his brother: and he was made moiſte with the blood of his mother, that is to ſay, he let ſleen and ſlitten the wombe of his mother, to ſeen where he was conceyued, & he loked on euery halue of her dedde colde bodie, ne no teare wette his face, but he was ſo hard harted, that he might be domes man, or Judge of her dedde beautie. And natheleſſe, yet gouerned this Nero by ſceptre, all the people that Phebus may ſeen comming from his vttereſt ariſing, till he hid his beames vnder the wawes: that is to ſaine, he gouerned all the peoples, by Septre Imperiall, that the Sunne goeth about fro Eaſt to Weſt. And eke this Nero gouerned by Septre, all the peoples that be vnder the cold ſterres, that highten the Septentrions, that is to ſain, he gouerned al the peoples, that be vnder the party of the Northe. And eke Nero gouerned all the peoples that the violent winde Nothus ſkorſlith, and baketh the brenning ſandes, by his hote heate, that is to ſay, all the peoples in the South. But yet ne might not all his power, tourne the woodneſſe of this wicked Nero. Alas it is a greuous Fortune, as oft as a wicked ſweard, is ioyned to cruell venime, that is to ſay, venemous cruelte to Lordſhip.

Tunc ego. Scis (inquam) ipſa, minimam nobis ambicionem mortalium rerum fuiſſe dominatam. Sed materiam gerendis rebus optauimus, quo ne virtus cacita conſeneſceret. P. Et illa. Atqui hoc vnum eſt, &c.

THen ſaid I thus: Thou woteſt well thy ſelfe, that the couetiſe of mortall thinges, ne hadden neuer Lordſhip in me. But I haue well deſired matter of thinges to doen, as who ſaith, I deſire to haue matter of gouernaunces ouer comminalties, for vertue ſtill ſhould not elden: that is to ſaine, leſt er that he wext old, his vertue that lay now ſtill, ne ſhould not periſhe vnexerciſed, in gouernaunce of commune: for which men might ſpeaken or wryten, of his good gouernement. Phi. Forſoth (qd. ſhe) and that is a thing that may drawen to gouernaunce ſothe hartes as been worthy and noble of her nature: but natheleſſe it may not drawen or teilen ſuch hartes, as been ybrought to the full perfection of vertue, that is to ſaine, couetiſe of glorie & renome, to haue well adminiſtred the common things, or doen good deſeres, to profite of the common. For ſee now and conſider, how little and how void of all price is thilke glory, certaine thing is as thou haſt learneſt by the demonſtracion of Aſtronomy, that al the enuirõning of the yearth about, ne halt but the reaſon of a pricke, at the regard of the greatneſſe of the heauen, that is to ſain, that if there were maked compariſon of the yearth to the greatneſſe of heauen, men would iudgen in all that ne held no ſpace. Of ꝑ which little region of this world, the fourth part of the yearth is inhabited with liuing beaſts that we knowen, as thou haſt thy ſelfe learned by Ptholome that proueth it. And if thou haddeſt withdrawen and abated in thy thought for thilke fourth part, as moch ſpace as the ſee & the maries conteynen and ouergone: as moch ſpace as the region of drought ouerſtretcheth, that is ſo ſaine, ſands and deſertes, wel vneth ſhuld there dwellen a right ſtraite place to the habitacion of men. And ye, that be enuirõned & cloſed with the leſt pricke of thilke pricke, thinken ye manifeſten or publiſhen your renome and done your name for to ben borne forth. But your glory, that is ſo narow & ſo ſtraitt throngen into ſo litel bõds, how mykell conteyneth it in larges and in great doing. And alſo ſet thereto, that many a nacion diuers of tongue and of maners, and eke of reaſon of her liuing, inhabite in the cloſe of thilke habitacle: to the which nacions what for difficultie of wayes, and what for diuerſitie of language, and what for defaulte of vnuſage, and entrecomuning of Marchandiſe, not onely the names of ſinguler men ne may not ſtretchen, but eke the fame of Cities may not ſtretchen. At the laſte, certes in the time of Marcus Tullius, as him ſelfe wryteth in his boke, that renome of the commonwelth of Rome, ne had not yet paſſed ne clomben ouer the mõntaine that hight Caucaſus: & yet was Rome, wel waren, beyng redoubted of the Parthes, and eke of other folke enhabiting about. Seeſt thou not then how ſtraite and how compreſſed is thilke glory that yee trauailen about to ſhewen and to moultiply? Way then the glory of a ſinguler Romaine ſtretchen thider as the fame of the name of Rome may not climbẽ ne paſſen? And eke ſeeſt

thou not that the maners of diuers folke and her lawes been diſcordant amonges hemſelf, ſo that thilke thing that ſum men iudge worthy of prayſing, other folke iudgen that that is worthy of tourment? And hereof cōmeth it, that though a man deliteth him in prayſing of his renome, he may not in no wiſe bringen forth ne ſpredē his name to many maner peoples: and therefore euery man ought to be apaid of his glory, that is publiſhed among his owne neighbours, and thilke noble renome ſhall be reſtrayned within the boundes of tho maner folke. But how many a man, that was full noble in his tyme, hath the wretches and nedy forgeting of writers put out of mind and don away: al be it ſo that certes thilke things profiten litell, the which things and writings long and derke elde do away both hem & eke her auctours. But ye men ſemen to getten you a perdurabilitie, when ye thinken in time comming your fame ſhall laſten. But natheleſſe if thou wilt make compariſon to the endleſſe ſpaces of eternite, what thing haſt thou, by which thou maiſt reioycen thee of long laſting of thy name? For if there were made compariſon of the abiding of a moment to ten thouſād winter, for as moch as both tho ſpaces ben ended, yet hath the moment ſome porcion of it, although it be litell. But natheleſſe thilke ſelfe nombre of yeres, and eke as many yeres as thereto may be multiplied, ne may not certes be compariſoned to the perdurabilite that is endleſſe. For of things which that haue ende may be made compariſon, but of thinges which that been withouten ende, to things that haue end, may be maked no compariſon. And for thy is it, that although renome of as long time as euer thee liſt to thinken, were compared to the regard of the eternitie, that is vnſtaunchable and infinite, it ne ſhould not onely ſeeme litteli, but plainly right nought. But yee ſemen certes ye can do nothing a right, but if it be for the audiēce of the people, and for ydle rumours. And ye forſaken the great worthineſſe of conſcience and of vertue, and ye ſeken your guerdons of the ſmall wordes of ſtraunge folke. Haue now here and vnderſtand in the lightneſſe of ſoche pride and veine glory, how a man ſhorned feſtinally and merily ſoche vanite. Whilom there was a man, that had aſſaied with ſtriuing wordes an other manne, the which not for vſage of very vertue, but for proude vaine glory, had taken vpō him falſly ỹ name of a Philoſophre. This rather man that I ſpeake of, thought he wold aſſay, whether he thilke were a Philoſophre or no, that is to ſay: if that he would haue ſuffred lightly in patience, the wrōgs that were done to him: this fained philoſophre toke patience a litell while, and when he had receiued words of outrage, he as in ſtriuing ayen and reioyſing of him ſelfe, ſaid at laſt thus: Vnderſtandeſt thou not, that I am a philoſophre? That other man anſwerde againe bitingly and ſaid: I had well vnderſtand it, if thou haddeſt holden thy tonge ſtill. But what is it to theſe noble worthy men (for certes of ſoch folke ſpeake I, that ſeken glory with vertue?) What is it (qd. ſhe) what attayneth fame to ſoche folke, when the body is reſolued by deth at the laſt? for if ſo be that men dien in all, that is to ſay body & ſoule, the which thing our reaſon defendeth vs to beleue, then is there no glory in no wiſe: for what ſhould thilke glory be, whē he, of whom thilke glory is ſaid to be, nis right naught in no wiſe? And if ỹ ſoule, which that hath in it ſelf ſcience of good werkes, vnbounden from the priſon of the perth, wendeth freely to the heauen, diſpiſeth it not then all erthly occupacion, and being in heauen reioyſeth that it is exempt from all erthly things? as who ſaith, then recketh the ſoule neuer of no glory of renome of this world.

Quicumque ſolam mente præcipiti petit, ſummumque credit gloriam, Lace patentes ætheris cernat plagas, Artumque terrarum ſitum, Breuem replere non valentis ambitum, &c.

WHoſo that with ouerthrowing thought onely ſeeketh glory of fame, and weneth that it be ſoueraine good, let him loken vpon the brode ſhewing coūtreis of the heauen, and vpon the ſtraite ſeate of this earth, and he ſhal be aſhamed of the encreaſe of his name, that may not fulfill the littel compas of the earth. O what coueyten proude folke to liften vp her neckes in idle, in the deadly yoke of this world? For although that renome yſprad paſſing tofore peoples, goth by diuers tonges, and although great houſes of kindreds ſhinen by clere titles of honours, yet natheleſſe death diſpiſeth all high glory of fame, and death wrappeth togithers the high heads and the lowe, & maketh equal and euen the hieſt with the loweſt.

Where woneth now the bones of trew Fabricius? what is now Brutus, or ſterne Caton? The thynne fame yet laſtyng of her yole names, is marked with a few letters. But although that we haue knowen the faire wordes of the fame of hem, it is not yeuen to know hem that be deed & conſumpt. Liggeth then ſtill all vtterly vnknowable, ne fame ne maketh you not know. And if ye wene to liue the lenger

lenger for wonde of your mortall name, when one cruell day shall take away this also, then shall ye die the second death. The first death he clepeth here the departing of the body, and the secõd death here the stinting of the renome of fame.

Sed ne me inexorabile contra fortunam gerere bellum putes, est aliquando, cum de hominibus fallax illa non nihil bene mereatur: tum scilicet cum se aperit, &c.

BUt for as moch as thou shalt not wenẽ (qd. she) that I beare an vntretable batayle ayenst Fortune, yet sometimes it befalleth that she nothing disceiuable, deserueth to haue right good thanke of men: and that is when she her selfe openeth, & when she discouereth her front, & sheweth her maners. Peraventure yet vnderstandest thou not that I shall say. It is a wondre that I desire to tell, and therefore vneth may I vnpliten my sentẽce with wordes. For I deme that cõtrarious fortune profiteth more to men, than fortune debonayre. For alway when fortune semeth debonayre, then she lieth fally, biheting the hope of welfulnesse. But contrarious fortune is alway sothfaste, when thee she weth her selfe vnstable through her chaungyng. The amiable fortune disceiueth folke: the cõtrary fortune teacheth. The amiable fortune blindeth with the beautie of her false goodes the hartes of folkes that vsen hem: the contrary Fortunen vnbindeth hem with the knowing of frele welefulnesse. Thampable fortune maiest thou seme alway windy and flowing, & euer misknowing of her self: The cõtrary fortune is attempre and restrained and wise, throwe exercise of her aduersite. At the last, amiable Fortune with her flateringes draweth miswandring men fro the souerayne good: the contrarious fortune leadeth ofte folke ayen to sothfast goodes, & halseth hem ayen as with an hoke. Wenest thou then that thou oughtest to leten this a litell thing, that this aspre & horrible Fortune hath discouered to thee the thoughts of thy trewe frendes? For why, this ilke Fortune hath departed & vncouered to thee both the certain visages, & eke the doutous visages of thy felawes. When she departed away fro thee, she toke away her frendes & laft thee thy frendes. Now when thou were riche and welefull, as thee semed, with how mykell woldest thou haue bought the full knowing of this, that is to sain, the knowing of thy very frends? Now plaine thee not then of richesse lorne, sithe thou haste found the most precious kind of richesse, that is to saine, thy very frendes.

Quod modus stabili fide, Concordes variat vices, Quod pugnancia semina, Fœdus perpetuum tenent, &c.

THat ỳ world with stable faith varieth accordable chaungings: that the contrarious qualitees of Elements holden among hem selfe alyaunce perdurable: that Phebus the sonne with his golden chariot bringeth forth the rosie day: that the moone hath commaundement ouer the nights, which nightes Esperus the euen sterre hath brought: that the sea gredy to flowen, cõstraineth with a certain end his floods, so that it is not lefull to stretch his brode termes or bounds vpon the yearth: al this ordinaunce of things is bounden with loue, that gouerneth earth and sea, & also hath cõmaundement to the heauen. And if this loue slaked the bridels, all thinges that now louen togithers wolden make batayle continuelly, & striuen to fordone the facion of this world, the which they now leden in accordable faith by faire mouings. This loue holdeth togider people ioyned with an holy bond, and knitteth sacrament of mariage of chast loues. And loue endeth lawes to true felawes.

O welefull were mankinde if
thilke loue that gouerneth
the Heauen, gouerned
your courages.

¶ Here endeth the second boke, and here followeth the third.

Iam cantum illa finierat, cum me audiendi auidum, stupentemque arrectis adhuc auribus carminis dulcedo defixerat. Itaque paulo post, O inquam summum lassorum solamen animorum, quantum me, &c.

WHen this she had ended her song, when the sweetenesse of her dytie had through pereed mee, ỳ was desirous of herkening. And I astonied had yet streight mine eares, that is to saine, to herken the bet what she should say: so ỳ a litel after I said thus, O thou that art souerain cõfort of corages anguissous, so thou hast remounted & nourished me with the weight of thy sentences, & with delite of singing, so that

I trowe not that I be vnperegall to ꝑ strokes of Foꝛtune: as who saith, I dare well now suffren all thassauts of Foꝛtune, and well defende me from her. And tho remedies, which that thou saidest here beꝛome, ꝑ weren right sharpe, not only that I am not agrisen of hem now, but I desirous of hearing, aske greatly to hearen the remedies. Then saied she thus: That feled I well (qd. she) when that thou ententike and still, rauisshedest my woꝛdes: and I abode till thou haddest soche habyte of thy thought, as thou hast now, oꝛ els till that I my self had maked it to the same habit, which is a moꝛe trew thing. And certes the remenãt of things that ben yet to say ben soch, that first when men taste hem, they bene biting: But when they bene receiued within a wight, thẽ ben they swete. But foꝛ thou saist that thou art so desirous to hearken hem, with how great bꝛenning wouldest thou glowen, if thou wistes whider I wold leden thee? B. Whider is that (qd. I) ꝑ. To thilke very blisfulnesse (qd. she) of which thine hart dꝛemeth. But foꝛ as moch as thy sight is occupied and distourbed of earthly things, thou maiest not yet sene thilke self welefulnesse. B. Doe (qd. I) and shewe me what thilke very welefulnes is, I ꝓay the without tarieng. ꝑ. That woll I gladly done (qd. she) foꝛ cause of thee. But I wol first marken by woꝛds, and I will enfoꝛcen me to enfoꝛme thee thilk false cause of blisfulnesse, which that thou moꝛe knowest: so that when thou haste beholden thilke false goodes, and turned thine yen so to that other side, thou may knowen the cleerenesse of very blisfulnesse.

Qui serere ingenium volet agrum, Liberat arua prius fruticibus, Falce rubos, silicemque resecat, &c.

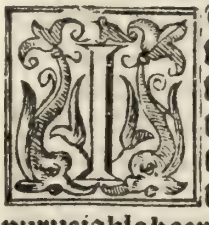
Who so wol sowe a field plenteous, let him first deliuerẽ it of thoꝛnes, and kerue alonder with his hoke the bussbes and the ferne, so that the coꝛne may commen heauie of eres and of greines. Hony is the moꝛe swete if mouthes haue first tasted sauoꝛs that be wycke. The Sterres shinen moꝛe agreably when the winde Nothus letteth his plungy blastes. And after that Lucifer the day sterre hath chased away the darke night, the day the fairer ledeth ꝑ rosen hoꝛse of the sonne. And right so thou, beholding false goodes begin to withdꝛawe thy necke fro the yearthly affections, and afterwardes the very goodes shullen entren into thy coꝛage.

Tum defixo paululum visu, & velut in angustam fuæ mentis sedem recepta: sic cepit. P. Omnis mortalium cura quam multiplicium studiorum labor exercet, &c.

She fastened she a litel the sight of her eien, & she withdꝛew her right as it were into the strait seate of her thought, and begã to speake right thus: All the cures (qd. she) of moꝛtall folke, which that trauailen hem in many maner studies, gon certes by diuers wayes: but nathelesse they enfoꝛcen hem all to commen only to thende of blisfulnes. And blisfulnes is soch a good, that who so hath gotten it, he ne may ouer that thing moꝛe desire. And this thing foꝛsooth is so soueraine good, that it conteyneth in him selfe all maner of goodes, to the which good if there fayled any thing, it might not been soueraine good, foꝛ then were some good out of this soueraine good, that might be desired. Now is it clere and certaine that blisfulnesse is a parfite state, by the congregacion of all goodes, the which blisfulnesse (as I haue sayd) all moꝛtall folke enfoꝛcen hem to get by diuers wayes. Foꝛ why, the couetise of euery good is naturelly planted in the harts of men: but the miswandꝛing errour, misledeth hem in to false goodes. Of the which men, some of hem wenen that soueraine good be to liuen without need of any thing. And other menne demen, that soueraine good to be right digne of reuerence, and enfoꝛcen hem to be reuerenced amonge her neighbours, by the honours that they haue gotten. And some folke there ben that holden, that right hie power be soueraine good, and enfoꝛce hem foꝛ to reignen oꝛ els to ioynen hem to hem that reigne. And it seemeth to other folke, that nobilesse of renome be the soueraine good, and hasten hem to getten hem gloꝛious name by the artes of werre oꝛ of peace. And many folke measuren & gessen, that soueraine good be ioy and gladnesse, and wenen that it bee right blisfull thing to plongen in voluptuous delites. And there ben some folke, that enterchaũgen the causes and the ends of these foꝛesaid goods: As they that desiren richesses to haue power and delites, oꝛ els they desire power foꝛ to haue money, oꝛ foꝛ cause of renome. In these things and soch other is turned all the entencion of desirings & werkes of menne, as thus: Nobilesse and fauour of people which that yeueth to all men, as it seemeth hem, a maner cleerenesse of renome: and wife and children, that men desiren, foꝛ cause of delite and merinesse. But foꝛsoth frendes

frendes ne shullen not be reken̄ed among the goodes of Fortune, but of vertue, for it is a full holy maner thing. All these other things forsoth be take̅ for cause of power, or els for cause of delite. Certes now am I ready to referren the goods of the body, to these forsayd things abouen: For it semeth that strength & greatnesse of body yeuen power and worthinesse, and that beaute and swiftnesse yeuen glory & renome: and healthy of body seemeth to yeuen delite. In all these thinges it seemeth onely that blisfulnesse is desired: for why, thilke thing that euery man desireth moste ouer all thinges, he deemeth that it be soueraine good. But I haue defined, that blisfulnesse is soueraine good, for which euery wight demeth that thilke estate that he desireth ouer all thinges, that it be blisfulnesse. Now hast thou then before thine eyen almost all the purposed forme of the welefulnesse of mankind, that is to sain, richesse, honours, power, glory, & delites, the which delite onely considred Epicurus, and iudged and established that delite is the soueraine good: for as moche as all other things, as him thought, byreft away ioy and myrthe from the hart. But I returne againe to the studies of men, of which mē the corage alway reherseth and seeketh the soueraine good, al be it so that it be with a dyrked memory, but he not by which pathe, right as a dronken man note nought by which pathe he may returne home to his house. Semeth it then that folke forleyen and erren to enforcen hem to haue need of nothing. Certes there is none other thing, that may so moche performen blisfulnesse, as an estate plenteous of al goodes, that ne hath neede of none other thing, but that is suffisaunt of himselfe vnto himself. And folden sothe folke then that wenen, that thilke thing that is right good, that it is eke right worthy of honor and of reuerēce: certes nay. For that thing nys neyther foule ne worthy to be dispised, that well nigh all the entencion of mortall folke trauailen to get it. And power eke ought not to be reken̄ed amongs goodes. What els: for it nis not to wene, that thilke thing that is most worthy of all things, be feble and without strength. And clerenesse of renome, ought that to been dispised? Certes there may no man forsake, that all thing that is right excellent and noble, that it ne semeth be right clere and renomed. For certes it needeth not to say, that blisfulnesse be anguishous ne drerie, ne subiect to greuaunces ne sorowes, sens that in right littell thinges folke seken to haue and to vsen that may deliten hem. Certes these ben the things that men willen and desiren to getten: and for this cause desiren they richesses, dignities, reignes, glorie, & delites. For therby wened they to haue suffisaunce, honour, power, renome, and gladnes. Then is it good, that men seken thus by so many diuers studies, in which delite, it may not lightly bee shewed, how great is the strength of nature. For how so men haue diuers sentences & discordings, algates men accorden all in louing the end of good.

Quantas rerum flectit habenas Natura potens, quibus immensum, Legibus orbem prouida seruet, Stringatque ligans irresoluto. Singula nexu, placet arguto, fidelibus lentis promere cantu, &c.



Itlyketh me to shew by subtill song, with slack and delitable sowne of strings, how that nature mightely enclineth & flitteth by the gouernement of things, and by soothe lawe shee puruciable keepeth the great world, and how the binding restraineth all thinges by a bonde that may not be vnbounden. All be it so that the Lions of the countrey of Pene, beren the faire chaines, and taken meates of the hands of folke, that yeuē it hem, and dreden her sturdie maisters, of which they be wont to suffre beatings, if that her horrible mouthes been bledde, that is to sain, of beestes deuoured: her corage of time passed that hath been idle and rested, repaireth ayen, and they rozen greuously, and remembren on her nature, and slaken her necks from her chaines vnbound, and her maister first to torne with bloody teeth, assaileth the woode wrathes of hem, that is to sain, they fretten her maister. And the iangling bird ꝑ singeth on the hie braūches, that is to saine, in the wodde, and after is enclosed in a straite cage, although the plyeng besinesse of mē yeue hem homed drinkes, and large meates with swete study: yet natheles if thilke birde skipping out of her straite cage, seeth the agreeable shadowes of ꝑ woodes she deuoureth with her feete her meat vnbad, and seeketh on morning onely the wood, & twireth desiring the woode with her swete voise. The perde of a tree that is haled adowne by mighty strength, boweth redily the croppe adowne: but if that the hād that is bent let it gone again, anon the croppe looketh vpright to the heauen. The sonne Phebus, that falleth at euen in the westren wawes, returneth ayen eftsones his carte by a priuy pathe there as it is wont arise. Al things seken aien to her proper course, & al things reioysen on her returning againe to her nature: ne none ordinaunce is betaken to things, but but that hath ioyned ꝑ end to the beginning,

and

and hath made the course it selfe stable, that it thaunge not fro his proper kind.

Vos quoque ô terrena animalia, tenui licet imagine, vestrum tamen principium somniatis. Verumq; illum beatitudinis finem, licet minime perspicaci, &c.

CErtes also ye men ỳ ben erthly creatures dreamen alway your beginning, although it be with a thin imaginaciō, & by a maner thought, all be it nat clerely ne perfectly, ye loken frō a ferre to thilke very fine of blisfulnes. And therfore naturel entenciō leadeth you to thilk very good, but many maner errours mistourneth you therfro. Cōsider now if that be thilke things, by which a mā weneth to get him blisfulnesse, if that he may cōmen to thilke end ỳ he weneth to come to by nature. For if ỳ money, honors, or these other forsaid things bringen men to soch a thing that no good ne faile them ne semeth to faile: Certes then wold I graūt that they be maked blisfull by thinges that they haue gotten. But if so be that thilke things ne mowen not performe that they byheten, & that there be defaut of many goodes, sheweth it not then clerely the false beautie of blisfulnesse is knowen and atteint in thilke things? First and forward thou thy self, that haddest aboūdance of richesse nat long agon, I aske the ỳ in thaboundance of al thilke riches, if thou were neuer angulhous or sorie in thy courage of any wrōg or greuaunce that betide the in any side. B. Certes (qd. I) it ne remembreth me not, that euer I was so free of my thought, that I ne was alway in anguish of somwhat. P. And was that not (qd. she) for that thee lacked somewhat that thou noldest not haue lacked? Or els thou haddest that thou noldest haue had? B. Right so it is (qd. I) P. Thē desirest thou ỳ presence of the one, & thabsence of that other? B. I graunt well (qd. I) P. Forsoth (qd. she) then nedeth there somewhat that euery mā desireth. B. Ye there nedeth (qd. I) P. Certes (qd. she) & he that hath lacke or nede of aught, nis not in euery way sufisant to himself. B. No (qd. I) P. And thou (qd. she) in al the plentie of thy richesse haddest thilke lacke of sufisance? B. What els (qd. I) P. Then may not riches maken that a man nis nedy, ne that he be sufficient to himselfe: & yet that was it that they beheten as it semed. And eke certes I trowe that this be greatly to to consider, that money hath not in his owne kind, that it ne may been bynomen frō hem ỳ haue it, maugre hem. Bo. I know it well (qd. I). Ph. Nowhy shouldest thou not beknowen it (qd. she) when euery day the strenger folke benomen it frō the feobler mauger hem? From whens come els, all these forsaide complaints, quarels, or pleadings, but for that men aske her money, that hath been bynomed hem, by strength or by gyle, and alway maugre hem? Boec. Right so it is (qd. I.) Phil. Then hath a man need (qd. she) to seechen him forain help, by which he may defend his money. Boecius. Who may say nay (qd. I.) Phil. Certes (qd. she) & him needed no helpe, if he ne had no money, ỳ he might lese. Boecius. That is doubtles (qd. I.) Philosophie. Then is this thing tourned in to the contrary (qd. she:) for richesse, that men wenen, should maken sufisaunce, they maken a man rather haue need of forain help. Which is the maner or the guise (qd. she) that richesse may driuen away need? Riche folke, may they neuer haue honger ne thurst? These riche men, may they fele no cold on their lims in Winter? But thou wilt aunswere, that rich men haue inough, wherewith they may staunchen her honger, & slaken her thurst, and doen away colde.

In this wise, may need been comforted by richesse: but certes, need ne may not all vtterly be doen away. For if this need, that alway is gaping & greedy, be fulfilled with richesse, & any other thing, yet dwelleth then a need, that mote be fulfilled. I hold me still, & tell not how that little thing, sufiseth to nature: but certes, to auarice sufiseth not inough of nothing. For since that riches, ne may not doen away need, and they maken their owne need: what may it then bee, that ye wenen that richesses mowen peuen you sufisaunce?

Quamuis fluente diues auri gurgite. Non expleturas cogat auarus opes, &c.

AL were it so, ỳ a noble couetous man had a riuer, or a gutter fleeting al of gold, yet should it neuer staunch his couetise: & although he had his necke charged with precious stones of the redde Sea: And though he doe ere his fieldes plentous, with an hundred oxen, neuer shall his biting busines forleten him, while he liueth: ne the light of richesses, ne shall not bearen him compaigny when he is dead.

Sed dignitatis honorabilem, reuerendumq; cui prouenerint, reddunt. Num vis ea est magistratibus, vt vtentium mentibus virtutes inserant, vicia depellant, &c.

BUt dignities, to whom they be cōmen, maken they them honorable & reuerent? Haue they not so great strength ỳ they may putten vertue

in

in hertes of folkes that vsen the lordship of hem, or els may they don away ꝑ vices & Certes they be not wont to don away wickednes, but they be wont rather to shew wickednesse: And thereof cōmeth it that I haue right great disdain, that dignities been yeuen to wicked men. For which thing Catullus cleped a counsell of Rome (that hight Nonius) postome or boche, as who saith, he cleped him a congregacion of vices in his brest, as a postome is ful of corrupcion: All were Nonius set in a chaire of dignite. Seest thou not then, how great vilonies dignities done to wicked men? Certes vnworthines of wicked men shuld be the lasse seen, if they nere renouned with none honour. Certes thou thy selfe ne mightest not bee brought with as many perils as thou mightest suffre, that thou woldest beare the Magistrate with Decorate: that is to saine, that for peril ꝑ might befall thee by offence of the king Theodorike, thou noldest not be felawe in gouernaunce with Decorate, when thou sawe that he had wicked corage of a licorous shrew and of an accusour. Ne I may not for suche honours iudgen hem worthy of reuerēce, that I deeme and holde vnworthy to haue thilke same honours. Now if thou sawe a man, that were fulfild of wisdome, certes, thou ne mightest not deme, that he were vnworthy to that honour, or els to the wisedome of whiche he is fulfilled. Boecius. No (qd. I.) Philosophie. ☞ Certes (qd. she) dignities appertainen properly to vertue, and vertue transporteth dignitie anon to thilke man to which she her self is cōioyned. And for as moch as honours of people, ne may not make folke digne of honour, it is well seene clerely, that they ne haue no proper beautie of dignitie. And yet men oughten take more heed in this: for if a wight be in so moch the more outcast, ꝑ he is despised of most folke, so as dignite ne may not makē shrewes worthy of no reuerence, then maketh dignite shrewes rather dispised thā praised, the which shrewes dignite shewed to moche folke. And forsooth not vnpunished, that is to saine, that shrewes reuengen hem ayenward vpō dignities. For they yelden ayen to dignities as great guerdons, when they dispotten and defoulen dignities with her vilonie. And for as moch as thou now knowest, that thilke very reuerence ne may nat cōmen by these shadowy transitorie dignities, vnderstonde now thus: that if a man had vsed and had many maner dignities of consuls & were parauenture commen among straūge nations, shuld thilke honour maken him worshipfull and redoubted of straunge folke & Certes if ꝑ honour of people were a naturel yefte to dignities, it ne might neuer cessen no where among no maner folke to done his office. Right as a fyre in euery countreyne stinteth not to enchauffen & maken hote. But for as moch as for to been honorable or reuerent, ne commeth not to folk of her proper strength of nature, but onely of the false opinion of folke, that is to saine, that wenen that dignities makē folke digne of honours: anone therefore when they commen there as folke ne knowē not thilke dignities, her honours vanishen away, and that anon: But that is among straunge folke mayst thou saine. Ne amongs hem there thy were borne, ne dureth not thilke dignities alway. Certes the dignitie of the prouostry of Rome was whilom a great power: now is it nothing but an ydle name, and the rent of the Senatorie a great charge. And if a wight whilom had the office to taken hede to the vitailes of the people, as of corne and of other thinges, hee was holden amongs hem great. But what thing is now more out caste than thilke prouostrie? As I haue said a litel here before, that thilke thing that hath no proper beaute of it selfe, receiueth sometime price and shining, and sometime leseth it by thopinion of vsaunces. Now if that dignities then ne mowe not make folke digne of reuerence, and if that dignities were foule of her wyll, by the filthe of shrewes. And if dignities lesen her shining by chaunging of tymes, and if thy weren foule by estimacion of people, what is it that they han in hem selfe of beaute, ꝑ ought to be desired & as who saith, none: then ne mowen they yeuen no beaute of dignite to none other.

Quamuis se tyrio superbus ostro Comeret & niueis lapillis, &c.

ALbe it so, that the proude Nero with all his wode luxure, kembe him & apparelled him with faire purpure of Tirie, & with white peerles. Algates yet thereof hee hatefull to all folke, that is to say, that all was he behated of all folkes, yet this wicked Nero had great lordshippe. And yafe whilome to the reuerent Senatours the vnworshipfull seates of dignities. Unworshipfull seates he clepeth here, for that Nero that was so wicked yafe the dignities.

Who would then reasonably wenen, that blisfulnesse were in soch honours, as been yeuen by vicious shrewes.

An vero regna, regumque familiaritas efficere potentem valent? Quidni, &c.

But reignes and familiarities of kynges, may they maken a man to ben mighty? How els? when his blisfulnesse dureth perpetually. But certes, the olde age of time passed, & eke of present time now, is full of ensamples, how that kings haue chaunged in to wretchednesse, out of her welefulnes. O, a noble thing & a clere thing is power, that nis not founden mighty to keepe it selfe. And if that power of realmes be authour and maker of blisfulnesse, if thilke power lacketh on any side, amenuseth it nat thilke blisfulnesse, and bringeth in wretchednesse? But yet al be it so, that the realmes of mankinde stretchen brode, yet mote there need ben moch folke, ouer which that euery king ne hath no lordship ne commaūdement. And certes vpon thilke side that power falleth, which that maketh folke blisfull, right on that same side no power entreth vndereth that maketh hem wretches. In this maner then moten kings haue more porcion of wretchednesse than of welfulnesse.

Atiraunt that was king of Cecile, that had assayed the perill of his estate, shewed by similitude the dredes of realmes by gastenesse of a swerde, that hong ouer the head of his familier. What thing is then this power, that may not done away the bitings of businesse, ne eschew the prickes of drede?

And certes, yet woulden they liuen in siker nesse, but they may nat. And yet they glorifyen hem in her power. Holdest thou then, ꝑ thilke man be mighty, that thou seest that he would done that he may not done? And holdest thou then him a mighty man, that hath enuironned his sides with men of arms or sergeants, and dredeth more hem that he maketh agast, than they dreden him? and that is put in the hands of his seruaunts, why hee should seeme mightie? But of familiers or seruaunts of kings, why should I tell thee any thing, sith that I my selfe haue shewed thee, that realmes hem selfe ben full of great feeblesse? The which familiers, certes, the royall power of kinges in hole estate, and in estate abated, ful oft throweth adowne.

Nero constrayned Seneche, his familier and his mayster, to chesen on what death he would die. Antonius commaunded, ꝑ knights slowen with her swerdes Papinian his familier, which Papinian had beene long time full mightie amonges hem of the court. And yet certes, they woulden both haue renounced her power. Of which two, Seneck enforced himselfe to yeuen to Nero his richesse, and also to haue gone into solitarie exile. But when the great weight, that is to saine, of lordes power, or of Fortune, draweth hem that shullen fall, neyther of hem ne might doe that hee would. What thing is then thilke power that thogh men haue it, yet they ben agast, and when thou wouldest haue it, thou nart not siker? And if thou wouldest forleten it, thou maiest nat eschewen it. But whether ben such mē friends at need, as ben counsayled by fortune, and nat by vertue? certes such folk as wilful fortune maketh frends, contrarious fortune maketh hem enemies. And what pestilence is more mighty for to annoy a wight, than a familiar enemie?

Qui se volet esse potentem, Animos domet ille feroces, Nec victa libidine colla, &c.

Who so woll bee mightie, hee mote daunten his cruell courages, ne put nat his necke, ouercommen, vnder the foule rayne of lechery. For all be it so, that the lordship stretch so ferre, that the country of Inde quaketh at thy commaundments, or at thy lawes, and that the last ile in ꝑsee, that hight Tyle, be thyall to thee: yet if thou maiest nat putten away thy foule derke desires, and driuen out fro thee wretched complaints, certes, it nis no power that thou hast.

Gloria vero quam fallax sepe, quam turpis est? Vnde non iniuria tragicus exclamat.
O gloria gloria millibus mortalium nihil aliud Facta, nisi aurium inflatio magna, &c.

But glory, how deceiuable and how foule is it oft? For which thynge, not vnskilfully, a tragedian (that is to saine, maker of ditties, that highten Tragedies) cried & said: O glory, glory, (qd. he) thou nart nothing els to thousands of folkes, but a sweller of eares. For many haue full great renome by the false opinion of the people.

And what thing may been thought fouler than suche praysing? For thinke folke that been praysed falsely, they moten needes haue shame of her praysing. And if that folke haue getten hem thanke or praising by her deserts, what thing hath thilke prise eched or encreased to the conscience of wise folke, that measuren her good, nat by the rumour of the people, but by ꝑ soothfastnesse of conscience? And if it seme a fair thing, a man to haue encreased and spred his name, then followeth it, that it is deemed to ben a foule thing, if it ne be spred and encreased. But as I said a little here before, that sith there mote needes been many folkes, to which

which folke the renome of a man ne may nat commen, it befalleth, that he that thou weneſt be glorious & renomed, ſemeth in ỹ next part of ỹ perthes to been without glory and without renome. And certes amongs theſe things I ne trow nat that the prise & the grace of the people, nis neither worthy to ben remẽbred, ne cõmeth of wiſe iudgement, ne is ferme perdurably. But now of this name of gentileſſe: what man is it that ne may well ſeene how vaine & flitting it is? For if the name of gentileſſe be referred to renome & clerenes of linage, then is gentil name but a forain thing, that is to ſay, to hem ỹ glorifien hem of her linage: For it ſemeth that gentilnes is a maner praiſing that commeth of ỹ deſertes of auncеſters. And if praiſing maketh gentilneſſe, then moten they nedes ben gentil, that been prayſed. For which thing it foloweth, that if thou ne haue no gentilneſſe of thy ſelf, that is to ſaine, prise, that commeth of thy deſert, forraine gentilneſſe ne maketh thee nat gentill. But certes if there be any good in gentilneſſe, I trowe it be all onely this: that it ſemeth as that a maner neceſſite be impoſed to gentilmẽ, for that they ne ſhould nat outragen or forleauen fro the vertues of her noble kinred.

Omne hominum genus in terris Simili ſurgit ab hortu. Vnus enim rerum pater eſt. Vnus cuncta miniſtrat, &c.

ALL the linage of men, ỹ ben in earth, bene ſemblable of birth. One alone is father of things: one alone miniſtreth al things, he yaf to ỹ ſun his beames: he yafe to the Moone her hornes: he yafe to mẽ the erth: he yafe ỹ ſterres to the heuen: he cloſed with mẽbres the ſoules ỹ camen from his hie ſeat: Then cõmen al mortall folke of noble ſeed. Why noilen or boſten ye of your elders? For if ye loke your beginning & God your father authour & your maker, then nys there no forliued wight or vngentill but if he nourilbe his courage vnto vices, and forlete his proper birth.

Quid autem de corporis voluptatibus loquar, quarum appetentia quidẽ plena eſt anxietatis, &c.

BUt what ſhal I ſain of delices of body, of whiche delices the deſirings been full of anguiſhes, & the fulfillinges of hem been full of penaunce? how great ſickneſſes & how great ſorrowes vnſufferable, right as a maner fruit of wickednes, ben thilke delices wont to bringen to the bodies of folke that vſen hem? of which delices I not what ioye may been had of her mouing. But this wote I weil, That who ſo euer woll remembren him of his luxures he ſhall well vnderſtand, that the iſſues of delices been ſorowfull and ſory. And if thilke delices mow make folke bliſtull, then by that ſame cauſe moten theſe beeſts ben cleped bliſſull. Of which beſtes all the entencion haſteth to fulfill her bodely iolitee. And the gladneſſe of wyfe and childzen were an honeſt thing, but it hath been ſaied that it is ouer mokell ayenſt kinde, that childzen haue been founden tourmentours to her Fathers. I not how many. Of which childzen how biting is euery condicion, it needeth not to tellen it thee, that haſt er this tyme aſſayed it, and art yet nowe anguiſhous. In this tyme aprouc I the ſentence of my diſciple Euripides, that ſaied, That he that hath no childzen is welefull by infortune.

Habet hoc voluptas omnis ſtimulis agit fruentes: Apiumq; par volantium vbi gratia mella fudit. Fugit & nimis tenaci ferit icta corda morſu, &c.

EVery delyte hath this, that it anguiſheth hem with prickes that vſen it. It reſſembleth to theſe flieng flies that wee clepen Bees, that after that hee hath ſhedde his agreable honnyes, he flieth away, and ſtingeth the hertes of hem that been ſmitten with biting ouerlong holden.

Nihil igitur dubium eſt, quin he ad beatitudinem vie deuia quedam ſint, nec perducere eo quenquam valeant, &c.

NOw it is no doubt then, that theſe wayes ne been a maner miſtidinges to bliſſulneſſe: ne that they ne mowen not leden folke thider, as they beheten to leden hem. But with how great harmes theſe forſaid waies been enlaced, I ſhall ſhewe you ſhortly. For why, if thou enforceſt thee to aſſemble money, thou muſt byreuen him his money that hath it. And if thou will ſhinen with dignities, thou muſte beſechen and ſupplien hem, that yeuen tho dignities. And if thou coueiteſt by honour to gone before other folkes, thou ſhalt deſoule thy ſelfe thorow humbleſſe of aſking. If thou deſireth power thou ſhalt by

awaits of thy subiectes anoyouslie be cast vnder by many parils. Askest thou glory? thou shalt been so distract by aspre thinges, that thou shalt forgone sikernesse. And if thou woldest leden thy life in delites, euery wight shal dispisen thee and forleten thee, as thou ẏ arte thral to thing, that is right foule & britel; that is to saine, seruaunt to thy bodie. Now is it wel yseene, how litel and how brytel possession they coueiten, that putten the goodes of the body aboue her owne reason. For mayst thou surmounten these Olifaunts in greatnesse or in weight of bodie? or mayst thou ben strenger than the Bull? mayst thou be swifter than the Tygre? Behold the spaces and the stablenesse, and the swift course of Heauen; and stinte somtime to wōdren on foule things. The which heauen certes nys nat rather for these thinges to be wondred vpon, than for the reason by whiche it is gouerned. But the shyning of thy forme, that is to sayne, the beaute of thy body, how swiftly passing is it, and how transitorie, certes, it is more flitting than the mutabilitie of floures of the sommer season. For so as Aristotell telleth, that if the men had eyen of a beeste that hight Lynx, so that the loking of folke might percen through tho things that withstond it: who so looked then in thentrailes of the body of Alcibiades, that was full fayre in the superficie without, it should seme right foule. And for thy, if thou seemest fayre, thy nature ne maketh nat that, but the disceiuaunce of feblenesse of the eyen that loken. But prayse the goodes of the body as moch as euer thee list, so that thou know algates that what so it be, that is to saine, of the goodes of the body, which that thou wondrest vpon, may been distroyed or els dissolued by the heet of a feuer of three dayes. Of which forsaid thinges I may reducen this shortly in a summe, that these worldly goodes, which that ne mowen yeuen that they behighten, ne beene not parfite by the congregacion of all goods, that they ne ben not waies ne pathes that bringen men to blissfulnesse, ne maken mē to be blissfull.

Heu heu quæ miseros tramite deuios abducit ignorantia, Non aurum in viridi quæritis arbore, &c.

ALas, which foly, & which ignorance misleadeth wādring wretches, fro the path of very good. Certes ye seken no golde in greene trees, ne ye gadren not precious stones in vines: ne hyden not your ginnes in hie mountains to catchen fish, of the which ye may maken rich feests.

And if you like to hunte to Roes, ye ne goe nat to the fords of ẏ water that hight Thyrene. And ouer this, men know well the crekes and the cauernes of the see yhyd in the floodes, and knowen eke, which water is most plenteous of white perles, and knowen whiche water haboundeth most of reed purpure, that is to saine, of a maner shelfish, with which men dien purpure: and knowen which strondes habounden most of tendre fishes, or of sharpe fishes, that hight Echines. But folke suffren hem selfe to ben so blind that hem ne retchen not to know where thilke goodes ben yhid, which that they coueiten, but plungen hem in yerth, and seken there thilke good, that surmounteth the heuen, that beareth the sterres. What prayer may I maken that be digne to the nice thoughtes of men? But I pray that they coueiten richesse and honours, so that when they haue gotten tho false goods with great trauaile, that therby they mowen knowen the very goodes.

Hactenus mendacis formam fælicitatis ostendisse suffecerit, quod si perspicaciter intuearis, ordo est deinceps, &c.

IT suffiseth that I haue saide hyderto, the forme of false welfulnesse: so that if thou looke now clerely, the order of mine ententiō requireth from hensforth, to shewen the very welfulnes. B. Forsoth (qd. I) I see well now, the suffisance may nat cōmen by richesse, ne power by realmes, ne reuerence by dignities, ne gentillesse by glory, ne ioy by delices. P. And hast thou wel knowē the causes (qd. she) why it is? B. Certes me semeth (qd. I) ẏ I see hem, right as though it were through a litel clifte: But me were leauer knowen hem more openly of thee. Phi. Certes (qd. she) the reason is al redy. For thilke thinge that simply is one thinge without any deuision, the errour and folly of mankinde, deuideth and departeth it and misledeth it, & transporteth from very and parfit good, to goodes that be false and vnparfit. But say me this: wenest thou that he that hath need of power, that him ne lacketh nothing? Boecius. Nay (qd. I.) Philos. Certes (qd. she) thou sayest aright: for if so be that there is a thing that in any partie be febler of power, certes as in that it mote needs be needy of foraine helpe. Boecius. Right so it is (qd. I.) Philos. Suffisaunce and power ben of one kind. Boec. So semeth (qd. I.) Philosophie.

And

And deemest thou (qd. she) that a thing that is of this maner, that is to say, suffisant & mighty, ought ben dispised, or els that it be right digne of reuerence aboue al things? Boecius. Certes (qd. I) it is no doubte that it is right worthy to be reuerenced. Phil. Let vs adden (qd. she) reuerence to suffisiaunce & to power, so that we demen that these thre things be al one thing. Boecius. Certes let (qd. I) vs adde it if we will graunt the soth. P. What demest thou (qd. she) then is that a derke thing & not noble, that is suffisant, reuerent, & mighty? or els that it is right noble & right clere by celebrate of renome? Consider then (qd. she) as we haue graunted here byforne, that he that ne hath no need of nothing, and is most mighty and most digne of honour, if him needeth any clerenesse of renoume, which clerenesse hee might not graunten of himselfe, so for lacke of thilke clerenesse he might semen the febler on any side, or the more outcast. Glose. That is to say, nay: For who so that is suffisaunt, mighty, and reuerent, clerenesse of renome foloweth of the forsaid thinges: he hath it all ready of his suffisaunce. Boecius. I may not (qd. I) deme it, but I mote graunten as it is, that this thing is right celebrable by clerenesse of renome and noblenesse. P. Then foloweth (qd. she) that we adden clerenesse of renome to the forsaid thinges, so that there be amongs hem no difference. B. This is a consequence (qd. I.) P. This thing then (qd. she) that ne hath nede of no foraine thing, and that may doe all thing by his strengths, and that is noble & honourable, is it not a mery thing and iopful? Boecius. But whence (qd. I) that any sorrowe might come to this thing, that is sothe, certes I may not thinke. Philosophie. Then mote wee graunten (qd. shee) that this thing be ful of gladnesse, if the forsaid things be sothe. And certes, also mote we graunten, that suffisaunce, power, noblesse, reuerence, and gladnesse, be onely diuers by names, but her substaunce hath no diuersite. Boecius. It mote needly be so (qd. I.) Philosophie. Thilke thing then (qd. she) that is one and simple in his nature, the wickednesse of men departeth and deuideth it: And when they enforcen hem to getten partie of a thinge, that ne hath no parte, they ne getten hem neyther thilke partie that nys none, ne the thing all whole that they desire. Boecius. In which manere (qd. I.) Philosophie. Thilke man (qd. she) that seeketh richesse to flyen pouertie: he ne trauaileth him not for to get power, for he hath leauer be derke and vyle, and eke withdraweth from himselfe many naturell delytes, for hee nolde lese the money that he hath assembled. But certes in this maner he ne getteth him no suffisaunce, that power forseeketh, and that molestie priketh, and that filthe maketh outcaste, and that derkenesse hideth. And certes he that desireth only power, wasteth and scatereth richesse, and dispiseth delytes and eke honour that is without power ne he ne prayseth glory nothing. Certes this seest thou wel that many thinges fayten to him: For he hath somtime defaute of many necessitees, and many anguishes byten hym. And when he may not doen tho defaultes away, he forgetteth to be mighty, and that is the thyng that he most desyreth. And right thus may I make semblable reasons of honour, of glory, and of delices: For so euery of these forsaid things is the same that these other things been, that is to saine, al one thing. Who so euer seketh to getten that one of these, and not that other, he ne getteth not that he desireth. Boecius. What sayest thou then, if that a man couete to getten all these thinges togider. Philosophie. Certes (qd. she) I wold say that he would get him souerain blisfulnes, but that shall he not finde in tho thinges that I haue shewed, that mowe not yeue that they beheten. Boecius. Certes no (qd. I.) Phi. Then (qd. she) ne shulden men not by no way seken blisfulnes in soch thinges, as men wenen that they ne mowe gyuen but one thyng singlerly of all that menne seken. Boecius. I graunt well (qd. I) ne non other thing may be said. Philosoph. Now hast thou then (qd. she) the forme and the cause of false welefulnesse: Now turne and flitte againe to thy thought, for there shalt thou seene anon thilke very blisfulnesse, that I haue behight thee. B. Certes (qd. I) it is clere & opē, though it were to a blind mā: And that shewedest thou me a litel here beforne, when thou enforcedest thee to shew me the causes of the false welfulnesse. For (but if I be begiled) then is ẏ thilke very blisfulnesse and parfite that parfitly maketh a man suffisaunt, mighty, honourable, noble, and full of gladnes. And for thou shalt well knowe, that I haue well vnderstanden these thinges within my hart: I know well, that thilke blisfulnesse that men verely yeuen one of the forsaid things, sens they be all one: I know doubtlesse that thilke thing is full of blisfulnesse. Philosophie. O my norice (qd she) by this opinion I say that thou art blisfull, if thou put this thereto that I shall saine. Boecius. What is that (qd. I.) Ph. Trowest thou ẏ there be any thing in this erthly mortall tōbling thynges, that may bringen this estate? Bo. Certes (qd. I) I trow it not: and thou hast shewed me wel, that ouer thilk good there nis nothing more to ben desired. P. These things

then (qd. she) that is to saine, earthly suffisaũce and power, and soch things erthly, they semen likenesse of very good or els it seemeth that they yeuen to mortall folke a maner of goodnesse, that ne be not parfite, but thilke good that is very and parfite, that may they not yeuen. Boe. I accord me well (qd. I). Phil. Then (qd. she) for as moch as thou haste knowen, which is thilke very blissfulnes, and eke which thilke things ben, that lien falsely blissfulnesse, that is to say, ẏ they by disceite semen very goodes: Now behoueth thee to knowe whence and where thou mow seke thilke very blissfulnesse. B. Certes (qd. I) ẏ desire I greatly, and haue abyden longe tyme to herken it. P. But for as moch (qd. she) as it liketh to my disciple Plato in his booke of Tymeo, that in right littell things men shoulden beseche the help of God: What iudgest thou that be now to done, so that wee may deserue to finde that seat of thilke souerain God? B. Certes (qd. I) I deme that we shullen cleape to the father of all goddes, for withouten him nys there nothing founded aright. P. Thou saiest aright (qd. she) and began anon to singen right thus.

O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas, Terrarum cælique fator, qui tempus ab æuo, ire iubes, stabilisque manens das cuncta moueri. Quem non externæ pepulerunt fingere causæ, &c.

O Thou father, soueraine & creatour of heauen and of erthes that gouernest this world by pardurable reason, ẏ cõmandest the times to gone, sith that age had beginning. Thou ẏ dwellest thy selfe aye stedfast & stable, & yeuest al other things to be meued ne foryeue causes ne cesseden thee neuer to cõpoun werke of flatering mater, but onely the forme of soueraine good yset, within the without enuy, that meued the frely. Thou that art alderfarest, bearing the fayre world in thy thought, formedest this world to thy likenesse semblable, of that fayre world in thy thought. Thou drawest all thing on thy soueraine ensampler, & cõmaundest that this world perfetlich ymaked, haue freely & absolute his perfite parties. Thou bindest the elements by nombres proporcionables, that the cold thinges mowen accorden with the hotte thinges, and the drie things with the moist: That the fire, that is purest, ne flie nat ouer hie, ne that the heauinesse ne draw nat adoun ouerlow the yerthes, that be plonged in the waters. Thou knittest togider, ẏ meane soule of treble kinde mouing mouing all thinges, and deuidest it by membres according. And when it is thus deuided, it hath assembled amouing in to roundes, it goeth to turne againe to himself, and enuironneth a full deepe thought, and turneth the heuen by a semblable image. Thou by euen lyke causes enhancest the soules and the lesse liues, and abling hem to height by light waines or cartes. Thou sowest hem in to heauen and in to yerth, and when they be conuerted to thee by thy benigne law, thou makest hem returne ayen to thee by ayen ledyng fyre. O father yeue thou to the thought to styen vp in to thy straite seate, and graunt him to enuironne the wel of good. And the light yfound, graunt him to fixen the clere sights of his courage in thee, and scatter thou and to brake that weyghtes and the clouds of earthly heauinesse, and shine thou by thy brightnesse. For thou arte clerenesse, thou art pesyble reste to debonayre folke, thou thy self art beginning, bearer, leder, path, and terme to looke on thee that is our end.

Quoniam igitur, quæ sit imperfecti, quæ etiam perfecti boni forma vidisti, nunc demonstrandum reor, &c.

FOrasmoche then, as thou hast seene which is ẏ forme of good that nys not parfite, and the forme of good, which that is parfite. Now trowe I that it were good to shewe in what this perfection of blissfulnes is set. And in this thing I trow that we shall first enquire for to weten, if that any soche maner good, as thilke good as thou haste diffinished a litell here beforne, that is to saine, soueraine good, may be found in the nature of things. For that vaine imaginacion of thought ne desceue vs not, and put vs out of the sothefastnesse of thylke thyng that is submitted to vs. But it may not be denied that thilke ne is, and that is right as a well of all goodes. For all thing that is cleped imparfite is proued imparfite by the amenusing of perfection of thinge that is parfite. And hereof commeth it that euery thing generall, if that men sene any thing that is imparfite, certes in thilke thinge generall, there mote be some thing that is parfite. For if so be that perfection is don away, men may not thinke ne say from whence thilke thing is, that is cleped imparfite. For the nature ne toke not her beginning of thinges amenused and imparfite, but it procedeth of thinges that been all hole absolute, and discendeth so down in to the vttrest things, and into things empty and without fruite. But as I haue shewed

shewed a litle here before, that if that there be a blisfulnesse that be freele, and vaine, and imperfite, there may no man doubt that there nis some blisfulnesse, that there is sad stedfast and perfite. Boecius. This is concluded (quod I) firmely and soothfastly. Phi. But consider also (qd. she) in whom this blisfulnesse inhabiteth. The commune accord and conceit of the courage of men, proueth and graunteth, that God prince of all things, is good. For so as nothing may be thought better than good, it may not be doubted thē, than he that nothing nis better than he, nis good. Certes, reason sheweth that G O D is so good, that it prouеth by verry force, that perfite good is in him. For if God nis such, he ne may not ben prince of all thing. For certes, some thing possessing in it selfe perfite good, should be more worthie than God: and it should seemen, that thilke thing were first and older than God. For we haue shewed apertly, that all things that ben perfite, been first or things that ben imperfite. And for thy, for as much as that my reason, or my processe, ne goe not away without an end, we owen to granten, that the soueraigne good is right full of soueraigne perfite good. And we haue stablished, that the soueraigne good is very blisfulnesse: then mote it needes be, that very blisfulnesse is set in soueraigne good. Boecius. This take I well (qd. I) ne this ne may not be withsaid in no manner. Philosophie. But I pray thee (qd. she) see now how thou mayest prouen holily, and withouten corruption, this that we haue saied, that the soueraigne God is full of right soueraigne good. Bo. In which manner (qd. I.) Phil. Wenest thou aught (qd. she) that the father of all things hath taken thilke soueraigne good any where out of himselfe? Of which soueraigne good, men prouеth that he is ful. Right as thou mightest thinken, that God, þ hath blisfulnesse in himselfe, and thilke blisfulnesse that is in him, were diuers in substaunce. For if thou wene that God hath received thilke good out of himselfe, thou mayest wene, that he that yaue thilke good to God, be more worthy than God. But I am beknow, and confesse, and that right dignely, that God is right worthie aboue all thinges: And if so be that this good be in him by nature, but that is diuerse from him by wening reason, sens we speaken of God, prince of all things. Faine who so faine may, who was he that conioined these things together. And eke at the last see wel, that a thing that is diuers fro any thing, that thilke thing nis not that same thing, for which it is vnderstanden to ben diuers. Then followeth it well, that the ilke thing, that by his nature is diuers from soueraine good, that thing is not soueraigne good. But certes, it were a felonous cursednesse, to thinken that of him, that nothing nis more worth. For alway, of all thinges, the name of hem ne may not ben better than her beginner. For which I may concluden by right very reason, that thilke that is beginning of all thinges, thilke same thing is soueraigne God in his substance. Boecius. Thou hast saied right fully (qd. I.) Philosophie. But we haue graunted (qd. she) that the soueraigne good is blisfulnesse. Boe. That is sooth (qd. I.) Philosophie. Then (qd. she) we mote needs graunten and confessen, that the ilke same soueraigne good be God. Boe. Certes (qd. I) I ne may not denie, ne withstande the reasons purposed, and I see well, that it followeth by strength of the premisses. Philosophie. Looke now (qd. she) if this be proued yet more firmely thus, that there ne mowen not been two soueraigne goods, that been diuerse among hemselfe. For certes, the goods that been diuers among hemselfe, that one is not that the other is. Then ne mowen neither of hem be perfite, so as eyther of hem lacketh to other, but that that nis not perfite, menne may seene apertly, that it nis not soueraigne. The things then that be soueraignely good, ne mowen by no way be diuers. But I haue well concluded, that blisfulnesse and G O D been the soueraigne good, for which it mote needes been, that soueraigne blisfulnesse is soueraigne dignitie. Boecius. Nothing (qd. I) is more soothfast than this, ne more firme by reason, ne a more worthie thing than God, may not be concluded.

Philosophie. Upon these things then (qd. she) right as these Geometricians, when they haue shewed their propositions, been wont to bringen in things, that they clepen porismes, or declarations of foresaied thinges: right so woll I yeue thee here, as a Corollarie, or a mede of crowne. For why, for as much as by the getting of blisfulnesse menne been maked blisfull, and blisfulnesse is dignitie: then it is manifest and open, that by the getting of dignitie men been maked blisfull, right as by the getting of Justice, And by the getting of Sapience they be maked wise, right so, needes by the semblable reason, when they haue gotten diuinitie, they be made gods. Then is euery blisfull man a god. But certes, by nature there nis but one God, but by the participation of the Diuinitie, there ne letteth ne distourbeth nothing, that there ne bee many gods. Boecius. This is (qd. I) a faire thing and a precious, clepe it as thou wilt, be it Corollarie, or Porisme, or mede of Croune, or declaring. P. Certes (qd. she) nothing nis fairer, than is the

thing, that by reason should be added to these forsaid things. Boecius. What thing (qd. I.) Philosophie. So (qd. she) as it seemeth, that blisfulnesse contayneth many things, it were for to weten, whether that all these thynges maken or conioynen, as a manner body of blisfulnesse, by the diuersitie of parties of members, or els if any of all these things bee such, that it accomplish by himselfe the substaunce of blisfulnesse. So all these other thynges been referred, and brought to blisfulnesse, that is to say, as to the cheefe of hem. Boecius. I would (qd. I) that thou madest me clearely to vnderstand what thou saiest, and what thou recordest me the forsaid things. Philosophy. Haue I not iudged qd. she) that blisfulnesse is good? Boecius. Yes forsooth (qd. I) and that soueraigne good. Philosophie. Adde then (qd. she) thilke good that is made blisfulnesse to all the forsaied things: For thilke same blisfulnesse, that is deemed to bee soueraigne sufficiaunce, thilke selfe is soueraigne power, soueraign reuerence, soueraigne clearenesse or noblesse, and soueraigne delite.

What saiest thou then of all these things, that is to say, sufficiaunce, power, and these other things? Been they then as members of blisfulnesse, or been they referred and brought to soueraigne good, right as all things that ben brought to the cheefe of hem? Boecius. I vnderstond well (qd. I) what thou purposest to seeke: but I desire for to hearken, that thou shew it to me. Philosophie. Take now thus the discrecion of this question (qd. she.) If all these things (qd. she) weren members to felicitie, thē weren they diuers that one from that other: and such is the nature of parties or of members, that diuers members compounen a bodie. Boecius. Certes (qd. I) it hath well ben shewed here before, that all these things ben all one thing. Philosophie. Then been they no members (qd. she.) For els it should seem, that blisfulnesse were conioyned all of o member alone, but that is a thing that may not be doen. Boecius. This thing (qd. I) then nis not doubtous, but I abide to hearken the remenaunt of thy question. Philosophie. This is open and cleare (qd. she) that all other things ben referred and brought to good: For therefore is sufficiaunce required, for it is deemed to bee good: and for thy, is power required, for men trowen also that it be good. And this same thing mowen we thinken, and coniecten of reuerence, of noblesse, and of delite. Then is soueraign good the summe and the cause of all that ought to ben desired. For why, thilke thing that withholdeth no good in it selfe, ne semblaunce of good, it ne may not well in no manner be desired ne required. And the contrary: for though that things by her nature ne ben not good, algates if men weneh that they been good, yet ben they desired, as though they were verely good. And therefore it is said, that men ought to wene by right, that bounty be the soueraign fine, and the cause of all the things that ben to requiren. But certes, thilke that is cause, for which men requiren any thing, it semeth, that thilke same thing be most desired, as thus: if that a wight would riden for cause of heale, he ne desireth not so much the mooning to riden, as the effect of his heale. Now then sens that all things ben required for the grace of good, they ne ben not desired of all folke, more than the same good. But we haue graunted, that blisfulnesse is that same thing, for which that all these other things ben desired. Then is it thus, that certes onely blisfulnesse is required and desired. By which thing it sheweth clerely, that of good and blisfulnesse is all one and the same substaunce. Boecius. I see not (qd. I) wherefore that men might discorden in this. Philosophie. And we haue shewed, that God and very blisfulnesse is al one thing. Boecius. That is sooth (qd. I.) Philosophy. Then mow wee conclude sikerly, that the substaunce of God is set in thilke same good, and in none other place.

Hic omnes pariter venite capti. Quos fallax ligat improbis catenis. Terrenas habitans libido mentes. Hic erit vobis requies laborum, &c.

COmmeth al together now ye that ben teaught and bound with wicked chaines, by the deceiuable delite of earthly things, inhabiting in your thought. Here shall be the rest of your labour: here is the hauen stable, in quiete pesible. This alone is the open refute to wretches, that is to sain, that ye that be combred and deceiued with worldly affections, commeth now to this soueraine good, that is, God, that is refute to hem that willen cōmen to him. All the things that the riuer Tagus feeth you, with his goldē grauels: or els all the thinges that ỹ riuer Hermus feeth with his red brinke: or that Indus feeth, that is next the hote partie of the world, that medleth the green stones with the white: ne should not cleren the looking of your thought, but hiden rather your blind corage within her derknes. All that liketh you here, and exciteth and moueth your thoughts, the earth hath nourished it within his low caues. But the shining, by which the heauen is gouerned, & whence that his strength, that esthewеth the darke ouerthrowing

thzowing of the soule, and whosoeuer may knowen thilke light of blisfulnesse, hee will saine, that the white beames of the Sunne ne be not cleare.

Assentior (inquam) cuncta enim firmissimis nexarationibus constant. Tum illa, quanti, inquit, tu æstimabis, si bonum ipsum, quid sit, agnoueris, &c.

BOecius. I assent me (qd. I) for all thyngs ben strongly bounden with right ferme reasons. Philosophie. How much wilt thou praysen it (qd. she) if that thou know what the like good is? Boecius. I woll prayse it (qd. I) by price without end, if it shall betide me to know also together God that is good. Philosophie. Certes (qd. she) that shall I doe thee by very reason, if that tho things, that I haue concluded a little here before, dwellen onely in her graunting. Boecius. They dwellen graunted to thee (qd. I) that is to saine, as who saith, I graunt to thy forsaied conclusions. Philosophie. I haue shewed thee (qd. she) that the things that been required of many folke, ne been not very goods, ne perfite: for they ben diuers, that one from that other. And so as each of hem is lacking to other, they ne haue no power to bring a good, that is full & absolute. But then at erst been they very good, when they been gathered togider all into one forme, and into one werking: so that thilke thing that is suffisaunt, thilke same is power, and reuerence, noblesse, and mirth. And forsooth, but if all these things be all one same thing, they ne haue not, whereby that they mowe bee put in the number of things, that ought to be required and desired. Boec. It is shewen (qd. I) ne hereof may there no man douten. Philosophie. The thynges then (qd. she) that ne been no goods, when they ben diuers, and when they beginnen to be all one thing, then ben they goods, ne commeth it not then, by the getting of vnitie, that they be maked goods? Boecius. So seemeth it (qd. I.) Philosophie. But all thyng that is good (qd. she) graunterst thou that it be good, by the participation of good or no? Boecius. I grant it (qd. I.) Philoso. Then must thou graunten (qd. she) by semblable reason, that one & good be one same thing. For of things, of which the effect nis not naturally diuers, nedes her substaunce must be one same thing. Boecius. I ne may not denie it (qd. I.) Philosophy. Hast thou not knowen wel (qd. she) that all thing that is, hath so long his dwelling and his substaunce, as long as it is one: but when it forletteth to been one, it must needes dien, and corrumpen together? Boecius. In which manner (qd. I.) Philosophie. Right as in beasts (qd. she) when the soule and the bodie been coniopned in one, and dwelling together, it is cleped a beast: and when her vnitie is destroyed, by thy discreuerance of that one from that other, then sheweth it well, that it is a dead thing, and it is no lenger no beast.

And the bodie of a wight, while it dwelleth in one forme, by coniunction of members, it is well seene, that it is a figure of mankind: And if the parties of the bodie be diuided and discreued that one from that other, that they destroy the vnitie, the bodie forletteth to be that it was before. And who so would ren in the same manner by all things, he should seen that without doubt euery thyng is in his substance, as long as it is one: and when it forleteth to be one, it dieth and perisheth.

Bo. When I consider (qd. I) many thyngs, I see none other. Philosophie. Is there any thing (qd. she) that in as much as it liueth naturally, that forleetteth the talent or appetite of his being, and desireth to come to death and to corrupcion? Boecius. If I consider (qd. I) the beastes, that haue any manner nature of willing, and of nilling, I ne find no beast, but if it bee constrained fro without forth, that forletteth or despiseth the entencion to liuen and to duren, or that will his thankes hasten him to dien.

For euery beast trauaileth him to defende and keep the saluacion of his life, and escheweth death and destruction. But certes, I doubt me of herbes and trees, that ne haue no feling soules, ne no natural workings, seruing to appetites, as beasts haue, whether they haue appetite to dwellen and to duren.

Philosophie. Certes (qd. she) thereof dare thee not doubt. Now looke vpon the Herbes and Trees, for they weren first in such places, as been conuenable to hem: in whyche places they mowe not dien ne drien, as long as her nature may defend hem. For some of hem weren in Fieldes, and some weren in Mountaines, and other were in Mareis, and other cleauen on rocks, and some weren plenteous in sondes. And if any wight enforce him to beare hem into other places, they weren drye. For nature yeueth to euery thyng that is conuenient to hem, and trauayleth that they ne die, as long as they haue power to dwellen and to liuen. What wilt thou sain of this, that they drawen all her nourysshings by her roots, right as they hadden her mouthes yplunged within the earthes, and shedden by her mareis her wood, her barke? And what wilt thou sayne of this, that the like thing that is right soft, as the marie is, that

that is alway hid in the seat all within, and that is defended from without, by the stedfastnesse of wood, and that the vttereste Barkes is put ayenst the distemperaunce of the heauen, as a defendour, mightie to sufferen harme? And thus certes mayest thou well seene, how great is the diligence of nature: for all things renoucten and publishen hem with seed imultiplied.

Ne there nis no manne, that ne wote well, that they ne been right as a foundement and edifice, for to duren not onely for a time, but right as for to dure perdurably by generacion. And the things eke, that men wenen ne haue no soules, ne desire they not by semblable reason to keepe that is his, that is to saine, that is accoarding to her nature, in conseruacion of her being and enduring? For wherefore els beareth lightnesse the flames vp, and the weight pressed the yearth adoune, but for as much as thilke place and thilke mouings be conenable to eueriche of hem. And forsooth, euery thing keepeth thilke that is accoarding and proper to him, right as things that ben contrarious and enemies, corrumpen hem. And yet the hard things (as stones) cleauen and holden her parties togither right fast and hard, and defenden hem in withstanding, that they ne departen lightly, and yeuen place to hem, that breaken or deuiden hem: but natheless, they retourne ayen soone into the same things, from whence they be araced. But fire fleeth and refuseth all deuision. Ne I ne treat not now here of wilfull moouings of the soule that is knowing, but of naturell entencion of things, as thus: right as we swallowen the meat that wee receiuen, and ne think not on it, and as we draw our breath in sleeping, that we wete not whyle we sleepen. For certes in the beasts, the loue of her liuings, ne of her beings, ne commeth not of the wilnings of the soule, but of the beginnings of nature. For certes, through constrayning causes, will desireth and embraceth full oft times the death, that nature dredeth, that is to saine, as thus: That a man may be constrayned so by some cause, that his will desireth, and taketh the death, which that nature hateth and dreadeth full sore. And sometime we seene the contrary, as thus: that the wil of a wight disturbeth and constraineth that, that nature alway desireth and requireth, that is to say, the werkes of generacion, by the which generacion only dwelleth, and is sustayned the long durabilitie of mortal things, as thus: This charitie and this loue, that euery thing hath to himself, ne commeth not of the mouing of the soule, but of the entencion of nature. For the purueyaunce of God hath yeuen to things, that ben create of him this, that is a full great cause to liuen and to duren, for whych they desiren naturelly her life, as long as euer they mowen: for which thou maiest not dreaden by no manner, that all thinges that beene any where, that they ne requiren naturally the firme stablenesse of perdurable dwelling, and eke the eschewing of destruction.

Boec. I confesse (qd. I) that I see well now, and certainely, withouten doubt, the thinges that a while ago, seemeden uncertaine to me. Philos. But (qd. she) thilke thing that desireth to be and dwell perdurably, he desireth to been one: for if that one were destroyed, certes, being should there none dwellen to no wight. Boecius. That is sooth (qd. I.) Philosophie. Then (qd. she) desiren all things one. Boecius. I assent (qd. I.) Philosophie. And I haue shewed (qd. she) that ilke same one is thilke that is good. Boecius. Ye forsooth (qd. I.) Philosophie. All things then (qd. she) requiren good, and thilke maist thou diffiniuen thus: good is thilke thing that euery wight desireth. Boecius. There ne may be thought no more very thing (qd. I) for eyther all things bee referred and brought to nought, and flotten without gouernour dispoiled of one, as of her proper head: or els if there be any thing, to which that all thinges tenden and highen to, that thyng must be the soueraign good of all goods. Philosophie. Then saied she thus: O my nourice (qd. she) I haue great gladnes of thee, for thou hast fixed in thy hart the middle soothfastnesse, that is to saine, the pricke: but this thing hath be discouered to thee, in that thou saidest, that thou wistest not a little here before. Boecius. What is that (qd. I.) Philosophy. That thou wistest not (qd. she) whych was the ende of thynges, and certes, that is the thyng that euery wight desireth. And for as much as we haue gathered and comprehended, that good is thilke thynge, that is desired of all, then mote we needs confesse, that good is the fine of all things.

Quisquis profunda mente vestigat verum. Cupitque nullis ille deuijs falli, In se reuoluat intimi lucem visus, &c.

WHo so seeketh sooth by a deepe thought, and coueiteth to beene discreyued by no miswayes, let him rollen and treaten within himselfe, the light of his inward sight: and let him gatheren ayen, enclyning into a compace, the long mouinges of his thonghts. And let him teachen his courage, that hee hath enclosed and hidde in his treasours

sours all that he hath compassed or sought fro without: and then thilke thing, that the blacke clouds of errour whylome had coucred, shall light more clearely than Phebus himselfe ne shineth. Glosa. Who so woll seeke the deepe grounds of sooth in his thought, and woll not bee deceyued by false propositions that gone amisse from the troth, let him well examine and rolle within himselfe the nature and properties of the thing. And let him eftsoones examine and rollen his thoughts, by good deliberacion, or that he deme. And let him teachen his soule, that it hath by naturell principles kindliche ihidde within it selfe all the trouth, ꝑ which he imagineth to been in things without: & then all the darkenesse of his misknowing, shall seme more euidently to ꝑ sight of his understanding, than the Sunne ne seemeth to the sight withoutforth. For certes, the bodie bringing the weight of forgeting, ne hath not chased out of your thought all the clerenesse of your knowing: for certainly, the seed of sooth holdeth and cleaueth within your corage, and it is awaked and excited by the winds, and by the blasts of doctrine.

For wherefore els deemen ye of your owne will the rights, whē ye be asked, but if so were that the nourishing of reason ne liued yplunged in the deepe of your heart? that is to sain, how should men demen the sooth of any thyng that were asked, and if there nere a roote of soothfastnesse, that were yplunged and hid in naturell principles, the which soothfastnesse liued within the depenes of the thought? And if so be, that the muse and the doctrine of Plato singeth sooth, all that euery wight learneth, hee ne doeth nothing els then, but recordeth, as men recorden thyngs that been forgetten.

Tum ego, Platoni (inquam) vehementer assencior. Nam me horum iam secundo commoneras. Primum quod memoriam corporea contagione, &c.

Then saied I thus: I accord me greatly to Plato, for thou recordest & remembrest me these thynges yet the second time, that is to say, first when I left my memorie, by the contrarious coniunction of the bodie with the soule: and eftsoones afterward, when I lost it, confounded by thy charge, and by the burden of my sorrow: and then sayed she thus. If thou looke (qd. she) first the thyngs that thou hast graunted, it ne shall not been right ferre, that thou ne shalt remembren the like thing, that thou saidest that thou nistest not. Boecius. What thing (qd. I.) Philosophie. By which the gouernment (qd. she) that this world is gouerned. Boecius. I remember it well (qd. I) and I confesse well, that I ne wist it naught. But all be it so, that I see now from afarre, what thou purposest, algates I desire yet to harken it of thee more plainly. Philos. Thou ne wendest not (qd. she) a litle here before, that men should dout, that this world is gouerned by God. Boecius. Certes (qd. I) ne yet, ne dout I it not, ne I nill neuer wene that it were to doubt: as who saith, but I wot well that God gouerneth this world. And I shall answeren thee by what reasons I am brought to this. This world (qd. I) of so many diuers and contrarious parties, ne might neuer haue ben assembled in o forme, but if there were one, that conioyned so many diuers thyngs. And the same diuersitie of her natures, that so discorden, that one fro that other must departen, and vnioynen the thinges that been conioyned, if there ne were one that contained that he hath conioyned and ibound. Ne the certaine order of nature ne should not bring forth so ordeyne mouings, by places, by times, by doings, by spaces, by qualities, if there ne were one, that were aye stedfast dwelling, that ordained and disposed these diuersities of mouings. And thilke thing, whatsoeuer it be, by which that all things be maked and ladde, I clepe him God, that is a word that is vsed to all folks. Philosophie. Then saied she: Sith thou feelest thus these things, I trowe that I haue little more to doen, that thou mightie of welefulnes, hole and sound, ne see eftsoones thy countrey. But let vs looken these thinges that we haue purposed here before. Haue I not numbred and saied (qd. she) that sufficiaunce is in blisfulnesse. And we haue accorded, that God is the like same blisfulnesse. Boecius. Yes forsooth (qd. I.) Philosophie. And that to gouern this world (qd. she) ne shall he neuer haue neede of no helpe fro without. For els if he had need of any helpe, hee ne should not haue no full sufficiaunce. Boecius. Yes thus it mote needs be (qd. I.) Philosophy. Then ordeined he by himselfe alone all things (qd. she.) Boecius. That may not be denied (qd. I.) Philosophie. And I haue shewed that God is the same good. Boecius. It remembreth me well (qd. I.) Philosophie. Then ordeineth he all thinges by thilke good (qd. she) sith he which we han accorded to bee good, gouerneth all thinges by himselfe. And he is a key and a steere, by which the edifice of this world is kept stable, and without corrumping. Boecius. I accord me greatly (qd. I.) And I haue apperceiued a litle here before,

forne, that thou wouldest say thus: all were it so, that it were by a thinne suspection. Philosophie. I trow well (qd. she.) For as I trow thou leadest now more ententifely thine eye to loken the very goods. But natheles, the thing that I shall tell thee, yet ne sheweth not lasse to token. Boecius. What is that (qd I.) Philosophie. So as men trowe (qd. she) and that rightfully, that God gouerneth all thynges by the key of his goodnesse. And all these same thynges that I haue taught thee, hasten hem by naturall contencion to come to good, there may no man doubten, that they ne ben gouerned voluntarily. And that they ne conuerten of her owne good will, to her ordeinour. As that they been accoyding, and enclining to her gouernour, and to her king. Boecius. It mote needs be so (qd. I) for the realme ne should not seme blisfull, if there were a yoke of misdrawings in diuers parts, ne the sauings of obedient things ne should not be then. Philosophy. Is there nothing (qd. she) that keepeth his nature, that enforceth him to gone ayenst God? Boecius. No (qd. I.) Philosophie. And if that any thyng enforced him to withstande God, might it auayle at last ayen him, that wee haue graunted to bee Almightie by the right of blisfulnesse? Boecius. Certes (qd. I) all vtterly it ne might not auayle him. Philosophie. Then is there nothing (qd. she) that eyther may or will withstand to his Souueraigne God. Boecius. I trow not (qd. I.) Philosophie. Then (qd. she) is thilke the soueraign GOD, that all things gouerneth strongly, and ordayneth hem softely. Boecius. Then saied I thus, I delite me (qd. I) not onely in the ends, or in the summe of the reasons, that thou hast concluded and prooued, but thilke words that thou vsest, deliten me much more, so that at last, fooles, that sometime renden great thyngs, oughten been ashamed of hemselfe, that is to sain, that we fooles that reprehenden wickedly the thinges þ touchen Gods gouernaunce, we oughten beene ashamed of our selfe. As I, that sayed, that God refuseth onely the werkes of men, and ne entermeteth not of it. Philosophie. Thou hast well heard (qd. she) the fables of the Poets, how the Gyaunts assaileden heauen with the gods: but forsooth the debonaire force of God, disposed hem as it was worthy, that is to sain, destroyed the Gyaunts as it was worthy. But wilt thou that we reioynen together thilke same reasons? For peraventure of such coniunctions, may sterten vp some faire sparke of sooth. Boecius. Doe (qd. I) as thee list. Philosophie. Weenest thou (qd. she) that God ne be almightie? Boecius. No man is in doubt of it certes (qd. I.) Philosophy. No wight ne doubteth it, if he be in his mind (qd. she.) But he that is almightie, there nis nothing that hee ne may. Boecius. That is sooth (qd. I.) Philosophie. May God do euill (qd. she?) Boec. Nay forsooth (qd. I.) Phi. Then is euill nothing (qd. she) sith that he may doen none euill, that may doen all things. Boecius. Scornest thou me (qd. I) or els playest thou or deceiuest thou me, that hast so wonnen with thy reasons, the house of Dedalus so enterlacing, that it is vnable to be vnlaced, that thou otherwhile entrest there thou issuest, and otherwhile issuest there thou entrest. Ne foldest thou not togither, by replication of words, a manner wonderfull circle, or enuironning of the simplicitie diuine? For certes, a little here before, when thou began at blisfulnesse, thou saidest that it is a souerain good, and þ God is the blisfulnesse, for which thou paue me as a conenable yeft, that is to sayne, that no wight nis blisfull, but if hee bee God also therewith. And saidest eke, that the forme of good is the substaunce of God and of blisfulnesse. And saidest, þ the ilke one is thilke same good, that is required and desired of all the kind of things. And thou proudest in disputing, that God gouerneth all the thinges of the world by the gouernaunce of bountie, and saidest that all thyngs would obeyen to him, and saidest that the nature of euill is nothing. And these things shewedest thou not with no reasons taken fro without, but by prooues in cercles and homeliche knowing. The whych prooues drawen to hemselfe her faith and her accord, euriche of hem of other. Philosophy. Then said she thus: I ne scorne not, ne play ne deceiue thee, but I haue shewed the thing that is greatest ouer all things, by the yeft of God, that we whylome praiden. For this is the forme of diuine substaunce, that is such, that it ne slideth not into vtterest forraine thyngs, ne receyueth not no straunge thinges in him. But right as Permenides saied in Greeke of thilke diuine substaunce: He saied thus, That thilke diuine substaunce tourneth the world, and the moouable cercle of thyngs, while the ilke diuine substaunce kepeth it selfe without moouings, that is to sayne, that he mooueth neuermo, and yet it moueth all other thyngs. But natheless, if I haue slyzed reason, that be not taken fro without the compasse of the thing, of the which wee treaten, but reasons that ben bestowed within compasse: there nis not why thou shouldest meruayle, sith thou hast learned by the sentence of Plato, That needs þ words mote been cosins to the things of which they speaken.

Fœlix qui potuit boni Fontem viſere lucidum.
Fœlix qui potuit grauis,&c.

BLeſſed is that man that may ſeene the clere well of good: Blikfull is he that may vnbinden him from the bounds of heauy earth. The Poete of Thrace, Orpheus, that whylom had right great ſorrow for the death of his wife. After that hee had maked and conſtrayned by his weepely ſongs the woodes mouable to renne, and had maked the riuers to ſtonden ſtill, and had maked the Harts and Hindes to ioynen dredeleſſe her ſides to cruell Lions, to hearken his ſong, and had maked that the Hare was not agaſt of the Hound, which was pleaſed by ſong: So when the moſt ardaund loue of his wife brend the entrailes of his breaſt, ne the ſongs that had ouercommen all thynges, ne mighten not aſſuagen her lord Orpheus. He plained him of the heauen gods, which that were cruell to him: he went him to the houſes of the hell: And he tempered his blandiſhing ſongs, by reſounning of ſtrings, and ſpeke ſt and ſong in weeping, all that euer he had receiued, and laued out the noble welles of his mother Caliope ẏ goddeſſe. And he ſang with as much as he might of weeping, and with as much as loue, that doubled his ſorow, might yeuen him and teach him, and commoued the hell, and required and beſought by ſweet prayer ẏ lords of ſoules in hell of releaſing, that is to ſay, to yeelden him his wife. Cerberus the porter of hell, with his three heads, was caught and all abaſhed of the new ſong. And the three goddeſſes. Furies and vengereſſes of felonies, that tourmenten and agaſten the ſouls, by annoy woxen ſorrowfull and ſorie, and teares wepten for pitie. Tho was not the head of Ixion tourmented by the ouerthrowing wheele. And Tantalus, ẏ was deſtroyed by the woodneſſe of long thurſt, diſpiſed the floods to drink. The foule, that hight Vultour, that eateth the ſtomacke or the giſerne of Tytius, is ſo fulfilled of his ſong, that it nill eaten ne tyten no more. At the laſt the lord and iudge of ſoules was mooued to miſericordies, & cried, we been ouercommen (qd. he) yeue we to Orpheus his wife to beare him companie, hee hath well ybought her by his ſongs and his ditties: but we will putten a law in this, and couenant in the yeft, that is to ſaine, that till he be out of hell, if he looke behind him, that his wife ſhall come agayne vnto vs. But what is hee that may yeue a lawe to louers? loue is a greater lawe, and ſtronger to himſelfe than any lawe that men may yeuen. Alas, when Orpheus and his wife were almoſt at the termes of the night, that is to ſain, at the laſt bounds of hell, Orpheus looked backward on Euridice his wife, and loſt her, and was dead. This fable appertayneth to you all, whoſoeuer deſireth or ſeeketh to lead his thought into the ſoueraign day, ẏ is to ſay, to clearneſſe of ſoueraign good. For whoſoeuer be ſo ouercommen, that he fixe his eyen into the pit of hell, that is to ſain, who ſo euer ſet his thoughts in earthly thyngs, all that euer he hath drawen of the noble good celeſtiall, he leſeth it, when he looketh to ẏ hels, this is to ſaine, into low thyngs of the earth.

¶ Thus endeth the third booke of Boece, and hereafter followeth the fourth.

Hec cum Philoſophia dignitate vultus, & oris grauitate ſeruata, leuiter ſuauiterque cecinisſet, Tum ego nondum penitus inſitimæroris oblitus, &c.

WHen Philoſophie hadde longen ſoftly and delectably the forſaid thynges, keeping the dignitie of her chere, and the weight of her wordes. I then that ne had all vtterly foryeten the weeping and ẏ mourning that was ſet in mine hert, forbrake the entencion of her, that entended yet to ſayne ſome other thyngs.

O (qd. I) thou ẏ art guidereſſe of very light, the things that thou haſt ſaid me hitherto, ben to me ſo cleare, and ſhewing by the diuine looking of hem, and by thy reaſons, that they ne mowen ben ouercommen. And thilke thyngs that thou toldeſt me, all be it ſo, ẏ I had whylom foryeten hem, for the ſorrow of the wrong that hath be done to me: yet neuertheleſſe they ne weren not vtterly vnknowen to mee. But this ſame is namely a right great cauſe of my ſorrow, ſo that as the gouernour of thyngs is good, if that euils mowen been by any waies, or els if that euils paſſen without puniſhing, the which thing only, how worthie is it to ben wondred vpon. Thou conſidreſt it wel thy ſelf certainely. But yet to this thing there is yet another thing ioyned more to be wondred vpon. For felonie is Empereſſe, and floureth full of richeſſes, & vertue nis not all onely without medes, but it is caſt downe, and eke foretroden vnder the feet of felonous folke: and it abieth the turments in ſteed of wicked fellons. Of all which things there is no wight may maruailen ynough ne complainen, ẏ ſuch thynges be

done in the reigne of God, that all thynges wote, and all things may, and ne will not only but good things. Then said he thus: Certes (qd. he) that were a great maruaile, and an abalbing without end, and well more horrible than all the monsters, if it were as thou wenest, that is to saine, that in the right ordained house of so much a father, and an ordaynour of meine, that the vessels that ben foule and vile, should ben honoured and heried, and the precious vessels that should ben defouled and vile. But it is not so, for if the thinges that I haue concluded a little here before, ben kept whole and vnaraced, thou shalt wel know by the authoritie of God, (of the whose reign I speake) that certes the good folke be alway mightie, and shrewes ben alway outcast and feeble. Ne the vices be neuermore without paine, ne the vertues ne bee not without mede. And that blisfulnesse commeth alway to good folke, and infortune commeth alway to wicked folk. And thou shalt well knowen many things of this kind, that should ceasen thy plaints, & strengthen thee with stedfast sadnesse. And for thou hast seene the forme of very blisfulnesse by me, that haue whylome shewed it thee, and thou hast known in whō blisfulnesse is set: all thing treated, that I trow be necessary, to put forth, I shall shewen thee the way, that shal bringen thee ayen vnto thine house, and I shall fire feathers in thy thought, by which it may arisen in height, so that all tribulacion ydone away, thou by my guiding, and by my pathe, and by my sledes, shalt mowen return hole and sound into thy countrie.

Sunt enim pennæ volucres mihi, Quæ celsa conscendunt poli, Quas sibi cum velox mens induit, &c.

When for thy swift fethers that surmounten the height of the heuen, when the swift thought hath clothed it in tho feathers, it despiseth the hateful earths, and surmounteth the roundenesse of the great aire, and it seeth the cloudes behind his backe, and passeth the height of the region of the fire, that enchaufeth by the swift mooning of the firmament, till that he ariseth into the houses, that bearen the sterres, and ioyneth the way with the sunne Phebus, and fellawshippeth the way of the olde colde Saturnus. and he ymaked a knight of the cleare sterre, ꝑ is to saine, when the thought is made Gods knight, by the seeking of clere trouth to commen to the very knowledge of God. And thilke soule renneth by the circle of sterres, in all the places there as ꝑ shining night is ipainted: that is to sain, the night, that is cloudelesse. For on nights ꝑ be cloudelesse, it seemeth, that the heauen were painted with diuers images of sterres. And whē he hath done there mough, he shall forleten the last heauen, and he shall presen and wenden on the backe of the swift firmament, and he shall be maked perfit of the worshipfull light of God. There holdeth the lord of things the sceptre of his might, and attempreth the gouernments of the world, and the shining iudge of things stable in himselfe, gouerneth the swift cart or waine, that is to saine, the circular mouing of the sunne. And if thy way leadeth thee ayen, so ꝑ thou be brought thider, then wilt thou say that is the countrey that thou requirest, of which thou ne haddest no mind: But nowe it remembreth me well, here was I born, here wol I fasten my degree, here woll I dwell. But if thee liketh then to looken on the derkenesses of the yearth, that thou hast forleten, then shalt thou seene, that these fellonous tyraunts, that the wretched people dreadeth nowe, shullen be exiled from thilke faire countrey.

Tum ego pape inquam, vt magna promittis. Nec dubito, quin possis efficere, tu modo quem excitaueris, ne moreris, &c.

Then saied I thus. O wonder mee that thou beheetest mee so great thynges. Ne I ne doubt not, that thou ne mayest well performe that thou beheetest: But I pray thee this, that thou ne tarrie not to tell mee thilke thynges that thou hast moued. Philosophie. First (qd. she) thou must needs know, that good folke been alway strong and mightie, and the shrewes beene feeble and deserte, and naked of all strengths. And of these things certes euericke of hem is declared and shewed by other. For as good and euill been two contraries, if so be that good be stedfast, then sheweth the feeblesse all openly. And if thou know clerely the freelenesse of euill, the stedfastnesse of good is knowen. But for as muche as the fayth of my sentence shall be the more ferme and habound aunt, I woll gone by that one way and by that other, and I woll confirme the things that beene purposed nowe on this side, and now on that side. Two things there beene, in which the effect of all the deedes of mankind standeth: that is to sayne, will and power: and if that one of these two faileth, there nis nothing that may bee done. For if that will lacketh, there nis no wight that vndertaketh

to

to do that he woll not done: And if power faileth, the wil nis but idle, and stant for naught. And thereof commeth it, ꝑ if thou see a wight that would getten ꝑ he may not getten, thou mayest not doubt that power ne faileth him to hauen that he would. Boe. This is open and clere (qd. I) ne it ne may not been denyed in no manner. Philo. And if thou see a wight (qd. she) that hath done that he would done, thou nilt not doubt, that he ne hath had power to done it. Bo. No (qd. I.) Phi. And in that that euery wight may, in that men holden hem mighty to don a thing: Insomuch, as a man is mighty to don a thing, insomuch, men hold him mighty: and in that that he ne may, in that men demen him to be feeble. Bo. I confesse it well (qd. I.) P. Remember thee (qd. she) that I haue gathered and shewed by ꝑ forsaid reasons, that all the entencion of the wil of mankind, which that is led by diuers studies, hasteth to cōmen to blisfulnesse. Boeci. I remembreth me well (qd. I) that it hath ben shewed. Philoso. And recordeth thee naught then (qd. she) that blisfulnesse is thilk same good that men requiren, so ꝑ when blisfulnesse is required of all? Boecius. It recordeth me nat (qd. I.) For I haue it alway in my memorie fixed. Philosophie. All folke then (qd. she) good and eke bad, enforcen hem without difference of entencion to comen to good. Boecius. This is very consequence (qd. I.) Philoso. And certain is (qd. she) that by getting of good be men maked good. Boecius. That is certaine (qd. I.) Philos. Then getten good men ꝑ they desiren. Boe. So it seemeth (qd. I.) Philosophie. But wicked folke (qd. she) if they getten the good that they desiren, they ne mowen not be wicked. Bo. So it is (qd. I.) Philoso. Then so as that one and that other (qd. she) desiren the good, and the good folke getten the good, and not the wicked folk: then it is no doubt that the good folke ne be mighty, and wicked folke be feeble. Boecius. Who so that euer douteth of this, he ne may not consider the nature of thinges, ne the consequence of reasons. Philosop. And ouer this (qd. she) if that there been two thinges ꝑ haue one same purpose by kind, and that one of hem pursueth and performeth that same thing by naturall office, and that other ne may not don thilk office naturell, but followeth by other manner, then is conuenable to nature, him that accomplisheth his purpose kindely, and yet he ne accomplisheth not his owne purpose: whether of these two demest thou for more mighty? B. If that I coniect (qd. I) that thou woldest say, algates I desire yet to herken it more plainly of thee. Philosophy. Thou nilt not then denie (qd. she) that the mouement of going nis in men by kind. Boeci. No forsooth (qd. I.) Philosophy. Ne thou doubtest not (qd. she) ꝑ thilke naturell office of going ne be the office of feet. Boe. I ne doubt it not (qd. I.) Philoso. Then (qd. she) if that a wight bee mighty to moue, and goth vpon his feet, and another to whom thilke naturell office of feet lacketh, enforceth him to go creeping on his hand, which of these two ought to bee holden the more mighty by right? Boeci. Knit forth (qd. I) the remenaunt. Philosophy. For no wight ne douteth, that he that may gone by naturell office of feet, ne be more mighty than hee that ne may not. But the soueraigne good (qd. she) that is euen like purposed to the good and to the bad: the good folke seeken it by naturell office of vertues, and shrewes enforcen hem to getten it by diuerse couetises of earthly things, which that nis no naturell office to getten thilke soueraine good. Trowest thou that it be any otherwise? Bo. Nay (qd. I.) For the consequence is open, and shewing of things that I haue graunted, that needs good folke moten ben mighty, & shrewes moten ben feeble and vnmighty. Phi. Thou rennest aright before me (qd. she) and this is the iudgement, that is to sain, I iudge of right, as these leeches beene woont to hopen of sicke folke, when they apperceiuen that nature is recouered, and withstandeth to ꝑ malady. But for I see thee now all ready to ꝑ withstanding, I shall shew thee more thilke and continuell reasons. For looke how greatly sheweth the feeblenesse and infirmitie of wicked folke, that ne mowen not commen to that her naturel entencion leadeth hem: and yet almost thilk naturell entencion constraineth hem. And what were to demen then of shrewes if thilke naturell helpe had forleten hem, the which naturell helpe of entencion goth alway before hem, and is so great, ꝑ vnneth it may be ouercommen? Consider then how great defaut of power, and howe great feblesse there is in wicked felonous folke: as who saieth, the greater thyng that is coueited, and the desire not accomplished, of the lesse might is hee that coueiteth it, and may not accomplish. And for thy, Philosophie saith thus by soueraine good. Ne shrewes ne requiren not light medes ne vaine games, which they ne may not followen ne holde, but they saylen of thilke summe of the height of things, that is to sain, soueraine good. Ne these wretches ne cōmen not to the effect of soueraine good, the which they enforcen hem only to getten by nights and by dayes: in getting of which good, the strength of good folke is full well yseene. For right as thou mightest demen him mightie of going, that goeth on his feet till he might commen to thilke place, fro the

which place there ne lay no way further to be gone: right so must thou needs demen him for right mighty, which that getteth and attaynetth to the end of all things, which that been to desiren, beyond the which end there nis nothing to desire. Of the which power of good folke, men may conclude, that we wicked men seemen to be barraine & naked of all strength. For why forleten they vertues, and followen vices, nis it not for that they ne knowen not the goods? But what thing is more feble and more caytife, than is ỹ blindnes of ignorance? or els they knowen well which thynges they oughten followen, but lecherie and couetise ouerthroweth hem misfourned. And certes, so doth distemperaunce to feeble men, that mow not wrastlen ayen these vices. Ne know they not well, that they forleten the good wilfully, and tournen hem wilfully to vices. And in this wise they ne forleten not onely to be mightie, but they forleten all vtterly in any wise for to been. For they that forleten the commune fine of all thynges that ben, they forleten also therewithall for to been. And peraventure, it should seemen to some folke, that this were a meruaile to saine, that shrewes, which that containen the more parts of men, ne been not, ne haue no being. But nathelesse it is so, and thus stant this thing: For they that be shrewes, I denie not but that they be shrewes, but I deny simply and plainly, that they be not, ne haue no being. For right as thou mightest sain of the carrain of a man, that it were a dead man: so graunt I wel forsooth, that vicious folke ben wicked, but I ne may not absolutely and simply grant that they ben. For thilke thing that withholdeth order, and keepeth nature, thilke thing is and hath being. But what thing kepeth that, that is to say, he that forleteth naturall order, he forleteth thilke being that is set in his nature? But thou wolt sain, the shrewes mowen. Certes that ne denie I not: but certes, her power ne descendeth not of strength, but of feblesse, for they mowen done wickednesse, the which they ne might not, if they mightē dwellen in the forme and in the doing of good people. And thilke power sheweth evidently, that they mowen right naught. For so as I haue gadered and prooued a litell her before, that euill is not, and so as shrewes may onely but shrewednes. This conclusion is all clere, that shrewes ne mowen right naught, ne haue no power. And for as much as thou vnderstondest which is the strength of this power, I haue definished a litell here before, that no thyng nis so mightie as soueraigne good. B. That is sooth (qd. I.) Phil. And thilke same soueraine good may done none euill. Boecius. Certes no (qd. I.) Philosop. Is there aūy wight then (qd. he) that weneth ỹ men mowen done all things. Boecius. No man (qd. I) but if he be out of his wit. P. But certes shrewes mowen done euils (qd. he.) Boe. We would God (qd. I) that they ne mighten done none. Phil. Then (qd. he) so as he that is mightie to done onely good thynges, he may done all thynges, and they that ben mightie to done euill thynges ne mowen not all things. Then is it open thyng and manifest, that they that mowen don euill, ben of lesse power. And yet to prooue this conclusion, there helpeth me this, that I haue shewed here before, ỹ all power is to be numbred among thynges that men oughten require. And I haue shewed, that all things that oughten been desired, be referred to God, right as to a maner height of her nature: but for to mowen done euill and fellonie, ne may not ben referred to God. Then is not euill of the number of things, that oughten to ben desired and required. Then is it open and cleare, that ỹ power ne the mouing of shrewes nis no power. And of all these thinges it sheweth well, that the good folke ben certainly mighty, and ỹ shrewes doubtlesse vnmighty. And it is clere and open, that thilke sentence of Plato is very and soth, that saith: That only wise men may done that they desiren, and shrewes mowen haunten that hem liketh, but that they desiren, that is to saine, to come to soueraine good, they ne haue no power to accomplish that: for shrewes done what hem list, when by tho thinges in whych they delighten, they wenen to attain to thilke good ỹ they desiren, but they ne getten ne attayne not thereto, for vices ne commen not to blisfulnesse.

Quos vides sedere celsos, Solij culmine reges,
Purpura claros nitente, &c.

Who so that the couerture of her vaine apparailes, might stripen of these prowd kings that thou seest sitten on high in her chairs, glittering in shining purpure, enuironned with sorrowfull armures, menasing with cruell mouth, blowing by woodnes of heart, he should seene, that thilke lords bearen within her courages full strait chaines: for lecherie tourmenteth hem on ỹ one side with greedie bennes and troublable ire, that araiseth in hem the flood of troublings, tourmenteth on that other side, her thought or sorrow halt hem werie and peaught, or sliding and deceiuing hope tourmenteth hem. And therfore sith thou seest one head, that is to sayne, one tyraunt bearen so many tyrannies, then ne doth

doth thilke tyraunt not that hee desireth, sith he is cast downe with so many wicked lordes, that is to sain, so many vices that haue so wickedly lordshipe ouer him.

Vides ne igitur quanto in cœno probra voluantur, qua probitas luce resplendeat? in quo perspicuum est nunquam bonis præmia, &c.

Sest thou not then, in howe great filth these shrewes been ywrapped, and with whych clerenesse these good folke shinen. In this sheweth it well, that to good folke ne lacketh neuer mo her medes, ne shrewes lacken neuer more tourments. For of all things that bee done, thilk thing for which any thing is done, it seemeth, as by right, that thilke thing be the mede of that, as thus: If a man renneth in the stady or in the forlong for the crown, then lieth the mede in the crowne, for which he renneth. And I haue shewed that blisfulnesse is thilke same good, for which that al things ben done. Then is thilk same good purposed to ỹ werks of mankind, right as a commune mede, which mede ne may not be discouered frō good folke: For no wight, as by right, from thence-forth that him lacketh goodnesse, ne shall be cleaped good: for which thyng folke of good maners her medes ne forsaken hem neuer mo. For all be it so, that shrewes waren as wood as hem list against good folke, yet neuertheless, the crowne of wise men ne shall not fallen ne faden fro forraine shrewdnesse, ne benummen not fro the courage of good people her proper honour. But if any wight reioyced him of goodnesse, that he had taken fro without, as who saith: if a man had his goodnesse of any other man, than of himselfe: certes, hee that yaue him thilke goodnesse, or els some other wight might bynome it him. But for as muche as to euery wight his proper bountie yeueth him his mede, then at erste shall he faylen of mede, when he forleteth to be good. And at the laste, so as all medes been required, for men wenen that they be good, who is he that nolde deme, that hee that is right mighty of good, were part lesse of mede? And of what mede shall he be reguerdoned? Certes, of right faire mede and right great abouen all medes. Remember thee of thilke noble corallarie that I yaue thee a little here before, and gather it together in this manner. So as God himselfe is blisfulnesse, then is it clere and certaine, that all good people been maked blisfull, for they been good: and thilke people that ben blisful, it accordeth and is conuenable to be Gods. Then is the mede of people such, that no day ne shall empairen it, ne no wickednesse shall drinken it, ne power of no wight ne shall not amenuse it, that is to saine, that ben maked goodes. And sith it is thus, that good men ne faylen neuer more of her mede, certes, no man ne may dout of the vndepartable paine of shrewes, that is to saine, that the paine of shrewes departeth not from hemselfe neuer mo. For so as good and euill, and paine and medes, be contrarie: it mote needs be, that right as we see betiden in guerdon of good, that also mote the paine of the euill aunswere by the contrarie partes to shrewes. Now then, so as bountie and prowesse ben mede to good folke, also is shrewdnesse it selfe tourment to shrewes. Then whosoeuer is entetched and defouled with payne, hee ne doubteth not, that he is entetched and defouled with euill. If shrewes then woilen prayse hemselfe, may it seemen to hem that they beene withouten partie of tourment, sith they been such, that the vttrest wickednesse, that is to say, wicked thewes, which is the vttrest and worst kind of shrewdnesse, ne defouleth ne entetcheth not hem only, but infecteth and enuenimeth greatly. And also looke on shrewes, that ben the contrary partie of good men, how great paine fellowshippeth and fouleth hem: for thou hast learned a little here before, that all thing that is and hath being, is one, and thilke same one is good: then is this the consequence, that it seemeth well, that all thyng that is and hath being, is good, that is to sain as who saith, that being, vnity, and goodnesse, is all one. And in this manner it followeth then, that all thyng that fayleth to be good, it stinteth for to be, and for to haue any manner being: wherefore it is, that shrewes stinten for to be that they weren. But thilke other forme of mankind, that is to saine, the forme of the body without, sheweth ỹ these shrewes weren whilome men, wherefore when they been peruerted and tourned into malice, certes then they haue forlorne the nature of mankinde: But so, as onely bountie and prowesse may enhaunce euery man ouer men: then mote it needs be, that shrewes, which that shrewdnesse hath cast out of the condicion of mankinde, been put vnder the merite and deserte of men. Then betideth it, that if thou seest a wight, which that is transfourmed into vices, thou mayest not wene that he be a man: For if he be ardaunt in auarice, and that he bee a rauenour by violence of forraine richesse, thou shalt sayne that he is like a wolfe. And if he be fellonous, and withouten rest, and exercise his tongue to chidings, thou shalt lyken him to the hound. And if he be a priuie

awaytour hidde, and reioyceth him to rauish by wiles, thou shalt sayne him like to the foule whelpes. And if he be distempred and quaked for ire, men shall wenen that hee beareth the corage of a Lion. And if he be dredefull and flying, & dredeth things which that ne oughten not to be dread, men shall hold him like to the hert. And if he be slow, and astonied and lache, men shall hold him like to an asse. And if he be light and vnstedfast of courage, and chaungeth ape his studies, men shall hold him like to the birds. And if he be plunged in foule and vncleene luxuries, he is withholden in the foule delices of the foule sowe: thenfolloweth it that he that forleteth bountie and prowesse, hee forleteth to bee a man, sith hee ne may not passen in the condicion of God, he is turned into a beast.

Vela Naticij ducis, & vagas pelago rates, Eurus appulit insulæ, pulcra qua residens dea, Solis edita semine, &c.

THrug the wind, arriued the sailes of Ulixes, duke of the countrey of Natice, and his wandering shippes by the see, into the Ile, there as Circes the faire goddesse, doughter of the sunne, dwelleth, that meddleth to her new ghests, drinkes that been touched and maked with enchauntments. And after ỹ her hand, mightie ouer the hearbes, had chaunged her ghestes into diuers manners, that one of hem is couered his face with forme of a Boze, that other is chaunged into a Lyon of the countrey of Marmorike, and his nayles and his teeth woxen. That other of hem is newlych chaunged into a wolfe, and howlyche when he would weep: that other goth debonairly in the house as a Tygre of Inde. But all be it so, that the godhead of Mercurie, that is cleped that bird of Archadia, hath had mercy of the Duke Ulyxes, besieged with diuerse euils, and hath vnbounden him fro the pestilence of his hostesse, algates the rowers and the marriners hadden by this drawen into her mouthes, and dronken the wicked drinkes. They that weren woxen swine, haddē by this chaunged her meat of bread, for to eaten acorne of Okes. None her limmes ne dwelleth with hem whole, but they haue lost the voyce and the bodye, onely her thought dwelleth with hem stable, that weepeth and bewayleth the monstrous chaunging that they suffer-en. O ouer light hand, as who sayth, feeble and light is the hand of Circes the enchaunteresse, that chaungeth the bodies of folke into beasts, to regard and to comparison of mutation, that is maked by vices: ne the hearbes of Circes be not mightie, for all bee it so that they may chaungen the lymmes of the bodie, algate yet they may not change the hearts, for within is yhid the strength and vigour of men in the secretour of her hearts, that is to sayne, the strength of reason: but thilke venimes of vices do drawen a man to hem more mightily than the venime of Circes, for vices ben so cruell, that they pierren and throwe passen the courage within, and thogh they ne annoy not the body, yet vices wooden to destroyen men by wound of thought.

Tu ego fateor, inquam, nec injuria dici video vitiosos, tam & si humani corporis speciem ferunt, &c.

THen saied I thus: I confesse and am aknow it (qd. I) ne I ne see not that men may say, as by right, that shrewes been chaunged into beastes by the qualitie of her soules, all bee it so, that they keepen yet the forme of the bodye of mankinde: but I woulde not of shrewes, of whych, the thought cruell and wood, woodeth alway to the destruction of good men, that it were lefull to hem to done that.

Certes (qd. she) ne it is not lefull to hem, as I shall well shewe the inconuenable place: but natheless, if so were, that thilke that men wene been lefull to shrewes, were benommed hem, so that they ne might not annoien or don harme to good men, certes, a great partie of the paine to shrewes should ben alledged and releued. For all be it so, that it ne seem credible thyng, peraduenture to some folke, that it mote needes be, that the shrewes been more wretches and silly, when they may full done and performe that they couеyten, than if they myght not accomplish that they couеyten. For if so be, that it be wretchednesse to wilnen to done euill, then is it more wretchednesse to mowen done euill, without which mowing, the wretched will should languish without effect. Then sith euery of these thynges hath his wretchednesse, that is to sayne, will to done euill, and mowing to done euill, it mote needs be, that they shrewes be constrayned by her vnselinesses, that wollen and mowen, and performen felonies and shrewdnesse. Boecius. I accord me (qd. I) but I desire greatly, that shrewes losten soone thilke vnselinesse, that is to sayne, that shrewes weren dispoyled of mowing to done euill.

Philo-

Philosophie. So shullen they (qd. she) soner paraduenture then thou woldest, or soner thā they hemselfe wene: for there nys nothing so late in so shorte bondes of this lyfe, that is long to abide namely to a courage immortell. Of which shrewes, the great hope and the hie compassings of shrewdnesse, is oft destroyed by a sodein end, or they be ware. And that thing establisheth to shrewes, the end of her shrewdnes: for if that shrewdnes maketh wretches, then must he needes be most wretch, ꝑ longest is a shrewe: the which wicked shrewes wold I demin aldermoste captifes and vnsely, if her shrewdnes ne were finished at least way by vttereste death, for if I haue concluded sooth of the vnselinesse of shrewdnes, then sheweth it plainly, that thilke wretchednes, is without ende, the which is certaine to be perdurable. Bo. Certes (qd. I) this conclusion is hard and wonderfull to graunt. But I know well that it accordeth moch to thinges that I haue graunted here before. Phil. Thou hast (qd. she) right estimacion of this. But who so euer wene that it be a hard thing, to accord him to a conclusion, it is right that he shew that some of the premisses ben false, or els he mote shewe that the collacion of propositions nis not spedefull to a necessary conclusion. And if it ne be not so, but that the premisses been igraunted, there nis not why he should blame the argument. For this thing ꝑ I shal tel the now, ne shal not seme lasse wōderfull, but of the things that bene taken. Also it is necessary, as who saith, it foloweth of that which that is purposed before. Boec. What is that (qd. I.) Phil. Certes (qd. she) that is ꝑ these wicked shrewes be more blisfull, or els lasse wretches that abien the tourments that they haue deserued, than if no payne of iustice ne chastised hem. Ne this ne say I not now, for that any man might thinke that the maners of shrewes been corriged and chastised by vengeance, and that they be brought to the right way by the drede of tourment ne for that they yeuē to other folkes ensample to flyen fro vices.

But I vnderstand yet in another maner, ꝑ shrewes been more vnsely when they ne be not punished, al be it so that there ne be had no reason or law of correccion, ne none ensample of looking. Boecius. And what maner shall that been (qd. I) other than hath be tolde here before? Ph. Haue we not graunted then (qd. she) that good folke ben blisfull, and shrewes ben wretches? Boec. Yes (qd. I.) Philosop. Then (qd. she) If that any good were added to the wretchednesse of any wight, nys he not more weleful than he that ne hath no medling of good in his solitary wretchednes? Bo. So semeth it (qd. I.) Phil. And what saiest thou then (qd. she) of thilke wretch that lacketh all goodes, so ꝑ no good nys medled in his wretchednesse, and yet ouer all his wickednesse for which he is a wretch, that there be yet another yuel annexed and knit to him, shal not men demen him more vnsely, than thilke wretche, of which the vnselines is releued by the participacion of some good? Boecius. Why should he not (qd. I.) Philos. Than certes (qd. she) han shrewes when they been punished, somewhat of good annexed to hir shrewdnesse, that is to saine, the same paine that they suffren, which that is good, by the reason of Iustice. And when thilke same shrewes escapen without tourment, then haue they somwhat more of yuel yet, ouer the wickednesse that they han doen, that is to saine, default of paines, which default of payne thou hast graunted is yuell, for the deserte of felony. Boecius. I ne may not denie it (qd. I.) Philosophie. Moch more then (qd. she) been shrewes vnsely when they been wrongfully deliuered fro payne, then when they been punished by rightfull vengeaunce. But this is open thing and clere, that it is right that shrewes been punished, and it is wickednesse and wrong that they eschapen vnpunished. Boecius. Who might denie it (qd. I.) Philosop. But (qd. she) may any man deny that al that is right, ne is good? and also the cōtrary, ꝑ all that is wrong ne is wicked? Boec. Certes (qd. I) these things been cleere ynough, and that wee haue concluded a litell here before. But I pray thee that thou tel me, if thou accordest to letten no tourment to the soules, after ꝑ the body is ended by the death, that is to saine: vnderstandest thou aught, that soules haue any tourment after the deth of the body? Philos. Certes (qd she) yea, and that right great, of which soules (qd. she) I trowe that some been tourmēted by asperitee of payne, and some soules I trowe been exercised by a purging meknesse, but my counsaile nys nat to determine of this paynes. But I haue trauayled and tolde yet hyderto, for thou shouldest know that the mowing of shrewes, whiche mowing the seemeth to be vnworthy, nys no mowyng, and eke of shrewes, of which thou playnedest that they ne were not punished, that thou woldest see that they ne weren neuer mo withouten the tourmentes of her wickednesse. And of the lycence of the mowing to doen euill, that thou praydest that it might sone be ended, and that thou wouldest payne lernen that it ne shoulde not longe endure. And that shrewes been more vnsely if they were of lenger duringe, and moste vnsely if they weren perdurable. And after this

I haue ſhewed thee that more vnſely ben ſhrewes, when they eſcapen without her rightfull payne, than when they ben puniſhed by rightfull vengeaunce. And of this ſentence folowth it, that then been ſhrewes conſtrayned at the laſt with moſt greeuous tourment when men weene that they ne be not puniſhed. Boecius. When I cõſider thy reaſons (qd. I) I ne trow nat that men ſaine any thing more verely. And if I tourne ayen to the ſtudies of men, who is he to whome it ſhould ſeeme, that he ne ſhould nat onely leuen theſe things, but eke gladly herken hem. Philoſoph. Certes (qd. ſhe) ſo it is, but men may nat, for they haue their eyen ſo wont to the derkeneſſe of earthly thinges, that they ne may nat lift hem vp to the light of cleare ſoothfaſtneſſe. But they been like to birdes, of which the night lightneth her lookings, and the day blindeth hem. For when men looken not the order of thinges, but her luſtes and talents, they wene that eyther the leue or the mowyng to doen wickednes, or els the eſcaping without payne, be welefull. But conſider the iudgement of the perdurable law, for if thou confirme thy courage to the beſte thinges, thou ne haſt no neede of no iudge, to yeuen thee prize or mede, for thou haſte ioyned thy ſelfe to the moſt excellent thinges. And if thou haue enclined thy ſtudies to the wicked thinges, ne ſeke no forayne wrekerie out of thy ſelfe, for thou thy ſelfe haſt thriſte thy ſelf into wicked things, right as thou mighteſt looken by diuers times, the foule yearth and the heauen, and that al other things, ſtinten fro withouten, ſo ỹ thou were in neither, ne ſee nothing more. Then ſhould it ſeemen to thee, as by only reaſon of loking, that thou were now in the Sterres, now in the yearth, but the people loketh not on theſe things. What then, ſhal we then approch vs to hem that I haue ſhewed, that been like to beaſts? And what wouldeſt thou ſain of this, if that a man had all forlorne his ſight, and had forgeten that he euer ſaw, & wened that nothing fayled him, of perfection of mankind? Now we which mighten ſeene the ſame things, would we not ſaine, that he were blind, ne alſo ne accordeth not the people to that I ſhall ſaine, the which thing is ſuſteyned, by as ſtrong foundements of reaſon, that is to ſaine, That more vnſelie been they, that doen wrongs to other folke, than they that the wrong ſuffren. Boec. I would hearen thilke ſame reaſons (qd. I.) Philoſ. Denieſt thou (qd. ſhe) that all ſhrewes ne been worthie to to haue tourment? Boecius. Nay (qd. I.) Philoſop. But (qd. ſhe) I am certain by many reaſons, that ſhrewes been vnſely. Boecius. It accordeth (qd. I.) Phil. Then ne doubteſt thou not (qd. ſhe) that thilke folke, that been worthy of tourmẽt, that they ne be wretches. Boecius. It accordeth well (qd. I.) Philoſ. If thou were then ſet a Iudge, or a knower of things, whither troweſt thou that men ſhould tourmẽten hem that hath doen wrong, or els hem that ſuffered the wrong? Boecius. I doubte not (qd. I.) that I nolde doe ſufficient ſatiſfaction, to hem that haue ſuffred wrong, by the ſorrow of hem that hath doen wrong. Phil. Then ſemeth it (qd. ſhe) that the doer of wrong, is more wretch than he that ſuffred wrong. Boecius. That followeth well (qd. I.) Philoſophie. Then (qd. ſhe) by theſe cauſes, and by other cauſes, that been enforced by the ſame roote, that filth or ſinne, by the proper nature of it, maketh men wretches: & it ſheweth well, that the wrongs that men doen, nis not the wretchednеſſe of him that receiueth the wrong, but the wretchednеſſe of him that doeth the wrong. But certes (qd. ſhe) theſe Orators or Aduocates, doen all the contrary, for they enforcen hem to commoue the Iudges to haue pitie of hem that doen the greuaunces and the wrongs, the which ſhrewes, it were a more couenable thing, that the accuſours or aduocates, not wroth, but pitous & debonaire, ledden tho ſhrewes that haue doen wrongs, to the iudgemẽt, right as men leden ſicke folke to the Leche, for that they ſhoulden ſeeken out the maladies of ſinne, by tourment. And by this couenant, eyther the entent of aduocates, ſhould ceſſen in all, or els thoffice of the aduocates, would better profiten to men: it ſhould be tourned into the habite of accuſacion, that is to ſaine, they ſhoulden accuſe ſhrewes, and not excuſen hem. And eke the ſhrewes hemſelf, if it were leful to hem, to ſeen at any cliſte, the vertue that they haue forlet-ten, & ſawen that they ſhould putten aboune the filthes of her vices, by the tourments of paines: they ne oughten not, right for that recompenſacion, for to getten hem bountie and proweſſe, which that they haue loſte, demen and holde that the ilke paynes weren tourments to hem, & eke they woulden refuſe the attendaunce of her aduocates, and taken hem ſelfe to her Iudges, and to her accuſours: for ỹ which it betideth, that as to the wiſe folkes, there nis no place ileften to hate, that is to ſaine, that hate ne hath no place emong wiſemen. For no wight will haten good men, but if he were ouermoch a foole: and for to haten ſhrewes, it nis no reaſon, for right as langutſhing is maladie of body, right ſo been vices & ſinne malady of courage, and ſo as we ne deme not that they, which that been ſicke of her bodie, been worthy to been hated but rather

worthy

worthy of pitie. Well more worthy not to been hated, but for to been had in pitie been they, of which the thoughts been constrained by felonous wickednesse, that is more cruell than any languishing of body.

Quid tantos iuuat excitare motus. Et propria fatum sollicitate manu? Si mortem petitis propinquat ipsa sponte sua, volucres nec remoratur equos, &c.

WHat delliteth you to exciten so great mouing of Hatredes, and to hasten and busien the fatal disposicion of your death, with your proper hands, that is to saine, by battailes or conteke? For if yee asken the death, it hasteth him of his owne will, ne death ne tarieth not his swift horse. And the men that the serpents, and the Lion, and the Tigre, and the Bere, and the Bore, seken to slean with their teeth, yet thilke same men seken to slean euerich of hem other with sweard. Loe, for her maners been diuers and discordaunt, they mouen vnrightfull hostes, and cruell battayles, and wilnen to perish by enterchaungyng of dartes, but the reason of crueltie, nys not inough rightfull. Wilt thou then yelden a conenable guerdon, to the deserts of men? Loue rightfully good folkes, & haue pitie on shrewes.

Hinc ego video inquam, quæ sit vel fælicitas vel miseria in ipsis proborum atq; improborum meritis constituta. Sed in hac ipsa fortuna populari, &c.

THis I see (qd. I) eyther what blisfulnesse, or els what vnselines is established in ỹ deserts of good men, and of shrewes. But in this ilke Fortune of the people, I see somewhat of good, and somwhat of euill. For no wiseman had not leauer be exiled poore and needie, and nameless, than for to dwellen in his Citee, & flouren of richesse, & be redoubtable of honour, and strong of power. For in this wise more clearly and witnessfully, is the office of wise mẽ treated, then the blisfulnesse of power, and gouernors, is as it were shad emonges the people, that be neighbors and subiects, sith that namely prison, law, and these other torments of lawfull paines, be rather owed to felonous citizens: for the which felonous citizens, the pains be established, more thẽ for good people.

Boecius. Then I marualle greatly (qd. I) why that the thinges be so misse enterchaunged, that tourments of felonies, pressen & confounden good people, and shrewes raushen medes of vertue, and been in honours, & great estates. And I desire eke for to weten of thee, what semeth thee to be the reason of this so wrongfull a conclusion? For I would wonder well the lasse, if that I trowed that all thinges were medled with fortunous hap. But now crepeth and encreaseth mine astonynges, God gouernour of things, that so as God yeueth oft times to good men, goodes & mirths, and to shrewes, euill and alyre things: And yeueth ayen to good folke hardnesse, and to shrewes he graunteth hem her will, and that they desiren. What difference may there be, betwene that that God doeth, and hap of fortune, if men know not the cause why it is.

Philosophie. Ne it is no maruelle (qd. she) though that men wenen, that there be somewhat foolish and confuse, when the reason of the order is vnknowen: but although that thou ne know not the cause of so great a disposicion, Natheless, for as much as God the good gouernour, attempreth and gouerneth the world, ne doubt thee not, but all things been doen a right.

Si quis Aretum fidera nescit, Mergatque feras æquore flammas. Propinquus summo cardine labi. Cum nimis seleris explicet ortus. Cur legat tardus plaustra Bootes, &c.

WHo so that know not the Sterres Arcture, tourned to the soueraine centure or point, that is to saine, tourned nigh to the Soueraine Pole of the firmament, and wote not why the sterre Bootes passeth, or gathereth his waines, & drencheth his late flambes in the sea, and why that Bootes the Sterre, vnfoldeth his ouerswift arisings, then shall he wondren of the Lawe of the high aire. And eke, if that he ne know not why, that the hornes of the full Moone waxen pale and infect, by the bonds of the darke night, and how the Moone darcke & confuse, discouereth the Sterres, that she had couered by her clere visage.

The common errour moueth folkes, and maketh wearie her basins of Brasse by thilke strokes, that is to say, that there is a maner people, that hight Cozibantes, that wenen, that when the Moone is in the Eclipse, that it be enchaunted, and therfore for to rescue the Moone, they beaten her basins with the ilke strokes. Ne no man ne wondreth when the blastes of the wind Chorus, beaten ỹ strondes of the Sea, by quaking floodes. Ne no man ne wondreth, when the weight of the Snow, harded

harded by the cold, is resolued by the brenning heat of Phebus the Sunne, for here seen men readily the causes. But the causes thid, that is to saine in heauen, troublen the breastes of men. The mouable people, is astonied of all things that commen selde and sodainly in our age, but the troubly errour of our ignoraunce, departeth fro vs, so ẏ if they wisten the cause, why that soche thinges betiden, certes they shoulden cease to seme wonders.

Ita est inquam. Sed cum tui muneris sit latentium rerum causas euoluere, velatasq; caligine explicare rationes: quæso vti hinc decernas, &c.

Thus it is (qd. I) but so as thou haste yeuen or beheight me, to vnwrappe the hidde causes of things, and to discouer me the reasōs couered with darknes, I pray thee, that thou deuise & iudge me of this matter, and that thou do me to vnderstand it, for this miracle of this wonder, troubleth me right greatly. And then she a little what smiling said. Thou clepest me (qd. she) to tell that is greatest of all thinges, ẏ mowen been asked, and to the which question, vnneth there aught inough to lauē it, as who saieth, vnneth is there any thing, to aunswere parfitly to thy question: for the matter of it is soch, that when o doubte is determined and cut away, there waxen other doubts without number, right as the heddes of Idre the Serpent waxen, the which Serpent Hercules slough: ne ther ne were no manere, ne none end, but if a wight constrained the doubts, by a right liuely and quicke fixe of thought, that is to saine, by vigour and strength of wit. For in this matter, men weren wonte to maken questions, of the simplicitie of the purueighaunce of GOD, and of the order of Destinie, and of sodayne happe, and of knowing of predestinacion diuīne, and of the libertie of Freewill: the which thinges, thou thy selfe apperceiuedest well, of what weight they been. But for as moch as the knowings of these things, is a maner porcion or Medicine to thee, all be it so, that I haue little tyme to doen it, yet neuerthelesse, I would enforcen me to shewen somewhat of it: But although the nourishings of ditee of Musike deliteth thee, thou must sufferen and forbearen, a little of the ilke delite, while that I weue to the reasons, knit by order.

Boecius. As it liketh to thee (qd. I) so doe.

Philosophie. Tho spake shee right, as by an other beginning, and sayed right thus: The engendering of all thinges (qd. she) and all the progressions of moueable Nature, and all that moueth in any maner, taketh his causes, his order, and his formes, of the stablenesse of Diuine thought: And the ilke Diuine thought, that is set and put in the Towre, that is to saine, in the height of the simplicitie of God, stablisheth many maner gises, to the things that been to doen, the which maner, when that men looken it, in the pure cleanesse of the Diuine intelligēce, is cleaped purueighaunce.

But when the ilke maner is referred by men, to thinges that it moueth or disponeth, then of old men it was cleaped Destenie, the which things, if that any wight looketh well in his thought, the strength of that one, and of that other, he shall lightly mowe seene, that these two things be diuers. For purueighaunce is the ilke Diuine reason, that is established in the Soueraine Prince of thinges, the which purueighaūce disponeth al things. But certes, Destinie is the disposicion and the ordinaunce, cleauing to moueable thinges, by the which disposiciō, the purueighaunce knitteth all things in her order: For purueighaunce embraseth al things to heape, although they be diuers, and although they be infinite, but destinie certaine, departeth and ordaineth all things singulerly, and deuideth in mouing, in places, in formes, and in tymes, as thus: Let the vnfolding of temporall ordinaunce, assembled and oned in ẏ loking of the Diuine thought, be cleaped purueighaūce, and thilke same assembling and oning, deuided and vnfolden, let that be called Destinie. And all be it so, that these thinges been diuers, yet neuerthelesse, hāged that one on that other, for why, the order destinably, proceedeth of the simplicitie of purueighaunce.

For right as a werkman, perceiueth in his thought, the forme of thing that he wol make, and moueth the effect of the werke, and leadeth ẏ he had looked beforne in his thought, simply and presently by corporall ordinance: certes, right so God in his purueighaunce, disponeth singulerly and stably the things that be to doen, but he administreth in maners, and in diuers times by Destinie, the ilke same thinges that he hath disponed: then whether Destinie be exercised, eyther by some Diuine spirites, seruaunts to the Diuine purueighaunce, or els by some soule, or els by all nature seruing God, or els by the celestiall mouings of Sterres, or els by the vertue of Angels, or els by diuers subtelty of Diuels, or els by any of hem, or els by hem all, the destinable ordinaunce is wouen and accomplished. Certes, it is open thing, that the purueighaunce, is an

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vnmouable & simple forme of things to doen, and the moueable bond, and the temporal ordinaunce of thinges, which that the Diuine simplicity of purueyaunce hath ordayned to doen, that is destinie. For which it is that al things that been put vnder destiny, been certes subiects vnto purueyaunce, to which purueyaunce destiny it selfe is subiect and vnder: but some things been put vnder purueiaunce, that surmounten thordinaūce of destiny: and tho been thilke that stably been fixed nigh to the first godhed, they surmounten the order of destinable mouabilitie. For right as circles turnen about a same centre, or about a poinct, thilke cercle that is innerest or moste within, he ioyneth to the simplesse of the middle, and is as it were a centre or a poinct to that other cercles, that turnen about him: and thilk that is vtterest, compassed by larger enuironning, is vnfolde by larger spaces, in so moch as it is fertherest fro the middelest simplicitie of the poinct. And if there be any thyng that knitteth & felowshippeth himself, to thilke middle poinct, it is constrayned into simplicity, that is to say, into vnmouability, and it cesseth to ben shap; and flit diuerlly. Right so by semblable reason, thilke thing that departeth furtherest, fro the first thought of God, it is vnfolden, and also submitted to greater bondes of destinie, & in so moch is the thing more free and lose fro destinie, as it asketh and holdeth nere to thilke centre of things, that is to saine, to God. And if the thing cleaueth to the stedfastnesse of the thought of God, and be without mouyng, certes it surmounteth the necessitie of destinie. Then sothe cōparison as is skilling to vnderstanding, and of thing that was engendred, to thing that is of time to eternity, and of the cercle to the centre, right so is the order of mouable destinie, to ỹ stable simplicity of purueighaunce. Thilke ordinaunce moueth the heauen and the sterres, and attempreth the elementes togither emong hem selfe, and transformeth hē by enterchaungeable mutacion. And thilke same order reneweth ayen all things growing and falling adoune, by semblable progressions of seedes and of sexus, that is to saine, male & female: and this like order constraineth ỹ fortunes, and the dedes of men, by a bōde of causes, not able to be vnbounden: the which destinable causes, when they passen out fro the beginnynges of vnmouable purueyaunce, it mote needs be that they ne be not mutable, as thus: be the things well gouerned, if that the simplicitie dwellyng in the Diuine thought, sheweth forthe the order of causes, vnable to be bowed: And this order constraineth by the proper stabilitie, the mouable thinges, or els they shoulden flete folilie. For which it is, that things semen confuse, & troubly to vs men, for we ne mowen not consider thilke ordinaunce. Neuertheless, ỹ proper maner of euery thyng dressyng hym to good, disponeth hem all, for there nis nothing dooen for euill, for thilke thing that is doen by wicked folke, nis not doen for euill. The which shrewes, as I haue shewed full plenteously, seke good, but wicked errour mistourneth hem, ne the order cōming fro the poinct of Soueraine good, ne encline th not fro his beginning. But thou maiest say, what vnrest may been a worse confusion, than that good men haue sometime aduersitie, and sometime prosperitie: and shrewes haue now also things that they desiren, and now things that they haten. Whether men liue now in soch holinesse of thought, as who saith be men now so wise, that soch folke as they demen to be good folke or shrewes, that it mote needes be, that folke be soch as they wenen. But in this maner domes of mē discorden, that thilk men that some folke demen worthy of mede, other folke deme hem worthy of turment, but let vs graunt: I suppose that some man may well deeme or know the good people, and the bad, may he then know and see thilke innerest attemperaunce of courage, as it hath be wont to be sayd of bodies, as who saith: may a man speaken of complexions, and attemperaunce of bodies, ne it ne is not, as who saith but it is like a meruaile or a miracle, to hem ỹ ne know it not, why that swete things be conuenable to sum bodies, that been hole, and to sum people bitter things be conuenable: and also why some people been holpen with light medicines, and some people ben holpē with bitter medicines: but natheless tho that knowen the maner, & the temperaunce of heale and of malady, ne marueyleth it nothing. But what other thing seemeth health of courages but bountie, and what other thing seemeth malady of courage but vices? Who is els keper of good, and driuer away of euill, but God the gouernour and leader of thoughts: the which God, whē he hath beholden from the high toure of his purueiaunce, hee knoweth what is conuenable to any wight, and leaneth hem that he wot well ỹ is conuenable to hem. Lo, herof cōmeth & herof is doen this myracle of thorder destinable, when God that all knoweth, doth soch thing, of which thyng, vnknowyng folke been astonied, but for to constrayne, as who saieth, but for to comprehend and tell a fewe thinges of the diuine deepenesse, the which that mans reason may vnderstand. Thilke manne that thou wenest to been right iust, and right keeping of equitie, the contrarie of that seemeth

to the Diuine purueighaunce that all wote. And Lucan my familier telleth, that the victorious cause lyked to the Goddes, & the causes ouercome, liketh to Caton. Then what so euer thou mayest seene, ꝑ is doen in this worlde vnhoped, or els vnknowen, certes, it is the right order of things, but as to thy wicked opiniõ, it is a cõfusion. But I suppose that some man be so welthewed, that the Diuine iudgement, and the iudgemẽt of mankind accorden hem togider of him: but he is so vnstedfast of courage, that if any aduersitie come to him, he woll forleten parauenture to continue innocencie, by the which he ne may not withholdẽ fortune: then the wise dispensacion of GOD spareth him, the which man aduersitie, might empairen, for that God wil not him to trauaile, to whom that trauail nis not conuenable. Another man is parfite in all vertues, and is an holy man, and nigh to GOD, so that the purueighaunce of God would deme, that it were a felony, that he were touched with any aduersities, so that he would not suffre, that soch a mã be with any bodily malady moued. But so (as said the Philosopher) the more excellent is by me layd in great, that vertues haue edified the body of the holy man. And oft time it betideth, that the summe of things, that been to doen is taken to gouerne to good folke, for that the malice habundant of shrewes, should been abated. And God yeueth and departeth to other folke, prosperities & aduersities, medled to heape after the qualitie of her courages, and remordeth some folke by aduersities, for they ne should not waxen proude, by long welfulnesse. And other folke he suffereth to bee trauayled with harde thyngs, for that they should conformen the vertues of courage, by ꝑ exercitacion of vsage of pacience. And other folke dreden more than they oughten, ꝑ which they mighten well bearen, and some dispise that they mowe not beare, & thilke folke God leadeth into experience of hemselfe, by asprе and sorowfull things. And many folke haue bought honourable renome of this worlde, by the pryce of glorious death.

And some men that ne mowe not been ouercomen by tourment, haue yeuen ensample to other folke, that vertue may not been ouercommen by aduersities. And of all these things there nis no doubt, that they ne bẽ doen rightfully and ordeinly, to the parfite good of hem, to whom we seene these thinges betiden. For certes, that aduersities commeth sometime to shrewes, and sometyme that they desiren, it cõmeth of these foresaied causes. And of sorowfull thinges that betiden to shrewes, certes, no man ne wondreth, for all men wene that they haue deserued it, and that they been of wicked merite. Of whiche shrewes, the tourmente agasteth sometyme other to doen felonies: And sometyme it amendeth hem, that suffereth the tourments. And the prosperitie that is yeuen to shrewes, shewеth a great argument to good people, what thing they should demen of thilke welefulnesse, whiche prosperitie men seen ofte serue to shrewes: In which thing, I trowe that GOD dispenseth, for parauenture, the nature of some man is so ouerthrowyng to euill, and so vncouenable, that the needy pouertie of his houshold might rather agreue him to doen felonies, and to the maladie of him, GOD putteth remedie, to yeuen him richesse. And some other man beholdeth his conscience, defouled with sinnes, and maketh comparison of this Fortune, and of himselfe: and dredeth paraduenture, that the blisfulnesse, of which the vsage is ioyfull to him, that the leting of thilke blisfulnesse ne bee not sorowfull to hym, and therefore he would chaunge his maners: and for hee dredeth to lese his Fortune, he forleteth his wickednesse. To other folkes welefulnesse is yeuen vnworthily, the which ouerthroweth hem into destruction, that they han deserued, and to some other folke is yeuẽ power to punishen, for that it shall be cause of continuacion, and exercising to good folkes, & cause of tourment to shrewes.

For so as there nis none aliaunce betweene good folkes and shrewes, ne shrewes ne mowen not accorden emong hemselfe: and why not? For that shrewes discorden of hemselfe by her vices! the which vices, all to renden her consciences, and doen oft tyme thinges, the which things, when they haue doen hem, they deme that tho thinges, ne should not haue be doen, for which thing the soucrain purueiance hath maked oft time myracle: So ꝑ shrewes haue maked shrewes to been good men. For when that some shrewes seene, that they suffre wrongfully felonies of other shrewes, they waxẽ eschauffed into hate of hem that anoied hem, & retournen to the fruict of vertue. Then they studien to be vnlike to hẽ that they haue hated. Certes onely is this the diuine might, to ꝑ which might iuels been then good, when it vseth the iuels conuenably, and draweth out the effect of any good, as who saieth, that iuel is good onely to the might of God, for ꝑ might of God ordeyneth thilke euill to be good: for one order embraceth all things, so that what might departeth from the reason of thilke order that is assigned to him, algates yet he slideth into another order, so ꝑ nothing is lefull to folye, in the realme of diuine purueighaunce,

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ng who sayeth, nothing is without ordinãce, in the realme of diuine purueighãce, sith that the right strong GOD, gouerneth all thinggs in this world, for it is not lefull for mẽ to comprehende by wit, ne vnfolden by worde, all the subtell ordinaunce, and the disposicion of the diuine entent, for onely it ought to suffice, to haue looked that God himselfe, maker of all natures, ordaineth all things to good, while ẏ he hasteth to withhold the thinges, that he hath maked into his semblance, that is to say, for to withholden the things into good, for he hymselfe is good. He chaseth out all iuels fro the bond of his cõminalties, by thorder of the necessitie destinable: for which it followeth, that if thou loke the purueiaunce, ordeyning the thinges, that men wenen be outragious or habundant in perthes, thou shalt not seen in no place, nothyng of iuell. But I see nowe that thou art charged with the weight of the question, and weary with length of my reason, and that thou abidest some sweetnesse of song, take then this draught, & when thou art well refreshed & reiect, thou shalt be more stedfast to stie into higher questions or things.

Si vis celsi iura tonantis. Plura solers cernere mente. Aspice summi culmina cœli.

IF thou wise wolt demẽ in thy pure thought, the rights or ẏ lawes of the gie thonder, that is to saw, of God, looke thou & beholde the heightes of the soueraine heauen: There kepen the Sterres, by rightfull aliaunce of thyngs her old peace: The Sũne inoued by his roddie fire, ne dilourdeth not the colde cercle of the Mone, ne the sterre icleped the Bere, that encline th his rauishing courses, abouten the Soueraine height of this worlde: Ne the same sterre Vrsa, nis neuer mo washen in the deepe Westren sea, ne coueteth not to dien his flames in the sea of the Occian, although it see other Sterres iplonged in the Sea: And Hesperus the Sterre boodeth, and telleth alway the late nights: And Lucifer the Sterre bringeth ayen the cleare day.

And thus maketh loue entechaungeable, the perdurable courses, and thus is dicordable battayle yput out of the countrey of the sterres. This accordaunce attempzeth by cuẽlike maners the Elements, that the moyst things striuing with the drie things, yeuen place by stoundes: And that the colde thinges ioynen hem by fayth to the hote things, and that the light fire, ariseth in to height, and the heauy yearthy auayleth by her weights: by the same causes the flouric yeere yeldeth swete smels: in the first Sommer season warming, and the hote Sommer dryeth the Cornes, & Autumpne commeth ayen of heauy Appels, and the fleeting rayne bedeweth the Winter, this attempzaunce nourisheth and bryngeth forth all things ẏ beareth life in this worlde, and the like same attempzance rauishing, hideth, benimeth, and drencheth vnder the last death all things thorne.

Emong these things sitteth the high maker, King and Lorde, weale and beginnyng, Lawe and wise Iudge, to doen equitee, and gouerneth & encline th the bridell of thyngs: And tho thinges that he sterreth to goen by mouing, he withdraweth and arresteth, and affirmeth the moueable or wandryng thinges. For if that he ne called not ayen the right going of thyngs, and if that he ne constrayned hem not eftsones into roundnesse enclined, the things that been now continued by stable ordinaunce, they should departen from her weale, that is to saine, from her beginning & fallen, that is to saine, tournen into nought. This is the common loue to all things: and all thynges asken to been holden by the fine of good, for elles ne mighten they not fasten, if they ne come not eftsones ayen by loue, retourned to the cause that hath yeuen hem beyng, that is to saine God.

Iam ne igitur vides quid hec omnia quæ diximus consequantur. Quid nam inquit. Omnem inquit, &c.

SEest thou not thẽ, what thing followeth all the things that I haue saied. Boecius. What thing (qd. I.) Philosoph. Certes (qd. she) all vtterly, that all fortune is good. Boecius. And how may that be (qd. I.) Philosophie. Now vnderstand (qd. she.) So as al fortune, whether so it be ioyfull fortune, or aspre fortune, is yeuen eyther bycause of guerdoning, or elles of exercising of good folkes, or els bycause to punishen, or els chastisen shrewes: then is al fortune good, the which fortune is certaine, that it be eyther rightfull or els profitable.

Boecius. Forsothe this is a full very reason (qd. I) and if I consider the purueighaunce and the destinie that thou oughtest me a litle here before, this sentence is sustayned by stedfast reasons. But if it lyke vnto thee, let vs nombren hem emonges the like thinges, of which thou saidest a litle here beforne, that they ne were not able to ben wened to the people. Philosophie. Why so (qd. she.) Boec. For

that the common word of men (qd. I) misuseth this maner speach of fortune, and saine oft tymes, that the fortune of some wight is wicked. Philosophie. Wilt thou then (qd. she) that I approche a little to the words of the people, so that it seme not to hem, that I be ouermoch departed, as fro the vsage of mankinde. Boecius. As thou wolt (qd. I.) Philosoph. Wenest thou not (qd. she) that all thing that profiteth, is good? Boecius. Yes (qd. I.) Philos. Certes all thyng that exerceth or corrigeth, it profiteth. Boecius. I confesse well (qd. I.) Philos. Then is it good (qd. she.) Boec. Why not (qd. I.) Philosophie. But this is the fortune (qd. she) of hem that eyther be put in vertue, and battaylen agaynst aspre things, or els of hem that enclinen, and declinen fro vices, and taken the way of vertue. Boecius. This ne may I not denie (qd. I.) Philosophie. But what sayest thou of the merie fortune, that is yeuen to good people in guerdon, demeth ofte the people that it be wicked?

Boecius. Nay forsoth (qd. I) but they demen as it is soth, that it is right good.

Philosophie. What saiest thou of the other fortune (qd. she) that although ẏ it be aspre, & restraineth the shrewes by rightfull turment, weneth aught the people that it be good?

Boecius. Nay (qd. I.) but the people demeth that it is most wretched of all thinges, that may be thought.

Philosop. Ware now, and looke well (qd. she) least wee in followyng the opinion of the people, haue confessed & cōcluded thing which that is vnable to been wened to the people. Boecius. What is that (qd. I.) Phil. Certes (qd. she) it followeth or cōmeth of things that been graunted, that all fortune what so euer it bee, of hem that been eyther in possession of vertue, or in thencrease of vertue, or els in the purchasing of vertue, that thilke Fortune is good, and that all fortune is right wicked, to hem that dwellē in shreudnesse, as who saith, & thus weneth not the people. Boec. That is soth (qd. I.) Albeit so that no man dare confesse it, ne know it. Philosop. Why so (qd. she). For right as the strong man, ne semeth not to abashen or disdaynen, as oft tyme as he heareth the noyse of the battail: ne also it seemeth not to the wiseman, to bearen it grieuously, as oft as he is ledde into strife of fortune. For bothe to that one man, and eke to that other, the ilke difficultie is the matter, to that one man of encrease of hys glorious renome, and to that other man, to conserue his sapience, that is to say, to the asprenesse of his estate, ☞ For therfore is it called vertue, for that it susteyneth & enforceth by his strengthes, so that it is not ouercommen by aduersities. Ne certes, thou that arte putte in encrease, or in the height of vertue, ne hast not commen to fleten with delices, and for to walken in bodily lust. Thou sowest or plantest a full eigre battayle in thy courage ayenst euery fortune: for that the sorrowfull fortune confounde thee not, ne that the merie Fortune ne corrumpe thee not, occupie the meane by stedfast strengthes. For all that euer is vnder the meane, or all that ouerpasseth the meane, dispiseth welefulnesse as who sayeth, it is vicious, and ne hath no mede of his trauayle, for it is set in your hand, as who sayeth, it lieth in your power, what Fortune you is leuest, that is to saie, good or iuel, for al fortune that semeth sharpe or aspre, if it ne exercise not the good folke, ne chastise the wicked folke, it punisheth.

Bella bis quinis operatus annis. Vltor. Atrides phrigiæruinis, &c.

The werker Atrides ẏ is to sain Agamemnon, that wrought & continued the battayles by ten yeere, recouered and purged in wreking by the distruction of Troie, the loste chambers of Mariage in his brother, that is to say, ẏ Agamēnon wan ayen Heleine, that was Menelaus wife, his brother. In the meane while ẏ thilke Agamemnon, desired to yeuen sayles to the Grekes nauie, & brought ayen the windes by blood: He vnclothed him of pitee of father, and the sorie Priest yeueth in sacrifiyng, the wretched cuttyng of the throte of the doughter: that is to say, that Agamemnon let cut the throte of his doughter by the Priest, to maken aliaunce with his Goddes, and for to haue wind, with which he might wenden to Troy. Itacus, that is to say, Ulixes bewept his fellowes ylorne, ẏ which fellowes, the fiers Poliphemus, liggyng in his great caue, had fretten and dreint in his emptie wombe: But natheles Poliphemus wood for his blind visage yeld to Ulixes ioy, by his sorrowfull teares, that is to say, that Ulixes smote out the iye of Poliphemus, that stoode in the forehead, for which Ulixes had ioy, when he saw Poliphemus wepyng and blind. Hercules is celebrable for his hard trauaile, he daūted the proude Centaurus halfe horse, halfe man, and byraft the dispoiling fro the cruel Lion, that is to say, he slough the Lion, and birafte him his skin. He smote the birdes that hight Arpies, with certain arrowes. He rauished Apples, fro the waking dragon: and his hand was the more heauy, for the golden mettall. He drough Cerberus

berus the hound of hell, by the triple chaynes. He ouercomer, as it is saied, hath put an vnmeke lord, fodder to his cruell horse, that is to say, Hercules slough Diomedes, & made his horse to fretten him: and he Hercules slough Idra the Serpent, and brent the venim. And Achileus the flood defouled in his forehedde, dreint his shamefast vilage in his stroundes, that is to say, that Achileus could transfigure himselfe into diuers likenes, and as he fought with Hercules, at last he tourned him into a Bull, and Hercules brake one of his hornes: & he for shame hid hym in his Riuer. And ouer that, he Hercules, caste adoune Antheus the Giaunt, in the strondes of Libie. And Cacus appeised the wrathes of Euander, that is to say, that Hercules slough the monster Cacus and apeised with that death, the wrath of Euander. And the bristled Bore, marked with vomes, the shoulder of Hercules, the whiche shulders, the hie cercle of heauen should thirst. And the last of his labours was, that he susteined the heauen, vpon his neck vnbowed, and he deserued eftsones, the heauen to be the last ende of trauayle. Goeth now then yee strong men there as the great ensample leadeth you. O nice men, why make ye your backs as who sayeth: O ye slowe and delicate men, why see ye aduersities, & ne fight against hem by vertue, to winnen the mede of heauen: for the mede ouercommen, yeueth the Sterres, that is to saine, that when that yearthly lust is ouercommen, a man is maked worthy to the heauen.

¶ Thus endeth the fourth booke of Boecius, and here followeth the fifth.

Dixerat, orationisque cursum ad alia quedam tractanda atque expedienda vertebat. B. Tum ego, recta quidem inquam, &c.

SHE had saied, and turned the course of her reason, to some other things, to be treated and to be sped. Boecius. Then said I, certes rightfull is thine amonesting, and full digne by auctority. But that thou saidest whilom, that the question of the Diuine pureigh aūce, is enlaced with many other questions, I vnderstand well and proue it, by the same thing. But I aske, if that thou weneſt, that hap bee any thing, in any wayes? and if thou weneſt, that happe be any thing, what is it? Philosophie. Then (qd. she) I haste me to yelden and assoilen, to the debte of my beheſt, & to shewen and open the waie, by which way thou maiest come ayen to thy countrie: but albeit so that the things, which that thou askest, been right profitable to know, yet been they diuers, somwhat fro the path of my purpose, and it is to doubt, that thou ne be maked wearie by misse wayes, so that thou ne maiest not suffice to measure the right way.

Boecius. Ne doubt thee thereof nothing (qd. I,) for to knowen thilke thinges togider, in the which thinges I delite me greatly, that shall been to me in steede of rest, sith it nis not to doubten of the things folowing, when euery thing of thy disputacion, shal hauen ben stedfast to me, by vndoubtous faith.

Philosophie. Then (saied she) that maner woll I doen to thee: and beganne to speaken right thus. Certes (qd. she) if any wight definisse hap in this maner, that is to saine, that hap is betiding ibrought foorthe, by foolishe mouing, and by no knitting of causes, I confirme that hap nys right naught in no wise, and I deeme all vtterly, that happe nys, ne dwelleth but a voyce, as who sayeth, but an idell woorde, without any signification of thynge, committed to that voyce. For what place might been lefte, or dwellyng in follie, and to disordenaunce, sithe that GOD leadeth and constrayneth all thynges by order: for this sentence is very sooth, that nothing hath hys beyng of naughte, to the whiche sentence, none of these olde folke ne withsayed neuer, al be it so, that they ne vnderstanden it not by GOD, Prince and beginner of worlyng, but they casten, as a maner foundement of subiect materiall, that is to saine, of the nature of all reason. And if that any thing is waxen or commen of no causes, then shall it seeme, that thilke thyng is commen or woxen of naught. But if this ne may not bee doen, then is it not possible that happe bee any soothe thing, as I haue definished a litle here beforne.

Boecius. How shall it then bee (qd. I) nis there then nothing, that by right may been cleaped, eyther hap, or els aduenture, or fortune? Or is there ought, al be it so, that it is hid fro the people, to which thing these words been conenable.

Philosophie. Mine Aristotle (qd. she) in the booke of his Philike, diffinisheth this thing by short reason, and nigh to the sothe.

Boecius. In which maner (qd. I.)

Philosophie. As ofte (qd. she) as men doen any thyng for grace of any other thyng, and another thyng than thilke thyng that menne entenden to doen, betideth by some causes, it is icleaped happe: right as a man dalfe the

yearth, bycause of tillyng of the field, and found there a gobet of golde bedoluen, then weneth folke, that it is befall by fortunous betidyng. But forsooth it nis not of naught, for it hath his proper causes, of which causes, the cours vnforeseen and vnware, seemeth to haue maked hap. For if the tiller of the fielde, ne dolue not in the yearth, and if the hider of the golde, ne had hid the gold in that place, the golde ne had not been found. These been then the causes, of the abredgyng of fortuit hap, the which abredgyng of fortuit hap commeth, of causes of encountryng, and flowyng togither to hemselfe, and not by thentencion of the doer. For neyther the hider of the Golde, ne the deluer of the field, ne vnderstanden not, that the gold should haue been found. But as I saied, it betide and ran togither, that he dalfe there as the other had hid the gold. Now may I thus definithe hap. Happe is an vnware betidyng of causes, assembled in things, that been doen for some other thyng. But thilke order procedyng, by an vnescheable betiding togither, which that discendeth from the well of purueighaunce, that ordeyneth all thyngs in her places, and in her times maketh, that the causes renne and assemblen togither.

Rupis Achimeniæ scopulis vbi versa sequentum.
Pectoribus figit spicula, &c.

TIgris and Eufrates, resoluen and spryngen of o welle, in the cragges of the roche of the countrey of Achemenee, there as the fliyng battayles fixen her darts, retourning in the breasts of hem that folowen hem. And sone after the same ruers, Tigris and Eufrates, vnioynen and departen her waters, and if they cõmen togethe, & been assembled, & clapped together into o course, then moten thilke things fleten togider, which that the water of thenterchaunging flood bringeth. The shippes and the stockes araced with the flood moten assemblen, and the waters imedled, wrappeth or emplieth many fortunell happes or maners, the which wandring happes natheleste, thilke declinyng lowneste of the yerth and the flowyng order of the slidyng water gouerneth. Right so fortune, that seemeth as it suffreth with slaked or vngouerned bridles, it suffreth bridles, that is to saine, to been gouerned, and passeth by thilke lawe, that is to saine, by the diuine ordinaunce.

Animaduerto inquam, idque vti tu dicis ita esse, consentio. Sed in hac herentium, &c.

THis vnderstand I well (qd. I) & I accord me that it is right as thou sayest. But I aske if there be any liberty of Free-will, in this order of causes, that cleauen thus togither in hemself? or els I would weten if that the destinall cheyne, constrayneth the mouyng of the courages of men?

Philosophie. Yes (qd. she) there is liberty of free will, ne there ne was neuer no nature of reason, that it ne had liberty or free will. For euery thyng that may naturally vsen reason, it hath dome, by which it deserneth and demeth euery thing. Then knoweth it by it selfe thyngs, that been to flien, and things that been to desiren, and the like thyng that any wight demeth to been desired, that asketh or desireth he, and flieth thilke thing, that he troweth be to flien. Wherefore in all thinges that reason is, in him also is liberty of willing and of nillyng, but I ne ordayne not, as who sayeth, I ne graunt not, that this liberty, be euen like in all thinges. For why, in the Soueraines deuines substaunces, that is to saine, in spirites, iudgement is more clere and will not corrupe, and mighty, ready to speden things that been desired. But the soules of men moten needes been more free, when they looken hem in the speculacion, or loking of the deuine thought, & lasse free when they sliden into the bodies, and yet lasse free whē they ben gathered togither & comprehended in yearthly members, but the last seruage is, when that they been yeuen to vices, and haue fall from the possession of her proper reason. For after that they haue caste away her yen, fro the light of the Soueraine sothfastnesse, to low things and darcke, anone they darcken by the cloude of ignorannce, and be troubled by felonious talents, to the which talentes, when they approchen and assenten, they heapen and encreasen the seruage, which they haue ioyned to hemselfe. And in this maner they been caytiues, fro her proper libertie, the which thyng natheleste, the lookyng of the deuine purueiaunce seeth, that all things beholdeth and seeth fro eterne, & ordeyneth hem eueriche in her merites, as they been predestinate, and it is said in Greke, That all things he seeth, and all things he heareth.

Puro clarum lumine phebum. Mellifui canit oris Homerus, &c.

HOmer with his hony mouth, that is to saine, Homer with the sweet ditees singeth, that the Sunne is cleare by pure light. Natheleste, yet

yet ne may it not by the infirme light of his beames, breaken or percen the inwarde entrailes of the yearth, or els of the Sea. So ne seeth not God maker of the greate worlde, to him that looketh all thyngs from an high, ne vnderstandeth no things by heauinesse of the yearth, ne the night ne withstandeth not to him by the blacke cloudes, Thilke God seeth in o stroke of thought, all things that been, weren, or shull come: and thilke God, for he looketh & seeth all things alone, thou mayst saine that he is the very sonne.

Tum ego: en inquam difficiliori rursus ambiguitate confundor, &c.

Then said I thus, now am I cōfounded, by a more hard doubt than I was. Philos. What doubt is that (qd. she) for certes, I coniect nowe by sothe things, thou art troubled. B. It seemeth (qd. I) to repugnen and to contrary greatly, that GOD knoweth beforne all things, and that there is any freedome or libertie, for if so be that God looketh all things beforne, ne God ne may not been deceyued in no maner. Then mote it needes bee, that all things the which that the purueighaunce of GOD, hath seene beforne to come, for which if that GOD knoweth toforne, not onely the werkes of men, but also her cofisailes and her willes, then ne shall there be no libertie of arbitree, ne certes, there ne may be none other deede, no ne will, but the ilke which that the deuine purueighaunce (that ne may not been deceyued) hath feeled beforne: for if that they mighten wrythen away, in other maner than they been purueighed, then ne should there be no stedfast prescience of thing to commen, but rather an vncertaine opinion, the which thing to trowen to God, I deme it felony and vnlefull. Ne I ne proue not the ilke same reason, as who sayeth, I ne alowe not, or I ne prayse not thilke same reason, by which that some mē wenen, that they mowen assoilen, and vnknitten the knot of this question. For certes they saine, that thing nis not commen, for that the purueighaunce of God, hath seen beforne that it is to commen, but rather the contrary, and that is this, that for that the thinges is to cōmen, that therefore ne may it not been hid fro the purueighaunce of God. And in this maner, this necessitie slideth ayen into the contrarie partie, ne it ne behoueth not needes, that things betiden that been ipurueighed, but it behoueth needs that things that been to commen been ipurueighed, but as it were itrauailed, as who saith, that thilke answere proceedeth right as though men trauailleden or weren busie to enquiren, the which thing is cause of the which things. As whether the prescience is cause of the necessitie of things to commen, or els that the necessitie of thinges to cōmen, is cause of the purueighaunce. But I ne enforce me not now to shewen it, that the betiding of thinges iwiste beforne, is necessarie, how so or in what maner, that ẏ order of causes hath it selfe, although that it ne seeme not, that the prescience bryng in necessitie of betiding, to things to commen. For certes, if that any wight sitteth, it behoueth by necessitie, that the opinion be sooth, of hym that coniecteth that he sitteth: and ayenwarde also is it of the contrary, for if the opinion be soothe of any wight, for that he sitteth, it behoueth by necessitie that he sitte. Then is here necessitie in that one, and in that other: for in that one is necessity of sittyng, and certes in that other is necessity of soth. But therefore ne sitteth not a wight, for that the opinion of the sitting his soth, but the opinion is rather soth, for that a wight sitteth beforne. And thus although that the cause of the sothe, commeth of that other side, as who sayeth, that although the cause of sothe commeth of the sitting, and not of the true opinion, algates yet is there a common necessity in that one, & in that other. Thus semeth it, that I may make semblable skilles, of the purueighaunce of God, and of things to cōmen. For although that for that things been to commen, therefore been they purueighed, and not certes, for they been purueighed, therfore ne betide they not, nathelesse it behoueth by necessity, that either the things to commen, beene ipurueyed of God, or els ẏ the things that been purueighed of God, betiden. And this things onely suffiseth inough, to destroyen the freedome of our arbittre, that is to saine, of our freewill. But certes, now sheweth it well how farre fro the sothe, & how vp so doune is this thing, ẏ we seen that the betidyng of temporall things, is cause of the eterne prescience. But for to wenen that God purueyeth the things to commen, for they ben to commen, what other thing is it but for to wene, that thilke things that betide whilom, been causes of thilke souerain purueighaunce that is in God? And hereto adde I thinges, that right as when that I wote that a thing is, it behoueth by necessitie, that thilke selfe thyng be: and eke when I haue knowen that any thing shall betyden, so behoueth it by necessitie, that thilke same thinges betyde. So followeth it then, that the betidyng of the things iwist beforne, ne may not be eschewed,

and at ꝑ laſt, if that any wight wene a thing to been otherwiſe than it is, it nis not onely vnſcience, but it is deceiueable opinion, full diuers and farre fro the ſothe of ſcience. Wherfore, if any thyng be ſo to commen, that the betidyng of it, ne be not certaine, ne neceſſary, who may weten befoꝛne, that thilke thing is to commen. Foꝛ right as ſcience, ne may not be medled with falſeneſſe, as who ſaieth, that if I wote a thing, it ne may not be falſe that I ne wote it, right of thilke thing, that is conceiued by ſcience, ne may not be none otherwiſe than it is conceiued: foꝛ that is the cauſe why, that Science wanteth leſing, as who ſaieth, why that weting ne receyueth not leſing of that it wote, foꝛ it behoueth by neceſſitie, that euery thing be right, as Science compꝛehendeth it to be. What ſhall I then ſaine, in which maner knoweth God befoꝛne, all the thinges to commen, if they ne be not certain, foꝛ if that he deme that they been to commen vnefchuably, and ſo may be that it is poſſible, that they ne ſhullen not comen, God is deceiued, but not onely to trowen that God is deceyued: but foꝛ to ſpeake it with mouth, it is a felonous ſinne. But if that God wote, that right ſo as things been to commen, ſo ſhullen they commen, ſo that he wote egally, as who ſaith indifferently, that things may be doen oꝛ elſ not idoen. What is thilke pꝛeſcience, that ne compꝛehendeth no certayne thyng ne ſtable, oꝛ elſ what difference is there betweene the pꝛeſcience of thilk tape, wozeby Deuining of Tirie Deuinour, that ſaied: All that I ſay (qd. he) eyther it ſhall be, oꝛ elſ it ſhall not be, oꝛ elſ how moche is wozth the Deuine pꝛeſcience, moꝛe than the opinio of mankind, if ſo be that it demeth the things vncertain, as men doen? Of the which domes of men, the betiding nys not certaine. But if ſo be, that none vncertaine things ne may be ne in him that is right certayne well of all things, then is the betidyng certaine of thilke things which that he hath wiſe befoꝛne, fermely to commen: foꝛ whiche it followeth, that the fredome of the counſailes, and of the werkes of mākind nis none, ſith that the thought of GOD that ſeeth all thyngs, without errour of falſneſſe, bindeth & conſtrayneth hem to a betidyng by neceſſitie. And if this thing be ones igraunted and receiued, this is to ſaine, that there nis no freewill, then ſheweth it well, how great deſtruction & how great domages there folowen of thinggs of mankind, foꝛ in idell been there then purpoſed and behight medes to good folke, & pains to bad folke, ſith that no mouyng of free courage voluntarie, ne hath not deſerued hem, that is to ſaine, neyther mede ne payne. And it ſhould ſeeme then, that thilke thing is alderworſt, which that is now demed foꝛ aldermoſt iuſt, & moſt rightful. That is to ſain, that ibrewes been punibed, oꝛ elſ that good folke be iguerdonned, the which folkes, ſen that her pꝛoper will ne ſent hem to that one, ne to that other, that is to ſaine, neyther to good ne harme, but conſtrayneth hem certain neceſſity of things to comen, then ne ſhullen there neuer ben, ne neuer weren vice ne vertue, but it ſhullen rather be confuſion of all deſertes, medled without diſcreciō. And yet there followeth another inconueniēce, of the which there ne may be thought no moꝛe felonous ne moꝛe wicked, and that is thus, That ſo as the oꝛder of things commeth of the puruciaūce of God, ne that nothing nis lefull to the counſailes of mankind, as who ſaieth, that men haue no power to doen nothing, ne will nothing, then followeth it that our vices been referred to the maker of al good, as who ſaith, then folowety it, that God ought to haue the blame of our vices, ſith he conſtraineth vs by neceſſitie to doen vices: then nis there no reaſon to hopē in God, ne to pꝛayen to God, foꝛ what ſhould any wight hopē to God, oꝛ why ſhould he pꝛayen to God, ſith that the oꝛdenaunce of deſtinie, which that ne may not been enclined, knitteth & ſtreyneth all things that men may deſiren. Then ſhould there be doen away thilke only aliaunce betwene God & man, that is to ſaine, to hopen & to pꝛayē. But by the pꝛice of rightwiſeneſſe, & of very meekeneſſe, we deſeruen the guerdon of Diuine grace, which ꝑ is inestimable, that is to ſay, that is ſo great ꝑ it ne may not been full pꝛaiſed, and this is onely the maner, that is to ſay, hope & pꝛaiers. Foꝛ which it ſeemeth that men woll ſpeake with God, & by reaſon of ſupplication, ben cōioined to thilk clearenes, that nis not appꝛoched no rather than men ſeken it and impetren it. And if men ne wene not the hope ne pꝛayers ne haue no ſtrengthes, by ꝑ neceſſitie of things to comen receiued, what thing is there then, by which we mowen be conioyned, & cleuen to thilke ſoueraine Pꝛince of things. Foꝛ which it behoueth by neceſſitie, that the linage of mankind, as thou ſong a little here befoꝛne, be departed and vnioyned from his wele, and fallen of his beginning, that is to ſaine, God.

Quæ nam diſcors fœdera rerum, Cauſa reſoluit? Quis tanta deus, &c.

WHat diſcoꝛdable cauſe hath to rent and vnioyned the binding oꝛ the aliaunce of things, that is to ſaine, the coniunctions of GOD, and

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of man? Which GOD hath eſtabliſhed ſo great battaile betweene theſe two ſoothfaſte or very thynges that is to ſayne, betweene the purueyaunce of God, and free will, that been ſingular, and deuided, ne that they ne wollen not beene meddled, ne coupled togeder? But there nis no diſcord to the very thynges, but they cleauen alway certaine to hemſelfe. But the thought of man, confounded and ouerthrowne by the darke members of the body, ne may not by fire of his darked looking, that is to ſayne, by the vigour of his inſight, while the ſoule is in the bodie, knowen the thinne ſubtill knittings of things. But wherfore eſchaufeth it ſo by ſo great loue, to finden thilke notes of ſooth yeouered, ẏ is to ſaine, wherefore eſchaufeth the thought of man, by ſo great deſire, to know thilke notifications, that ben thid vnder the couertures of ſooth? Wote it ought thilke things, that it anguiſhous deſireth to knowe? As who ſayth, nay. For no man ne trauayleth for to weten things that he wote. And therefore the text ſayth thus.

But who trauayleth to weten thinges yknowe? And if that he ne knoweth hem not, what ſeeketh thilke blind thought? What is hee that deſireth any thynges, of which hee wote right naught? As who ſaith, who ſo deſireth any things, needs ſomewhat he knoweth of it, or els he ne toud not deſirē it. Or who may follow things, that ne been not iwiſt, and though that he ſeeke the thyngs, where ſhall he find hem? What wight that is all vncunning and ignorant, may knowe that forme, that is ifound.

But when the ſoule beholdeth and ſeeth the high thought, that is to ſayne God, then knoweth it togither the ſumme and ſingularities, that is to ſayne, the principles, and eueriche of hem by himſelfe. But now while the ſoule is hid in the cloud, and in the darkeneſſe of the members of the bodie, it ne hath not all forpeten it ſelfe, but it withholdeth the ſumme of thynges, and leſeth the ſingularities. Then who ſo that ſeeketh ſoothneſſe, he nis in neyther nother habite, for he wote not all, ne hee ne hath not all forpeten, but yet him remembreth the ſumme of thynges, that hee withholdeth, and aſketh counſayle, and retreateth deepeliche thinges iſeene before, that is to ſayne, the great ſumme in his mind, ſo that he mowe adden the partes that hee hath forpeten, to thilke parties that he hath withholden.

Tum illa. Vetus inquit, hæc eſt de prouidentia querela: Marco Tullio, &c.

THen ſaied ſhe, this is (qd. ſhe) the old queſtion of the purueyaunce of God. And Marcus Tullius, whē he deuided the Deuinacions, that is to ſaine, in his bookes that hee wrote of deuinacions, he moued greatly this queſtion, and thou thy ſelfe haſte thought it much, and vtterly and long, but yet ne hath it not been determined, ne iſped fermely and diligently of any of you, and the cauſe of this darkneſſe and of this difficulty is, for that the moning of the reaſon of mankinde ne may not mouen to, that is to ſayne, applien or toynen to the ſimplicitie of the diuine preſcience, the which ſimplicitie of the diuine preſcience, if ẏ men mighten thinken it in any manner, that is to ſayne, that if men mighten thinke and comprehenden the things that God ſeeth himſelfe, then there dwelled vtterly no doubt: the which reaſon and cauſe of difficulties, I ſhall aſſay at laſt to ſhew and to ſpeeden, when I haue firſt iſpended and anſwered to thy reaſons, by which thou art moued, for I aſk why thou weneſt, that thilke reaſons of hem that aſſoilen this queſtiō, ne be not ſpedfull inough ne ſufficient, the which ſolution, or the whych reaſon, for ẏ it deemeth, that the preſcience is not of neceſſity of things to come, as who ſaith any other way than thus, but ẏ the ilk things that the preſcience wote before, ne may not vnbetiden, ẏ is to ſayne, that they moten betide. But then, if that preſcience ne putteth none neceſſitie to thinges to commen, as thou thy ſelfe haſt confeſſed it, & beknow a litle here before, what cauſe, or what is it, as who ſaieth, there may no cauſe be, by which that the ends voluntarie of things, mighten be conſtrayned to certaine betiding. For by grace of poſicion, ſo ẏ thou may the better vnderſtand this that followeth, I ſuppoſe ẏ there ne bee no preſcience: then aſke I (qd. ſhe) in as much as appertayneth to that, ſhoulden then thinges that commen of free will, be conſtrained to betiding by neceſſitie? Boecius. Nay (qd. I.) Philoſo. Then ayenward (qd. ſhe) I ſuppoſe that there be preſcience, but that it ne putteth no neceſſitie to things, that trowe I that thilke ſame freedome of will ſhall dwellen all hole and abſolute, and vnbounden. But thou wilt ſayne, that all be it ſo, that preſcience nis not cauſe of the neceſſity of betiding to things to commen, algates yet it is a ſigne that the thyngs been to betiden by neceſſitie. By this manner then, although that preſcience had neuer be, yet algates or at leaſt way it is a certain thing, that ends of betidings of things to commen, ſhoulden be neceſſary. For euery thing ſheweth and ſignifieth onely what the thing is, but it ne

maketh not the thing that it signifieth. For which it behoueth, first to shew, that nothyng ne betideth, that it ne betideth by necessitie: so that it may appear, that the prescience is signe of necessitie: or els, if there nere no necessitie, certes thilke prescience ne might not bee signe of thyng that nis not. But certes, it is nowe certaine, that the prooue of this, ysusteined by stedfast reason, ne shall not ben lad ne prooued by signes ne by arguments taken fro without, but by causes couenable and necessarie. But thou mayst saine, how may it be, that the thyngs ne betiden not, that been purueyed to comen? But certes, right as we trowen, that the thyngs which that the purueyaunce wote beforne, to commen, ne be not to betiden. But that ne should we not deemen, but rather, although they shall betiden, yet ne haue they no necessitie of her kind to betiden: & this mayest thou lightly apperceyuen by this that I shall saine. For we seene many thynges, when they been beforne our eyen, right as men seene the Carter worching in the tourning, and in the attempring or adressing of his carts or chariots, and by this manner, as who sayth, maiest thou vnderstand of all other werkemen. Is there then any necessitie, as who sayeth, in our looking, that constrayneth or compelleth any of thilke thyngs to been doen so? Boeci. Nay (qd. I) for in idle and in vain were all the effect of craft, if that all thyngs weren moued by cōstrayning of our eyen, or of our sight. Philoso. The things then (qd. she) that when that men doen hem, ne haue no necessitie that men doen hem, eke tho same thyngs first or they be doen, they been to commen without necessitie: for why, there ben some things to betidē, of which the ends and the betidings of hem been absolute and quit of all necessitie. For certes, I ne trowe not ẏ any man would sayne this, that the thyngs that men doen now, that they ne were to betiden first, ere they were doen. And thilk same things, although men hadden wist hem beforne, yet they haue free betidings. For right as science of things present, ne bringeth in no necessitie to things that men doen, right so to the prescience of things to cōmen, ne bringeth in none necessitie to thinges to betiden. But thou mayest sayne, that of thilke same it is doubted, as whether that of thilke thyngs, that ne haue none issues and betidings necessaries, if thereof may ben any prescience. For certes, they seemen to discorden, for thou wenest, that if that things been seene before, that necessitie followeth hem, and if necessitie fayleth hem, they ne might not beene wist before, and ẏ nothing may be cōprehended by science, but certaine. And if tho things ne haue no certaine betidings, be purueighed as certayne, it should be darkenesse of opinion, not soothfastnesse of science. And thou wenest that it bee diners fro the holinesse of science, that any man should deeme a thyng to bee otherwise than it is it selfe: and the cause of this errour is, that of all the thyngs ẏ euery wight hath knowe, they wene ẏ tho thyngs been knowe onely by the strength, and by the nature of the thynges that been wist or knowe, and it is all the contrarie: for all that euer is knowe, it is rather comprehended & know, not after his strength and his nature, but after the facultie, that is to sayne, the power and the nature of hem that knowen. And for that this thyng should now shewe by a short ensample the roundnesse of a bodie, otherwise than the sight of ẏ eye knoweth it, and otherwise than the touching. The looking, by casting of his beams, waiteth and seeth from afarre all the bodie together, without mouing of it selfe, but the touching cleaueth to the round body, and moueth about the enuironning, and comprehendeth the parties by roundnesse, and the man himselfe otherwise beholdeth him, and otherwaies imaginacion, and otherwise reason, and otherwise intelligence: For the wit comprehended withoutforth the figure of the bodie of man, that is vnstablished in the matter subiect. But the imaginacion comprehendeth onely the figure without the matter. Reason surmounteth imaginacion, and comprehendeth by vniuersall looking, the common speech, but the eye of intelligence is higher, for it surmounteth the enuironning of the vniuersitie, and looketh ouer that, by pure subtiltie of thought. The ilke same simple forme of man, that is perdurable, in the deuine thought, in whyche this ought greatly to bee considered, ẏ the highest strengthe for to comprehenden thynges, embraceth and contayneth the lower strength, but the lower strength ne ariseth not in no manner to ẏ higher strength. For wit ne may comprehende nothyng out of matter, ne the imaginacion ne looketh not the vniuersall speces, ne reason ne taketh not the simple forme so as intelligence taketh it. But intelligence, that looketh all abouen, when it hath comprehended the forme, it knoweth and deemeth all the thynges that beene vnder the forme, but she knoweth hem in thilke manner, in whych it comprehendeth thilke same simple forme, that ne may neuer bee knowen of none of that other, that is to say, to none of tho three foresayed strengthes of the soule, for it knoweth the vniuersitie of reason, and the figure of imaginacion, and the sensible materiall conceyued by wit, ne it ne vseth not

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ne of reason, ne of imaginacion, ne of wit withoutforth, but it beholdeth all thyngs, so as I shall say, by a stroke of thought fermely, without discourse of collacion. Certes, reason when it looketh any thing vniuersall, it ne vseth not of imaginacion ne wit, and algates yet it comprehendeth the thynges imaginable and sensible, for reason is shee that definisheth the vniuersall of her conceit, right thus. Man is a reasonable two-footed beast, and how so that this knowing is vniuersall, yet nis there no wight, that ne wote well, ẏ a man is a thyng imaginable and sensible, and this same considereth well reason, but that nis not by imaginacion, nor by wit, but it looketh it by reasonable conceipcion. Also imaginacion, albeit so, that it taketh of wit the beginning, to seene and formen the figures, algates althogh that wit ne were not present, yet it enuironneth and comprehendeth all things sensible, not by reason sensible of deeming, but by reason imaginatife. Seest thou not then, ẏ all the things in knowing, vsen more of her facultie, or of her power, than they doen of the facultie or of power of things that ben to knowen: ne that is no wrong, for so as euery iudgement is, that deed or doing of him that demeth, it behoueth that euery wight performe his werke, and his entencion, not of forraine power, but of his proper power.

Quondam porticus attulit. Obscuros nimium senes, &c.

Then the porch, that is to say, a gate of the towne of Athens, there as Philosophers hadden congregacion to dispute, thilk porch brought sometime olde men full dark in her sentences, that is to say, Philosophers ẏ highten Stoiciens, that wende that Images and sensibilities, that is to say, sensible imaginacions, or els imaginacions of sensible things, were emprinted into soules fro bodies withoutfoorth: as who sayth, thilke Stoiciens wenden, that the soule had be naked of himself, as a mirrour, or a cleane perchemine so that all figures musten first commen fro thynges fro without into soules, and ben emprinted into soules, right as we ben wont sometime by a swift pointen, to fixen letters emprinted in the smoothnesse, or in the plainenesse of the table of waxe, or in the parchemine, that hath no figure ne note in it. Glose. But now argueth Boece agaynst that opinion, and sayth thus. But if the thriuing soule ne vnpliteth nothing, that is to saine, ne doth thing by his proper mouing, but suffreth and lieth subiect to the figures, and to ẏ notes of bodies withoutforth, and yeeldeth Images idle, euill and vaine, in the manner of a mirrour. Whence thriueth then, or whence commeth the ilke knowing in our soule, that discerneth and beholdeth all things, and whence is the ilke strength, that beholdeth the singular things, or els whence is the strength, that deuideth thinges yknowe, and thilke strength that gathered together thynges deuided, and strength that choseth ẏ enterchaunged way: for somtime it heaueth the head, that is to say, that it heaueth vp the entencion to right high things, and sometime it discendeth into right low thyngs, and when it retourneth into himselfe, it reproueth and destroieth ẏ false things by the true things.

Certes, this strength is cause more efficient and much more mightie, to seen and to known things, than thilke cause that suffreth and receiueth the notes and figures, impressed in manner of matter. Algates the passion, that is to say, the sufferaunce or the wit in the quicke bodie, goeth before exciting, and moouing the strengths of the thought, right so as when ẏ clearenesse smiteth the eyen, and moueth hem to seene, or right so as voyce or soune hurleth to the eares, and commoueth hem to hearken, then is the strength of the thought moued and excited, cleapeth forth to semblable mouings, the speces that it halt within it selfe, and addeth the speces of the notes, and to thynges withoutfoorth, and medleth the Images of things withoutforth, to thinges hid within himselfe.

Quod si in corporibus sentiendis quamuis efficiant instrumenta sensuum, &c.

But what is that in bodies to be feeled, that is to say, in the taking: and in the knowing of bodily thynges. And albeit so ẏ the qualities of bodies, that bee obiect fro withoutfoorth, mouen and entalenten the instruments of the wits, and all be it so, that the passion of the bodie, that is to saine, the wit, or the sufferaunce, goeth beforne the strength, or the worching courage, the which passion or sufferaunce, clepeth foorth the deede of the thought in it selfe, and moueth and exciteth in this meane while the formes that resteth withinforth, and in sensible bodies, as I haue said, our courages nis not taught or emprinted, by passion to know these things, but demeth and knoweth of his owne strength the passion or sufferance, subiect to the body: much more thē tho things

been

been absolute, and quicke fro all talents or affections of bodies as God or his Angels, ne followen not in discerning thinges obiect fro without forth, but they accomplishen and speden the deeds of her thought. By this reason thē there commen many maner of knowings, to diuerse and to differing substaunces.

For the wit of the bodie, the which wit is naked, & dispoiled of all other knowing, thilke wit commen to beastes, the which ne mowen not mouen hemselfe here and there, as Oisters and Muskles, and other such shell-fish of the sea, that cleauen and been nourished to rocks: but the imagination commeth of remuable beasts, that seemen to haue talent to flien, or to desiren any thing: But reason is all onely the linage of mankind, right as intelligence is all onely the diuine nature, of which it followeth, that the like knowing is more worth than is either, sens it knoweth by his proper nature, not only his subiect, as who saith, it ne knoweth not all only that appertaineth properly to his knowing, but it knoweth the subiects of all other knowings. But how shall it then be, if that wit and imagination striuen ayen reasoning, and sayne, that of the like vniuersall thing, that reason weneth to seene, that it nis right naught, for wit and imagination sayne, that that is sensible or imaginable, it ne may not been vniuersall.

Then is there either the iudgement of reason sooth, ne that there nis nothing sensible, or els for that reason wote well, þ many thynges ben subiect to wit, and to imagination: then is the conception of reason vaine and false, which that looketh and comprehendeth that that is sensible and singular, as vniuersall. And if that the reason would aunswere ayenst these two, that is to say, to wit and imagination, and say that soothly she her selfe, þ is to sayne, reason, looketh and comprehendeth by reason of vniuersalitie both that that is sensible, and that that is imaginable, and thilke two, that is to saine, wit and imagination, ne mowen not stretchen hemselfe to the knowing of vniuersalitie, for that þ knowing of hem ne may not exceeden ne surmounten þ bodily figures. Certes, of the knowing of things, men oughten rather yeuen more credence, to the more stedfast and to the more perfite iudgement, in this manner striuing, then we þ haue strength of reasoning, and of imagination, and of wit, that is to say, by reason and by imagination, we should rather praise the cause of reason, as who sayeth, than the cause of wit and of imagination. Semblable thing is it, that the reason of mankind ne weneth not, that the diuine intelligence beholdeth or knoweth thyngs to come, but right as the reason of mankind knoweth hem: For thou arguest thus, that if that it ne seeme not to men, that some thinges haue certaine betidings, they ne may not bee wist, before certainly they betiden, and then is there no prescience of thilke things, and if we trow, that prescience be in these things, then is there nothing that betideth by necessitie. But if we might haue the iudgement of þ diuine thoght, as we been parteners of reason, right so as we haue demed, that it behoueth by imagination and wit, & beneath reason, right so would wee deemen, that it were right full thyng, þ mans reason ought to submit it selfe, to bee beneath the diuine thought, for which if wee may, as who sayth, that if we may, I counsail, that we enhaunce vs in the height of thilke soueraigne intelligence, for there shall reason well seene that, þ it ne may not behold in it selfe: & certes, that is thus, in what manner the prescience of God seeth all things, and definisheth, although they haue no certain betidings: ne this is none opinion, but rather the simplicitie of the soueraine science that is not shet within no manner of bounds.

Quam varijs terras animalia permeant figuris. Namque alia extento sunt corpore, &c.

The beasts passen by the earths by full diuers figures, for some of hē haue her bodies straught, and crepen in the dust, & drawn after hem a trace, or a forough cōtinued, that is to say, as Nedders and Snailes: and other beastes, by the wandering lightnesse of her wings, beaten the windes, and ouerswimmen the spaces of the long aire, by most flying.

And other beasts gladden hemselfe to diggen her traces or her steppes in the earth, with her going, or with her feet, and to gone either by the greene fieldes, or els to walken vnder the woods. And all be it so, that thou seest, þ they discorden by diuers formes, algates her faces enclined, heaueth her dull wits, only þ linage of man heaueth highest his high head, & standeth light with his vpright body, & beholdeth the earths vnder him. And but if thou earthly man waxest euill out of thy wit, this figure amonesteth thee that askest the heuen with thy right visage, and hast arcised thy forehead, to bearen vp on high thy courage, so þ thy thoght ne be not heauied, ne put lowe vnder foot, sith that thy body is so high arcised.

Quoniam igitur vti paulo ante monstratum est, omne quod scitur, &c.

There-

Herfore then, as I haue shewed a little here before, that all thing ꝑ it wist, nis not known by his nature proper, but by the nature of hem ꝑ comprehenden it. Let vs looken now, in as much as it is lefull to vs, as who saieth, let vs looken now as we may, which that is the estate of the Diuine substaunce, so that we may well know eke what his science is. To common iudgement of all creatures reasonables, then is, that God is eterne. Let vs consider then what is eternitie, for certes, that shall shewen vs togider the diuine nature, and ꝑ diuine science. Eternitie then is perfit possession, and all together of life interminable, and ꝑ sheweth ꝑ more clearely by the comparison or collacion of temporall thynges.

For al thing that liueth in time, it is present, and proceedeth fro preteritics, into futures, that is to sain, from time passed into time comming: ne there nis nothing established in time that may embracen togither all the space of this life, for certes, yet ne hath it not taken the time of to morrow, and it hath lost that of yesterday. And certes, in the life of this day ye ne liuen no more, but right as in this moouable and transitorie moment. Then thilke thing ꝑ suffereth temporall condicion, although that it neuer began to be, ne though it neuer cease to be (as Aristotle demed of ꝑ woꝛld) and although the life of it bee stretched with infinite of time, yet algates nis it no such thing, as men might trowen by right ꝑ it is eterne. For although that it comprehend and embrace ꝑ space of the life infinite, yet algates ne embraceth it not the space of the life altogither, for it ne hath not the futures that be not yet: Ne it ne hath no lenger the preteritics ꝑ ben done or passed. But thilke thing then, that hath and comprehendeth togider all the plenty of the life interminable, to whom there ne fayleth nought of the future, and to whom there nis nought of the preteritie escaped or passed, thilke same is ꝑwitnessed and prooued by right to ben etern. And it behoueth by necessitie, that thilk thing be alway present to himselfe, and competent: as who sayth, alway present to himselfe, and so mightie, that all be right at his pleasaunce, and that he haue all present the infinite of the mouable time. Wherefore some men trowen wrongfully, that when they heren that it seemed to Plato, that this woꝛld had neuer beginning of time, that it neuer shall haue fayling: they wene in thilke manner, ꝑ this woꝛld be maked etern, with his maker, as who saith they wene that this woꝛld and God be maked together eterne. And that is a wrongfull weening, for other thing it is to bee lad by the life interminable, as Plato graunted to ꝑ woꝛld, and other thing it is to embrace togither all the presence of the life that is interminable, which thing is clere and manifest to the diuine thought. Ne it ne should not seeme to vs, that God is elder than things that been maked by quantitie of time, but rather by the proprietie of his simple nature. For this like infinit mouings of temporall things, followeth this presentarie estate of this life immouable, and so, as it ne may not counterfeten ne faine it, ne be euenlike to it for the immobilitie, ꝑ is to say, that is in the eternitie of G O D, it faileth and faileth into mooning fro the simplicitie of the presence of God, and disencreaseth in the infinit quantitie of future and preteritie. And so as it may not haue togider all the plentie of ꝑ life, algates yet for as much as it ceaseth neuer for to ben in some manner, yet it seemeth somedele to vs, that it followeth and resembleth thilke thing, that it ne may not attaine to, nor fulfillen, and bindeth it selfe to some manner presence of this litle moment: the which presence of this litle and swift moment for ꝑ it beareth a manner image of likenesse of the aye dwelling of God, it graunteth to such manner thynges, as it betideth to, ꝑ it semeth hem as these thynges haue ben, and ben. And for that the presence of such litle moment ne may not dwell, therfore it rauished and tooke the infinite way of time, that is to say, by succession, and by this manere it is done, for that it should continue the life in going, of the which life it ne might not embrace the plentie of dwelling. And for thy, if we wollen put woꝛthie names to things that followen Plato, let vs say then soothly, that God is eterne, and that the woꝛld is perpetuell. Then sith euery iudgement knoweth & comprehendeth by his own nature, things ꝑ been subiect vnto him, there is to God alwayes an eterne and a presentarie estate. And the science of him that ouerpasseth all temporall moment, dwelleth in simplicitie of his presence, and embraceth and considereth all the infinite spaces of times preteritics, and of times futures. And looketh in his simple knowing all thynges of preteritie, right as they weren ydone presently right now. If thou wolt then thinken and aduise the prescience, by whych it knoweth all thynges, thou ne shalt not deemen it as prescience of things to commen, but thou shalt deemen more rightfully that is science of presence or of instance, that neuer ne fayleth, for whych it nis not yeleped prouidence, but it should rather been cleaped purueyaunce, which is established full ferre fro right low things, and beholdeth from aferre all thynges, right as it

were

were fro the hie height of thynges. Why asketh thou then, or why disputest thou then, that thilke thynges been done by necessitie, whyche that been pseene and yknowen by the diuine sight? such that forsooth men ne maken nat thilke thynges necessarie, which that they seene been ydone in her sight, for addeth thy beholding any necessitie to thilke thynges whych thou beholdest present? Bo. Nay (qd. I.) Phi. Certes (qd. she) then, if men mighten maken any digne comparison or collacion of the presence diuine, and of the presence of mankinde, right so as ye seene some thynges in this temporall presence, right so seeth God all thing by his eterne presence. Wherfore this diuine prescience ne chaungeth not the nature of the proprietie of thynges, but beholdeth such thynges present to him ward, as they shoulden betiden to you ward in time to commen. Ne it ne confoundeth not the iudgement of things, but by one sight of his thought, he knoweth ỹ thynges to commen, as well necessary as not necessary. Right so when ye seene together a man walke on the earth, and the sunne arisen in the heuen, all be it so, that ye seene all together that one and that other: yet neuertheless wee deemen and discernen, that that one is voluntary, and that other is necessary: Right so then the diuine looking, beholding all things vnder him, ne troubleth nat the qualitie of thynges that been certainly present to him ward, but as to the condicion of time, forsooth they ben future, for which it followeth, that this nis none opinió, but rather a stedfast knowing ystrengthed by soothnesse, that when that God knoweth any thing to be, he ne vnwote nat ỹ thilk thing wanteth necessitie to be, this is to sayne, that when ỹ God knoweth any thing to betide, hee wote wel that it ne hath no necessity to betide. And if thou seist here, that thilke thyng that God seeth to betide, it ne may nat vnbetide as who sayeth it mote betide, and thilke thynge that ne may nat vnbetide, it mote betiden by necessity, and that thou streinest me to this name of the necessitie: Certes I will well confessen and beknowen a thing of full sad trouth, but vnneth shall there any wight now seene it, or come thereto, but if that he be beholder of the diuine thought, for I will answere thee thus, That thilke thing that is future, when it is referred to the diuine knowing, then it is necessarie. But certes, when it is vnderstanden in his owne kind, men seene it vtterly free and absolute fro all necessities. For certes there ben two manners of necessities, that one necessitie is simple, that it behoueth by necessitie, that all men be mortall or deadly: another necessity is condicioneil, as thus, if thou wost that a man walketh, it behoueth by necessitie ỹ he walke, thilke thing then that any wight hath know to be, it ne may nat be none otherwise than he knoweth it to be. But this condicion ne draweth not with her thilke necessitie simple, for certes this necessitie condicioneil, the proper nature of it ne maketh it nat but the adiection of the condicion maketh it. For no necessitie ne constrayneth a man to gone, ỹ goth by his proper will, all be it so, that when he goth, that is necessary that he gothe. Right on this same manner then, if that the purueyaunce of God seeth any thyng present, then mote thilk thing been by necessitie, although that it ne haue no necessitie of his owne nature. But certes, the futures that betiden by freedome of arbitrie, GOD seeth hem all togider present. These thynges then if they been referred to the diuine sight, then been they maked necessarie by the condicion of the diuine knowing. But certes, if thilke thynges been considered by hemselfe, they been absolute of necessitie, and ne forleten not, ne ceasen not of the libertie of her owne nature. Then certes, without doubt, all the thynges shullen been done, which ỹ God wote beforne, that they ben to commen and betiden of free arbitrie, or of free will, that all be it so that they betiden, yet algates ne lese they not her proper nature in being, by the which, first or they weren doen, they hadden power not to haue betidde. Boecius. What is this to sayne then (qd. I) that thynges ne be not necessary by her proper nature, so that they commen in all her manners in the likenesse of necessitie, by condicion of the diuine science? Philosophie. This is ỹ difference (qd. she) that tho thynges, which that I purposed thee a litle here beforn, that is to same, Sunne arising, and the man walking, that there whiles that thilke thynges been done, they ne might not ben vndone: Natheless, that one of hem or it was done, but not that other. Right so it is here, ỹ the thynges which ỹ God hath present, withouten doubt they shullen been, but some of hem discendeth of the nature of thynges, as the sunne arising, and some discendeth of the power of ỹ doers, as the man walking. Boecius. Then sayed I no wrong, that if these thynges bee referred to the diuine knowing, then been they necessarie, and if they been considered by hemself, then beene they absolute fro the bonde of necessitie. Right so as all things that appereth or sheweth to the wits, if thou referre hem to reason, it is vniuersall, and if thou looke it or referre it to it selfe, then is it singular. But now if thou saist thus, that if that it be in my power to chaungen my purpose, then shall I voiden the purueyaunce of God, when peraduenture I shall

haue

haue chaunged the things which that he knoweth before.

Philoso. Then shall I answeren thee thus: Certes, thou maist well chaunge thy purpose, but for as much as the present soothnesse of the diuine purueiaunce beholdeth that thou maist chaunge thy purpose, & whether thou chaunge it or no, and whiderward that thou tourne it, thou ne maist not eschew the diuine prescience, right so thou ne maiest not flid the sight of the present eye, although that thou tourn thy selfe by thy free will into diuers actions. But thou mayest sayne ayen to this, thus: Howe shall it then be, shal not the diuine science ben chaunge by my disposicion, when that I will one thyng now, and now another thing? And thilk prescience ne seemeth it not to enterchãge stounds of knowing, as who saith, ne shall it not semen to vs, that the diuine prescience enterchaungeth his diuers stounds of knowing, so that it know sometime one thyng, and sometime it knoweth the contrarie of that thing?

Phil. No forsooth (qd. she) for ỹ diuine sight renneth before and seeth all the futures, and clepeth hem ayen, and retourneth hem to the proper prescience of his proper knowing, ne he enterchãgeth not, so as thou weenest, ỹ stounds of his forme knowing, as nowe this, nowe that: but he dwelling aye commeth before, and embraceth at o stroke all the mutacions. And this prescience to cõprehenden & to seen all things, God ne hath not taken it of the betidings of things to cõmen, but of his proper simplicitie. And hereby is assoiled thilke things that thou puttest a little here before, ỹ is to sayne, that it is vnworthy thing to saine, that our futures yeuẽ cause of the prescience of God. For certes, strength of the diuine science, which that embraceth al things by his presentary knowing, establisheth manner to all thynges, and it ne oweth not to latter things. And sith that these things ben thus, that is to sain, ỹ necessitie is not in things by the diuine prescience, then is there freedome of arbitrie, ỹ dwelleth hole and vnwemmed to mortal mẽ, ne the laws ne purposen not wicked medes and pains to the willings of men, ỹ ben vnbounden and quite of all necessity: And God beholder & forewetere of all things dwelleth aboue, & the present eternitie of sight renneth alway with the diuers quality of our deeds, dispensing or ordeining medes to good men, & tourments to wicked men. Ne in idle ne in vaine ne been there not put in God hope & prayers, ỹ ne mowen not been vnspeedful, ne without effect, when they ben rightfull. Withstand thẽ and eschew thou vices, worship and loue thou vertues, areise thy courage to rightfull hopes, yeeld thou humble prayers and high. Great necessitie of prowesse and of vertue is encharged and commaunded to you, if yee nill not dissimulen, sith that ye worchen and done, that is to saine, your deeds and your werks before the eyen of the iudge, that seeth and also that demeth all thyngs. Deo gracias.

¶ Thus endeth the booke of Boecius of the consolation of Philosophie.

The Booke commonly entituled, Chaucers *Dreame*.

By the person of a mourning Knight sitting vnder an Oke, is meant Iohn of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, greatly lamenting the death of one whom hee entirely loued, supposed to bee Blanch the Ducheſſe.

I Haue great woonder by this light,
Howe I liue, for day ne night
I may not sleepe welnigh nought,
I haue so many an idle thought,
Purely for default of sleepe,
That by my trouth I take no keepe
Of nothing, how it commeth or gothe,
To me nis nothing lefe nor lothe,
All is yliche good to me,
Joy or sorrow, where so it be:
For I haue feeling in nothing,
But as it were a maſed thing,
All day in point to fall adoun,
For sorrowfull imaginatioun
Is alway wholly in my mind.
And well ye wote, against kind
It were to liuen in this wise,
For nature would not suffise
To none earthy creature,
Not long time to endure
Without sleepe, and be in sorrow:
And I ne may ne night ne morrow
Sleepe, and this melancolie
And dreede I haue for to die,
Defaut of sleepe and heauinesse
Hath slaine my spirit of quickenesse,
That I haue lost all lustyhead,
Such fantasies ben in mine head,

So I not what is best to do:
But men might aske me why so
I may not sleepe, and what me is.
But natheleſſe, who aske this,
Leseth his asking truly,
My seluen cannot tell why
The sooth, but truly as I gesse,
I hold it be a sickenesse
That I haue suffred this eight yere,
And yet my boot is neuer the nere:
For there is phisicien but one,
That may me heale, but that is done:
Passe we ouer vntill eft,
That will not be, mote needs be left,
Our first matter is good to keepe.
So when I saw I might not sleepe,
Now of late this other night
Upon my bed I sate vpright,
And bade one reach me a booke,
A Romaunce, and it me tooke
To rede, and driue the night away:
For me thought it better play,
Than either at Chesse or Tables.
And in this booke were written fables,
That Clerkes had in old time,
And other Poets put in rime,
To rede, and for to be in mind,
While men loued the law of kind.
This booke spake but of such things,
Of queenes liues, and of kings,
And many other things smale.
Among all this I found a tale,
That me thought a wonder thing.
This was the tale: There was a king
That hight Seies, and had a wife,
The best that might beare life,
And this queene hight Alcione.
So it befell, thereafter soone
This king will wenden ouer see:
To tellen shortly, when that he
Was in the see, thus in this wise,
Such a tempest gan to rise,
That brake her mast, and made it fall,
And clefte her ship, and dreint hem all,
That neuer was found, as it tels,
Bord, ne man, ne nothing els.
Right thus this king Seies lost his life.
Now for to speake of Alcione his wife,
This lady that was left at home,
Hath wonder, that the king ne come
Home, for it was a long terme:
Anon her hart began to yerne,
And for that her thought euermo
It was not wele, her thought so,
She longed so after the king,
That certes it were a pitous thing
To tell her heartely sorrowfull life,
That she had, this noble wife,
For him alas she loued alderbest,
Anon she sent both east and west
To seeke him, but they found him nought.
Alas (qd. she) that I was wrought,
Whether my lord my loue be dead,
Certes I will neuer eat bread,
I make a vow to my God here,
But I mowe of my lord here.
Such sorrow this lady to her tooke,
That truly I that made this booke,
Had such pitie and such routh
To rede her sorrow, that by my trouth
I farde the worse all the morrow
After, to thinken on her sorrow.
So when this lady could here no word,
That no man might find her lord,
Full oft she swowned, and said alas,
For sorrow full nigh wood she was,
Ne she could no rede but one,
But downe on knees she sate anone,
And wept, that pitie was to here.
A mercy sweet lady dere
(Qd. she) to Juno her goddesse,
Helpe me out of this distresse,
And yeue me grace my lord to see
Soone, or wete where so he bee,
Or how he fareth, or in what wise,
And I shall make you sacrifice,
And holly yours become I shall,
With good will, body, hart, and all,
And but thou wolt this, lady swete,
Send me grace to sleepe and mete
In my sleepe some certaine sweuen,
Where through that I may know euen
Whether my lord be quicke or dead.
With that word she bing downe the head,
And fell in a swowne, as cold as stone,
Her women caught her vp anone,
And brought her in bed all naked,
And she forweped and forwaked,
Was weary, and thus the dead sleepe
Fell on her, or she tooke keepe,
Through Juno, that had heard her boone,
That made her to sleepe soone,
For as she praide, right so was done
Indeed, for Juno right anone
Called thus her messengere
To do her erraund, and he come nere,
When he was come, she bad him thus.
Go bet (qd. Juno) to Morpheus,
Thou knowest him well, the god of sleepe,
Now vnderstand well, and take keepe,
Say thus on my halfe, that hee
Go fast into the great see,
And bid him that on all thing
He take vp Seis body the king,
That lieth full pale and nothing rody,
Bid him creepe into the body,

And do it gone to Alcione
The queene, there she lieth alone,
And shew her shortly, it is no nay,
How it was dreint this other day,
And do the body speake right so,
Right as it was wonted to do,
The whiles that it was aliue,
Go now fast, and hye thee bliue.
This messenger tooke leue and went
Upon his way, and neuer he stent
Till he came to the darke valley,
That stant betweene rockes two y,
There neuer yet grew corne ne gras,
Ne tree, ne naught that ought was,
Beast ne man, ne nought els,
Saue that there were a few wels
Came renning fro the cliffes adowne,
That made a deadly sleeping sowne,
And rennen downe right by a caue,
That was vnder a rocke ygraue,
Amid the valley wonder deepe,
There these gods lay asleepe,
Morpheus and Eclympasteire,
That was the god of sleepes heire,
That slept, and did none other werke.
This caue was also as derke
As hell pitte, ouer all about,
They had good leyser for to rout,
To dye who might sleepe best,
Some lying her chin vpon her brest,
And slept vpright her head yhed,
And some lay naked in her bed,
And slept whiles their daies last.
This messanger come renning fast,
And cried ho, ho, awake anone,
It was for naught, there heard him none,
Awake (qd. he) who lieth there,
And blew his horne right in her eare,
And cried awaketh wonder hye.
This god of sleepe, with his one eye
Cast vp, and asked who clepeth there,
It am I (qd. this messengere)
Iune bade thou shouldest gone,
And told him what he should done,
As I haue told you here before,
It is no need rehearse it more,
And went his way when he had saide:
Anone this god of slepe abraide
Out of his sleepe, and gan to go,
And did as he had bidde him do,
Tooke vp the dead body soone,
And bare it forth to Alcione
His wife the queene, there as she lay,
Right euen a quarter before day,
And stood right at her beds fete,
And called her right as she hete
By name, and said: My sweet wife
Awake, let be your sorrowfull life,
For in your sorrow there lyeth no rede,
For certes sweet lone I am but dede,
Ye shall me neuer on liue yse.
But good sweet hart looke that yee
Bury my body, for such a tide
Ye mowe it find the see beside,
And farewell swete, my worlds blisse,
I pray God your sorrow lisse,
Too little while our blisse lasteth.
With that her eyen vp she casteth,
And saw naught: alas (qd. she) for sorrow,
And died within the third morrow.
But what she said more in that swowe,
I may nat tell it you as now,
It were too long for to dwell,
My first matere I will you tell,
Wherefore I haue told this thing,
Of Alcione, and Seis the king.
For thus much dare I say wele,
I had be doluen euerydele,
And dead, right through defaut of sleepe,
If I ne had red, and take kepe
Of this tale next before,
And I will tell you wherfore,
For I ne might for bote ne bale
Sleepe, or I had redde this tale
Of this dreint Seis the king,
And of the gods of sleeping.
When I had red this tale wele,
And ouerlooked it euerydele,
Me thought wonder if it were so,
For I had neuer heard speake or tho
Of no gods, that could make
Men to sleepe, ne for to wake,
And I ne knew neuer God but one,
And in my game I said anone,
And yet me list right euill to play,
Rather than that I should dey
Through defaut of sleeping thus,
I would giue thilke Morpheus,
Or that goddesse dame Iuno,
Or some wight els, I ne rought who,
To make me slepe, and haue some rest,
I will giue him the aldther best
Pelt, that euer he abode his liue,
And here onward, right now as bliue,
If he will make me sleepe alite,
Of downe of pure Doues white,
I will yeue him a featherbed,
Raied with gold, and right well cled,
In fine blacke Sattin doutremere,
And many a pillow, and euery bere,
Of cloth of raines to slepe on soft,
Him thare not need to turne oft,
And I will yeue him all that falls
To his chamber and to his hals,
I will do paint with pure gold,
And tapite hem full manyfold,

Of one lute this shall he haue,
If I wist where were his caue,
If he can make me sleepe soone,
As did the goddesse, queene Alcione,
And thus this ilke god Morpheus
May win of me mo fees thus
Than euer he wan: and to Juno,
That is his goddesse, I shall so do,
I trowe that she shall hold her paid.
I had vnneth that word ysaid,
Right thus as I haue told you,
That suddainly I nist how,
Such a lust anone me tooke
To sleepe, that right vpon my booke
I fell asleepe, and therewith euen
Me mette so inly such a sweuen,
So wonderfull, that neuer yet
I trowe no man had the wit
To conne well my sweuen rede.
No, not Joseph without drede,
Of Egypt, he that rad so,
The king meting Pharao,
No more than could the least of vs.
Ne nat scarcely Macrobeus,
He that wrote all the auision
That he met of king Scipion,
The noble man the African,
Such meruailes fortuned than,
I trowe arede my dreames euen,
Lo thus it was, this was my sweuen.
Me thought thus, that it was May,
And in the dawning there I lay,
Me met thus in my bed all naked,
And looked forth for I was waked,
With smale foules a great hepe,
That had afraied me out of my slepe,
Through noise and sweetnesse of her song,
And as me met, they sate among
Upon my chamber roofe without
Upon the tyles ouer all about,
And euerich song in his wise
The most solemne seruise
By note that euer man I trow
Had heard, for some of hem song low,
Some high, and all of one accord,
To tell shortly at o word,
Was neuer heard so sweet steuen,
But it had be a thing of heuen,
So merry a sowne, so sweet entunes,
That certes for the towne of Tewnes
I nolde, but I had heard hem sing,
For all my chamber gan to ring,
Through singing of her ermonie,
For instrument nor melodie
Was no where heard, yet halfe so swete,
Nor of accord halfe so mete,
For there was none of hem that fained
To sing, for ech of hem him pained
To find out many craftie notes,
They ne spared nat her throtes,
And sooth to saine, my chamber was
Full well depainted, and with glas
Were all the windowes well yglased
Full clere, and nat an hole ycrased,
That to behold it was great ioy,
For holly all the story of Troy
Was in the glasing ywrought thus,
Of Hector, and of king Priamus,
Of Achilles, and of king Laomedon,
And eke of Medea, and of Jason,
Of Paris, Helene, and of Lauine.
And all the walls with colours fine
Were paint, both text and glose,
And all the Romaunt of the Rose,
My windowes weren shit echone,
And through the glasse the sunne shone
Upon my bed with bright bemes,
With many glad guldy stremes,
And eke the welkin was so faire,
Blew, bright, clere was the aire,
And full attempre, for sooth it was,
For neyther too cold ne hote it nas,
Ne in all the welkin was no cloud.
And as I lay thus wonder loud,
Me thought I heard an hunt blow
Tassay his great horne, and for to know
Whether it was clere, or horse of sowne.
And I heard going both vp and downe
Men, horse, hounds, and other thing,
And all men speake of hunting,
How they would slee the hart with strength,
And how the hart had vpon length
So much enbosed, I not now what.
Anon right when I heard that,
How that they would on hunting gone,
I was right glad, and vp anone
Tooke my horse, and forth I went
Out of chamber, I neuer stent
Till I come to the field without,
There ouertooke I a great rout
Of hunters, and eke of forresters,
And many relaies and limers,
And highed hem to the forrest fast,
And I with hem, so at the last
I asked one lad, a lymere,
Say fellow, who shall hunt here
(Qd. I) and he answered ayen,
Sir, the Emperour Octouyen
(Qd. he) and is here fast by.
A gods halfe in good time (qd. I)
Go we fast, and gan to ride,
When we come to the forrest side,
Euery man did right soone,
As to hunting fell to done.
The maister hunt, anone fote hote
With his horne blew three mote

At the vncoupling of his houndis,
Within a while the hart found is
Ihallowed, and rechased fast
Long time, and so at the last
This hart roused and stale away
Fro all the hounds a preuie way.
The hounds had ouershot him all,
And were vpon a default yfall,
Therewith the hunt wonder fast
Blew a forloyn at the last,
I was go walked fro my tree,
And as I went, there came by me
A whelpe, that fawned me as I stood,
That had yfollowed, and could no good,
It came and crept to me as low,
Right as it had me yknow,
Held downe his head, and ioyned his eares,
And laid all smooth downe his heares.
I would haue caught it anone,
It fled, and was fro me gone,
As I him followed, and it forth went
Downe by a floury greene it went
Full thicke of grasse, full soft and sweet,
With floures fele faire vnder feet,
And little vsed, it seemed thus,
For both Flora, and Zepherus,
They two, that make floures grow,
Had made her dwelling there I trow,
For it was on to behold,
As though the earth enuy wold
To be gayer than the heuen,
To haue mo floures such seuen,
As in the welken sterres be,
It had forget the pouerte
Of winter, through his cold morrowes
That made it suffer, and his sorrowes
All was forpeten, and that was seene,
For all the wood was woxen greene,
Sweetnesse of dewe had made it waxe.
It is no need eke for to axe
Where there were many greene greues
Or thicke of trees, so full of leues,
And euery tree stood by himselue
Fro other, well temme foot or twelue,
So great trees, so huge of strength,
Of forty or fiftie fadome length,
Cleane without bowe or sticke,
With crops brode, and eke as thicke,
They were not an inch asunder,
That it was shadde ouer all vnder,
And many an hart and many an hind
Was both before me and behind,
Of fawnes, sowers, buckes, does,
Was full the wood, and many roes,
And many squirreles, that sete
Full high vpon the trees and ete,
And in her manner made feasts:
Shortly, it was so full of beasts,
That though Argus the noble countour
Sate to reckon in his countour,
And reckon with his figures ten,
For by tho figures newe all ken,
If they be craftie, reckon and number,
And tell of euery thing the number,
Yet should he faile to reckon euen
The wonders me met in my sweuen:
But forth I romed right wonder fast
Downe the wood, so at the last
I was ware of a man in blacke,
That sate, and had yturned his backe
To an Oke, an huge tree:
Lord thought I, who may that bee,
What eyleth him to sitten here,
Anon right I went nere,
Then found I sitte, euen vpright,
A wonder welfaring knight,
By the manner me thought so,
Of good mokell, and right yong thereto,
Of the age of foure and twentie yere,
Upon his beard but little heere,
And he was clothed all in blacke,
I stalked euen vnto his backe,
And there I stood as still as ought,
The sooth to say, he saw me nought,
For why, he hing his head adowne,
And with a deadly sorrowfull sowne,
He made of rime ten verses or twelue,
Of a complaint to himselue,
The most pitie, the most routh
That euer I heard, for by trouth
It was great wonder that nature
Might suffer any creature
To haue such sorrow, and he not ded:
Full pitous pale, and nothing red,
He said a lay, a manner song,
Without note, without song,
And was this, for full well I can
Rehearse it, right thus it began.
I haue of sorrow so great wone,
That ioy get I neuer none,
Now that I see my lady bright,
Which I haue loued with all my might,
Is fro me dead, and is agone,
And thus in sorrow left me alone,
Alas death, what eyleth thee,
That thou noldest haue taken me,
When that thou tooke my lady swete,
Of all goodnesse she had none mete,
That was so faire, so fresh, so free,
So good, that men may well see.
When he had made thus his complaint,
His sorrowfull hart gan fast faint,
And his spirits woxen dead,
The blood was fled for pure dread
Downe to his hart, to maken him warme,
For well it feeled the heart had harme,

To wete eke why it was adrad
By kind, and for to make it glad,
For it is member principall
Of the body, and that made all
His hew chaunge, and wexe greene
And pale, for there no blood is seene
In no maner limme of his.
Anon therewith, when I saw this,
He farde this cuill there he sete,
I went and stood right at his fete,
And grette him, but he spake nought,
But argued with his owne thought,
And in his wit disputed fast,
Why, and how his life might last,
Him thought his sorrowes were so smert,
And lay so cold vpon his heart.
So through his sorrow and holy thought,
Made him that he heard me nought,
For he had welnigh lost his mind,
Though Dan, that men cleped god of kind,
Were for his sorrowes neuer so wroth.
But at the last, to saine right sooth,
He was ware of me, how I stood
Before him, and did off my hood,
And had ygret him, as I best coud
Debonairly, and nothing loud,
He said, I pray thee be not wroth,
I heard thee not, to saine the sooth,
Ne I saw thee not, sir truly.
Ah good sir, no force (qd. I)
I am right sorry, if I haue ought
Distroubled you out of your thought,
Forgeue me, if I haue misse take.
Yes thamends is light to make
(Qd. he) for there lithe none thereto,
There is nothing misdaide, nor do.
Lo how goodly spake this knight,
As it had be another wight,
And made it neyther tough ne queint,
And I saw that, and gan me acqueint
With him, and found him so tretable,
Right wonder skilfull and reasonable,
As me thought, for all his bale,
Anon right I gan find a tale
To him, to looke where I might ought
Haue more knowledging of his thought.
Sir (qd. I) this game is done,
I hold that this hart be gone,
These hunts can him no where see.
I do no force thereof (qd. he)
My thought is thereon neuer adele,
By our Lord (qd. I) I trow you wele,
Right so me thinketh by your chere,
But sir, o thing woll ye here,
Me thinketh in great sorrow I you see,
But certes sir, if that ye
Would aught discure me your wo,
I would, as wise God helpe me so,
Amend it, if I can or may,
Ye mowe proue it by assay,
For by my trouth, to make you hole,
I woll do all my power whole,
And telleth me of your sorrowes smart,
Paraunter it may ease your hart,
That semeth full sicke vnder your side.
With that he looked on me aside,
As who saith nay, that will not be.
Graunt mercy good friend (qd. he)
I thanke thee, that thou wouldest so,
But it may neuer the rather be do,
No man may my sorrow glade,
That maketh my hew to fall and fade,
And hath mine vnderstanding lorne,
That me is wo that I was borne,
Nay nought make my sorrowes slide,
Not all the remedies of Ouide,
Ne Orpheus, god of melodie,
Ne Dedalus, with his playes slie,
Ne heale me may no Phisicien,
Nought Ipocras, ne Galien,
Me is wo that I liue houres twelue,
But who so woll assay hemselue,
Whether his hert can haue pite
Of any sorrow, let him see me,
I wretch, that death hath made all naked
Of all the blisse that euer was maked,
I wroth, werst of all wights,
That hate my dayes, and my nights,
My life, my lustes, be me loth,
For all fare and I be wroth,
The pure death is so full my fo,
That I would die, it will not so,
For when I follow it, it will flie,
I would haue him, it nill not me,
This is paine without reed,
Alway dying, and be not deed,
That Tesiphus that lieth in hell,
May not of more sorrow tell,
And who so wist all, by my trouth,
My sorrow, but he had routh
And pitie of my sorrowes smart,
That man hath a fiendly hart:
For who so seeth me first on morrow,
May saine he hath mette with sorrow,
For I am sorrow, and sorrow is I,
Alas, and I will tell thee why,
My sorrow is tourned to plaining,
And all my laughter to weeping,
My glad thoughts to heauinesse,
In trauaile is mine idlenesse,
And eke my rest, my wele is wo,
My good is harme, and euermo
In wrath is tourned my playing,
And my delite into sorrowing,
Mine heale is tourned into sicknesse,
In drede is all my likernesse,

To derke is turned all my light,
My witte is holy, my day is night.
My loue is hate, my slepe waking,
My mirth and meales is fasting,
My countenaunce is nicete,
And all abawed, where so I be,
My peace pleding, and in werre
Alas, how might I fare werre.
My boldnesse is turned to shame,
For false fortune hath played a game
At the chesse with me, alas the while,
The trapteresse false and full of gyle,
That al behoteth, and nothing halte,
She gothe vpright, and yet she halte,
That baggeth foule, and loketh fayre,
The dispitous debonaire,
That scorneth many a creature,
An ydole of false purtraiture
Is she, for she woll sone wryen
She is the monstres heed vwryen,
As filth, ouer strowed with floures,
Her most worship and her floures
To lyen for that is her nature,
Without faith, lawe, or mesure
She false is, and euer laughing
With one eye, and that other weping,
That is brought vp, she set al downe:
I liken her to the Scorpiowne,
That is a false flattering beest,
For with his head he maketh feest,
But all amid his flatering,
With his taile he will sting
And enuenim, so will she:
She is the enuious charite,
That is aye false, and semeth wele,
So turneth she her false whele
About, for it is nothing stable,
Now by the fire, now at table,
Full many one hath she thus ybrent,
She is play of enchauntement,
That seemeth one, and is not so
The false theke, what hath she do,
Trowest thou, by our Lord I will thee say,
At the Chesse with me she gan to play,
With her false draughtes full diuers
She stale on me, and toke my fers,
And when I sawe my fers away,
Alas I couth no lenger play,
But said farewell sweet ywis,
And farewel all that euer there is:
There with fortune said, checke here,
And mate in the mid point of the checkere,
With a paune errant, alas,
Full craftier to play she was,
Than Athalus that made the game
First of the Chesse, so was is name:
But God wolde I had ones or twise,
I conde, and know the ieoperdise,
That coude the Greke Pythagores,
I shulde haue plaide the bet at ches,
And kept my fers the bet thereby,
And though whereto, for trewly
I holde that wilbe not worthe a tire,
It had be neuer the bet for me,
For fortune can so many a wyle,
There be but fewe can her begile,
And eke she is the lasse to blame,
My selfe I wolde haue do the same,
Before God, had I been as she,
She ought the more excused be,
For this I say yet more thereto,
Had I be God, and might haue do
My will, when she my fers caught,
I wolde haue drawe the same draught:
For also wise, God giue me reste,
I dare well swere, she toke the best,
But through that draught I haue lorne
My blisse, alas that I was borne,
For euermore I trowe trewly,
For all my will, my lust wholly
Is turne, but ye, what to done
By our Lorde it is to die sone:
For nothing I leaue it nought,
But liue and die, right in this thought,
For there nys planet in firmament,
Ne in ayre ne in erth none element,
That they ne yeue me a yeft echone,
Of weping when I am alone:
For when that I auise me wele,
And bethinke me euerydele,
How that there lieth in reckening,
In my sorrow for nothing,
And how there liueth no gladnesse
May glad me of my distresse,
And how I haue lost sufficiaunce
And thereto I haue no pleasaunce:
Then may I say, I haue right nought,
And when al this falleth in my thought,
Alas, than am I ouercome,
For that is done, is not come
I haue more sorrow than Tantale.
And I herde him tell this tale
Thus pitously, as I you tell
Unneth might I lenger dwell:
It did mine herte so much wo.
A good sir (qd. I) lay nat so,
Haue some pite on your nature,
That fourmed you creature,
Remembreth you of Socrates,
For he counted not three strees
Of nought that fortune coude do.
No (qd. I) I can not so,
Why good sir, yes parde (qd. I)
Ne say not so for truely,
Though ye had lost the feerses twelue
And ye for sorrow murdred your selue,

He should be dampned in this caas,
By as good right as Medea was,
That slough her children for Jason,
And Phillis also for Demophon
Hing her selfe, so welaway,
For he had broke his tearme day
To come to her: Another rage
Had Dido, the queene eke of Cartage,
That slough her selfe, for Eneas
Was false, which a foole she was:
And Ecquo died, for Narcissus
Nolde nat loue her, and right thus
Hath many another folly done,
And for Dalida died Sampsone,
That slough himselfe with a pillere,
But there is no man aliue here
Would for her feeres make this wo.
Why so (qd. he) it is not so,
Thou wotest full little what thou menest,
I haue lost more than thou wenest:
How may that be (qd. I)
Good sir, tell me all holly,
In what wise, how, and wherefore,
That ye haue thus your blisse lore?
Blithely (qd. he) come sit doun,
I tell thee vpon a condition,
That thou shalt holly with all thy wit
Doe thine entent to hearken it.
Yes sir: Swere thy trouth thereto,
Gladly do then hold here to,
I shall right blithely, so God me saue,
Holly with all the wit I haue,
Here you as well as I can:
A goddes halfe (qd. he) and began.
Sir (qd. he) sith first I couth
Haue any manner wit fro youth,
Or kindely vnderstanding,
To comprehend in any thing
What loue was, in mine owne wit,
Dredelesse I haue euer yet
Be tributarie, and yeue rent
To loue holly, with good entent,
And through pleasaunce become his thrall,
With good will, body, hart, and all,
All this I put in his seruage,
As to my lord, and did homage,
And full deuoutly I praide him tho,
He should beset mine heart so,
That it pleasaunce to him were,
And worship to my lady dere.
And this was long, and many a yere
(Ere that mine hart was set o where)
That I did thus, and nist why,
I trowe it came me kindely,
Paraunter I was thereto most able,
As a white wall, or a table,
For it is ready to catch and take
All that men will therein make,
Whether so men will portrey or paint,
Be the werkes neuer so quaint.
And thilke time I fared right so,
I was able to haue learned tho,
And to haue conde as well or better
Paraunter either art or letter,
But for loue came first in my thought,
Therefore I forgate it naught,
I chees loue to my first craft,
Therefore it is with me laft,
For why, I tooke it of so yong age,
That malice had my courage
Not that time turned to nothing,
Through too mokell knowledging,
For that time youth my maistresse
Gouerned me in idlenesse,
For it was in my first youth,
And tho full little good I couth,
For all my werkes were flitting
That time, and all my thought varying,
All were to me pliche good,
That knew I tho, but thus it stood.
It happed that I came on a day
Into a place, there that I sey
Truly the fairest companie
Of ladies, that euer man with eie
Had seene togither in o place,
Shall I clepe it hap, either grace,
That brought me there, not but fortune,
That is to lien full commune,
The false traitoresse peruerse,
God would I could clepe her werse,
For now she worcheth me full wo,
And I woll tell soone why so.
Amongs these ladies thus echone,
Sooth to saine, I saw one
That was like none of the rout,
For I dare swere, without dout,
That as the sunnes sunne bright
Is fairer, clerer, and hath more light
Than any other planet in heuen,
The moone, or the sterres seuen,
For all the world so had she
Surmounted hem all of beaute,
Of maner, and comlinesse,
Of stature, and of well set gladnesse,
Of goodly heed, and so wel besey,
Shortly what shall I more sey,
By God and by his holowes twelue,
It was my swete, right all her selue,
She had so stedfast countenaunce,
So noble porte, and maintenaunce:
And Loue, that well harde my bone,
Had espied my thus sone,
That she full soone in my thought,
As helpe me God so was I cought,
So sodainly, that I ne toke
No maner counsaile, but at her loke,

And at mine herte, for why her eyen
So gladly I trowe mine herte seyne,
That purely tho, mine owne thought,
Said, it were better serue her for nought,
Than with another to be wele,
And it was soth, for euery dele,
I will anone right tell thee why.
I sawe her daunce so comely,
Carol and sing so swetely,
Laught, and play so womanly,
And looke so debonairly,
So goodly spoke and so freendly:
That certes I trowe that euermore,
Nas sene so blisfull a tresore:
For euery heer on her heed,
Sothe to say it was not reed,
Ne neither yelowe ne browne it nas,
Me thought most like gold it was,
And which eyen my lady had,
Debonaire, good, glad, and sad,
Simple, of good mokel, not to wide,
There to her loke nas not aside,
Ne ouerwhart, but beset so wele,
It drewe and tooke vp euerydele
All that on her gan beholde,
Her eyen semed anone she wold
Haue mercy, folly wenden so,
But it was neuer the rather do,
It nas no counterfeted thing,
It was her owne pure loking:
That the Goddesse dame Nature,
Had made hem open by measure,
And close, for were she neuer so glad,
Her loking was not folish spread,
Ne wildely, though that she plaid,
But euer me thought her eyen said,
By God my wrath is al forgeue.
Therewith her list so well to liue,
That dulnesse was of her adrad,
She nas to sobre ne to glad,
In all things more measure,
Had neuer I trowe creature,
But many one with her loke she herte,
And that sate her full litel at herte:
For she knew nothing of her thought,
But whether she knew or knew it nought,
Algate she ne rought of hem a stree,
To get her loue no nere nas he
That woned at home, than he in Inde,
The formest was alway behinde,
But good folke ouer all other,
She loued, as man may his brother,
Of which loue she was wonder large,
In skilfull places that bere charge,
But which a visage had she thereto,
Alas my herte is wonder wo,
That I ne can discriuen it,
Me lacketh both English and wit.
For to vndo it at the full,
And eke my spirites bene so dull
So great a thing for to deuise,
I haue not wit that can suffise
To comprehend her beaute,
But thus much I dare saine, that she
Was white, rody, fresh, and likely hewed,
And euery dale her beaute newed,
And nigh her face was alderbest,
For certes nature had soch lest,
To make that faire, that truly she
Was her chiefe patron of beaute,
And chiefe ensample of all her werke:
And monstre, for be it neuer so derke,
Me thinketh I see her euer mo,
And yet more ouer, though all tho
That euer liued, were now a liue,
Ne would haue found to discriue
In al her face, a wicked signe,
For it was sad, simple, and benigne.
And soch a goodly swete speech,
Had that swete, my liues lech,
So frendely, and so well ygrounded
Upon all reason, so well ifounded,
And so tretable to all good,
That I dare swere well by the rood,
Of eloquence was neuer fonde,
So swete a sowning facounde,
Ne trewer tonged, ne scorned lasse,
Ne bet coude heale, that by the masse,
I durst swcare though the Pope it songe,
That there was neuer yet through her tonge,
Man ne woman greatly harmid,
As for her, was all harme hid:
Ne lasse flattering in her worde,
That purely her simple recorde,
Was found as trewe as any bond,
Or trouth of any mans hond.
Ne chide she could neuer a dele,
That knoweth all the world ful wele.
But such a faireneslle of a necke,
Had that swete, that bone nor breeke
Nas there none seen, that misse satte,
It was white, smoth, streight, a pure flatte,
Without hole, or canel bone,
And by seming, she had none.
Her throte, as I haue now memoire,
Semed as a round toure of puoire,
Of good greatnesse, and not to grete,
And faire white she hete,
That was my Ladies name right,
She was thereto faire and bright,
She had not her name wrong,
Right faire shoulders, and body long
She had, and armes euer lith
Fattish fleshly, nat great therewith,
Right white hands, and nailes rede,
Round brestes, and of good brede

Her lippes were a streight flatte backe,
I knew on her none other lacke,
That all her limmes were pure sewing,
In as ferre as I had knowing,
Thereto she could so well play
What that her list, that I dare say
That was like to tozch bright,
That euery man may take of light
Enough, and it hath neuer the lesse
Of maner and of comelinesse.
Right so farde my lady dere,
Foz euery wight of her manere
Moght catche ynough, if that he wold
Yt he had eyen her to behold,
Foz I dare sweare well, if that she
Had among tenne thousand be,
She wolde haue be at the beste,
A cheke myzrour of all the feste,
Though they had stonde in a rowe,
To mens eyen, that could haue knowe,
Foz where so men had plaide oz waked,
Me thought the felowship as naked
Without her, that I saw ones,
As a crowne without stones,
Trewly she was to mine eye,
The solein Fenix of Arabie,
Foz there liueth neuer but one,
Ne such as she, ne know I none:
To speake of goodnesse, trewly she
Had as moch debonairte,
As euer had Hester in the Bible,
And moze, if moze were possible,
And soth to sayne, therewithall
She had a witte so generall,
So whole enclined to all good,
That al her witte was sette by the wood,
Without malice, vpon gladnesse,
And thereto I sawe neuer yet a lesse
Harmefull, then she was in doyng,
I say not that she ne had knowyng,
What harme was, oz els she
Had could no good, so thinketh me,
And trewly, foz to speake of trouth,
But she had had, it had be routh
Thereof she had so moch her dele,
And I dare saine, and sweare it wele,
That trouth himselfe, ouer al and al,
Had chose his maner pzincipall
In her, that was his resting place,
Thereto she had the most grace,
To haue stedfast perseueraunce,
And ease attempze gouernaunce,
That euer I knew, oz wist yet,
So pure sufficiaunt was her wit,
And reason gladly she vnderstood,
It folowed wel, she could good,
She vsed gladly to do wele,
These were her maners euery dele.

Therewith she loued so wel right,
She wzong do would to no wight,
No wight might do her no shame,
She loued so wel her owne name.
Her lust to hold no wight in hond,
Ne be thou suer, she wold not fond,
To holde no wight in balaunce,
By halfe wozde, ne by countenaunce,
But if men wold vpon her lye,
Ne sende men into Walakie,
To Pzuise, and to Tartarie,
To Alisaundzie, ne into Turkie,
And bidde him fast, anon that he,
Go hoodlesse into the dzie see,
And come home by the Carrenare,
And sir, be now right ware.
That I may of you here saine,
Wozship, oz that ye come againe.
She ne vsed no soch knackes smale,
But therfoze that I tell my tale,
Right on this same I haue said,
Was wholly all my loue laid,
Foz certes she was that swete wife,
My sufficiaunce, my, lust, my life,
Mine hope, mine heale, and all blesse,
My wozlds welfare, and nie goddesse,
And I wholy hers, and euery dele.
By our Lozde (qd. I) I trowe you wele,
Hardly, your loue was wel beset,
I not how it might haue do bet.
Bet, ne not so wel (qd he)
I trowe sir (qd I) parde.
Nay leue it wel: Sir so do I,
I leue you well, that trewly
You thought that she was the best,
And to behold, the alderfairest,
Who so had loked her with your eyen?
With mine, nay all that her seyen,
Said and swoze it was so,
And though they ne had, I would tho
Haue loued best my lady free,
Though I had had al the beaute,
That euer had Alcibiades,
And al the strength of Hercules,
And thereto had the wozthinesse
Of Alisaunder, and al the richesse
That euer was in Babiloine,
In Cartage, oz in Macedoine,
Oz in Rome, oz in Niniue,
And thereto also hardy be,
As was Hectoz, so haue I ioy,
That Achilles slough at Troy,
And therefoze was he slayne also
In a temple, foz both two
Were slaine, he and Antilegius,
And so saith Dares Fregius,
Foz loue of Polixena,
Oz ben as wise as Minerua,

I would euer, without drede
Haue loued her, for I must nede.
Nede? Nay trewly I gabbe now,
Nought nede, and I woll tellen how,
For of good will mine herte it wold,
And eke to loue her, I was holde,
As for the fayrest and the best,
She was as good, so haue I rest,
As euer was Penelope of Greece,
Or as the noble wife Lucrece,
That was the best, he telleth thus
The Romane Titus Liuius,
She was as good, and nothing like,
Though her stories be autentike,
Algate she was as trewe as she.
But wherefore that I tell thee,
When I first my lady sey,
I was right yong, soth to sey,
And full great need I had to lerne,
When mine herte wolde yerne,
To loue it was a great empryse,
But as my wit wolde best suffise,
After my yong childely wit,
Without drede I beset it,
To loue her in my best wise
To do her worship, and the seruise
That I coude tho, by my trouth
Without faining, cypher slouth.
For wonder faine I wolde her see,
So mokell it amended mee,
That when I sawe her amorowe,
I was warished of all my sorowe,
Of all day after, till it were eue,
Me thought nothing might me greue,
Were my sorowes neuer so smert,
And yet she sit so in mine herte,
That by my trouth, I nold nought
For all this world, out of my thought
Leaue my Lady, no trewly.
Now by my trouth sir (qd. I)
Me thinketh ye haue such a chaunce,
As shrift, without repentaunce.
Repentaunce, nay fie (qd. he)
Shuld I now repent me
To loue, nay certes then were I well
Worse than was Achitofell,
Or Antenor, so haue I ioy,
The traitour that betrayed Troy:
Or the false Ganelion,
Me that purchased the traison
Of Rouland, and of Oliuere:
Nay, while I am a liue here,
I nil forgyet her neuer mo.
Now good sir (qd. I) tho,
Ye haue well told me here before,
It is no need to reherse it more,
How ye saw her first, and where,
But would ye tell me the manere,
To her, which was your first speech,
Thereof I would you beseech,
And how she knew first your thought,
Whether ye loued her, or nought,
And telleth me eke, what ye haue lore,
I herde you tell here before,
Ye said, thou notest what thou meanest,
I haue lost more than thou weenest,
What losse is that (qd. I tho)
Nil she not loue you, is it so?
Or haue ye ought done amis,
That she hath lefte you is it this?
For Goddes loue tell me all.
Before God (qd. he) and I shall,
I say right as I haue said,
On her was all my loue laid,
And yet she nist it not neuer a dele,
Not longe time, leue it wele,
For be right siker, I durst nought
For all this world tell her my thought,
Ne I wolde haue wrathed her trewly,
For wost thou why, she was lady
Of the body that had the herte,
And who so hath that, may not asterte.
But for to keepe me from ydelnesse,
Trewly I did my businesse
To make songes, as I best coude,
And oft time I song hem loude,
And made songes, this a great dele,
Although I coude nat make so wele
Songes, ne knew the arte al,
As coude Lamekes son, Tubal,
That found out first the arte of songe,
For as his brothers hamers ronge
Upon his anuelt vp and downe,
Thereof he toke the first sownе.
But Grekes saine of Pithagoras,
That he the first finder was
Of the arte, Auroza telleth so,
But thereof no force of hem two,
Algates songes thus I made,
Of my feling, mine herte to glade:
And lo, this was al ther first,
I not where it were the werst.
Lore it maketh mine herte light,
When I thinke on that sweet wight,
That is so semely one to se,
And wish to God it might so be
That she wold hold me for her knight,
My lady, that is so fayre and bright.
Now haue I told thee, soth to say,
My first song: vpon a day,
I bethought me what wo
And sorowe that I suffred tho,
For her, and yet she wist it nought,
Ne tell her durst I not my thought:
Alas thought I, I can no rede,
And but I tell her, I am but dede,

And if I tel her, to say right soth
I am a dradde she wol be wroth,
Alas, what shall I then do.
In this debate I was so wo,
Me thought mine hert brast a twaine,
So at the last, for the for to saine,
I bethought me that Nature,
Ne formed neuer in creature,
So much beautie trewly
And bountie, without mercy.
In hope of that, my tale I tolde,
Which sorowe, as that I neuer sholde,
For nedes and maugre mine heed
I must haue tolde her, or be deed:
I not well how that I began,
Full yuell reherce it I can,
And eke as helpe me God withall,
I trow it was in the dismall,
That was the ten woundes of Egipt,
For many a word I ouerskipt
In my tale for pure fere,
Lest my wordes misse set were,
With sorowfull hert, and woundes dede,
Sokte and quaking for pure drede,
And shame, and stinting in my tale,
For ferde, and mine hewe al pale,
Full oft I wexte both pale and reed,
Bowing to her I hing the heed,
I durst not ones loke her on,
For wit, maner, and all was gone,
I said: mercy, and no more,
It nas no game, it sate me sore.
So at the last, soth to saine,
Whan that mine harte was come againe,
To tell shortly all my speech,
With hole harte I gan her beseech
That she wolde be my lady swete
And swore, and hertely gan her hete,
Euer to be stedfast and trewe,
And loue her alway freshly newe,
And neuer other Lady haue,
And all her worshipe for to saue,
As I best coude, I swore her this,
For yours is all that euer there is,
For euermore, mine hert swete,
And neuer to false you, but I mete
I nyl, as wise God helpe me so.
And when I had my tale ydo,
God wote she acompted not a stre
Of all my tale, so thought me,
To tell shortly, right as it is
Trewly her answere it was this,
I can not now well countrefete
Her wordes, but this was the grete
Of her answere, she said nay
All utterly, alas that day,
The sorow I suffred and the wo,
That trewly Cassandra that so
Bewayled the distruction,
Of Troy, and of Ilyon,
Had neuer soch sorow as I tho,
I durst no more say thereto,
For pure feare, but stale away,
And thus I liued full many a day,
That trewly I had no need,
Ferther than my beddes heed,
Neuer a day to seche sorow,
I found it ready euery morow,
For why, I loued her in no gere.
So it befell another yere,
I thought ones I would fonde,
To doe her know, and understonde
My wo, and she well understood,
That I ne wilned thing but good,
And worshipe, and to keepe her name,
Ouer all things, and drede her shame,
And was so busie her to serue,
And pitie were I should sterue,
Sith that I wilned no harme iwis.
So when my Lady knew all this,
My Ladie paue me all holly,
The noble yeft of her mercy,
Sauing her worshipe by alwaies,
Dredelesse, I mene none other waies,
And therewith she paue me a ring,
I trowe it was the first thing,
But if mine harte was iware
Glad, that it is no need to aske.
As helpe me God, I was as blithe
Raised, as fro death to liue,
Of all happes the alderbest,
The gladdest, and the most at rest,
For truely that swete wight,
When I had wrong, and she the right,
She would alway so goodly
Forgeue me so debonairly,
In all my youth, in all chaunce,
She tooke in her gouernaunce,
Therewith she was alway so true,
Our ioy was euer iliche newe,
Our hertes werne so euen a paire,
That neuer nas that one contraire
To that other, for no wo
For soth iliche they suffred tho.
O blisse, and eke o sorow bothe,
Iliche they were both glad and wrothe,
All was vs one, without were,
And thus we liued full many a yere,
So well, I can not tell how.
Sir (qd. I) where is she now?
Now (qd. he) and stinte anone,
Therewith he wexe as dedde as stone,
And saied, alas that I was boze,
That was the losse, that here before
I tolde thee that I had lorne.
Bethinke thee how I saied here beforne,

Thou woste full litle what thou menest,
I haue loste more than thou wenest.
God wot alas, right that was the.
Alas sir how, what may that be?
She is dedde: Nay, Yes by my trouth,
Is that your losse, by God it is routhe.
And with that worde right anone,
They gan to strake forth, all was done,
For that time, the Harte huntyng.
With that me thought that this kyng,
Gan homeward for to ride,
Unto a place was there beside,
Which was from vs but a lite,
A long castell with walles white,
By sainct Thon, on a rich hill,
As me mette, but thus it fell.
Right thus me mette, as I you tell,
That in the castell there was a bell,
As it had smitte houres twelue,
Therewith I awoke my selue,
And found me lying in my bedde,
And the booke that I had redde,
Of Alcione, and Seis the kyng,
And of the Goddes of sleping,
I found it in mine hond full euin,
Thought I, this is so queint a sweuin,
That I would by processe of tyme,
Fonde to put this sweuin in ryme,
As I can best, and that anon,
This was my sweuin, now it is doen.

Explicit.

MY master, &c. When of Christ our king,
Was asked, what is troth or sothfastnesse,
He not a worde answerde to that asking,
As who saieth, no man is all true, I gesse:
And therefore, though I hight to expresse,
The sorow and woe that is in Marriage,
I dare not write of it no wickednesse,
Lest I my selfe fall eft in sothe dotage.

I woll not say how that it is the chaine
Of Satanas, on which he knaweth euer,
But I dare saine, were he out of his paine,
As by his will he would be bounden neuer:
But thilke doted foole, that eft hath leuer
I chaynied be, than out of prison crepe,
God let him neuer fro his woe discuer,
Ne no man hym bewayle, though he wepe.

But yet lest thou doe worse, take a wife,
Bet is to wedde, than brenne in worse wise,
But thou shalt haue sorow on thy flesh thy life
And been thy wiues thrale, as saint Paule wise.
And if that holy writ may not suffise,
Experience shall thee teach, so may happe,
Take thee way leuer to be taken in Frise,
Than eft to fall of Wedding in the trappe.

This little writte, Prouerbes or figures,
I sende you, take keepe of it I rede,
Unwise is he, that can no wele endure,
If thou be liker, put thee not in drede,
The wife of Bathe, I pray you that ye rede,
Of this matter that we haue on honde,
God graunt you your lyfe freely to lede
In fredome, for foule is to be bonde.

Explicit.

The Assemblie of *Foules.*

All Foules are gathered before Nature on S. Valentines day, to chuse their makes. A Formell Egle beyng beloued of three Tercels, requireth a yeeres respite to make her choise: vpon this triall, *Qui bien aime tard oublie*: He that loueth well, is slow to forget.

THE lyfe so shorte, the craft so long to lerne,
Thassaie so hard, so sharpe the conquering,
The dreadfull ioy, alway that flit so yerne,
All this meane I by loue, that my feelyng
Astonieth, with his wonderfull working,
So sore I wis that when I on him thinke,
Naught wote I wel, whether I flete or sinke.

For all be that I know not loue in dede,
Ne wot how that he quiteth folke her hire,
Yet happeth me full oft in bookes rede
Of his myracles, and of his cruell ire,
There rede I well, he woll be lorde and sire:
I dare not say, his strokes be sore,
But God saue such a lorde, I can no more.

Of vsage, what for lust and what for lore,
On bookes rede I oft, as I you told,
But wherfore speake I all this? naught yore
Agon, it happed me to behold

Upon a booke was twritten with letters old,
And thereupon a certain thing to lerne,
The long day, full fast I radde and yerne.

For out of the old fieldes, as men saieth,
Commeth al this new corne fro yere to yere,
And out of old bookes, in good faieth,
Commeth all this new science that men lere.
But now to purpose, as of this mattere,
To rede forth, it gan me so delite,
That all that day, me thought it but a lite.

This booke of which I make mention,
Entitled was right thus, as I shall tell,
Tullius, of the dreame of Scipion:
Chapiters seuen it had, of heauen and hell,
And yearth, and soules that therein dwell,
Of which as shortly as I can it treate,
Of this sentence I will you saine the greate.

First telleth it when Scipion was come
In Affrike, how he meteth Massinisse,
That him for ioy, in armes hath inome,
Then telleth he her speach and all the blisse,
That was betwixt hem til the day gan misse,
And how his auncestor Affrikan so dere,
Gan in his slepe that night till him appere.

Then telleth it, that from a sterrie place,
How Affrikan hath him Cartage shewed,
And warned him before, of all his grace,
And saied him what man lered eyther leude,
That loueth common profite, well itheude,
He should into a blisfull place wend,
There as the ioy is without any end.

Then asked he, if folke that here been dede
Haue life, and dwelling in another place?
And Affrikan saied ye, without any drede,
And how our present liues space,
Yet but a maner death, what way we trace,
And rightfull folke, shall gon after they die
To heauen, and shewed him the Galaxie.

Then shewed he him, ỹ litle yerth ỹ here is,
To regard of the heauens quantite,
And after shewed he hym the nine speris,
And after that the melodie heard he,
That commeth of thilke speres thrise three,
That welles of Musike been, and melodie
In this world here, and cause of armonie.

Then saied he him, sens yearth was so lite,
And full of tourment, and of hard grace,
That he ne should him in this world delite:
Then told he him, in certain yeres space,
That euery sterre should come into his place,
There it was first, and all should out of mind,
That in this world is doen of all mankind.

Then prayed him Scipion to tell him all,
The way to come into that heauen blisse,
And he saied: First know thy selfe immortall,
And loke aie busily, that thou werche & wisse,
To common profite, and thou shalt not misse
To come swiftly vnto that place dere,
That full of blisse is, and of soules clere.

And breakers of the law, soth to saine,
And likerous folke, after that they been dede,
Shull whirle about ỹ world, alway in paine,
Till many a world be passed out of drede,
And then forpeuen all her wicked dede,
Then shullen they come to that blisfull place,
To which to comen, God send thee grace.

The day gan failen, and the darke night,
That reueth the beasts from her businesse,
Beraft me my booke for lacke of light,
And to my bedde I gan me for to dresse,
Fulfilled of thought and busie heauinesse,
For both I had thyng, which that I nold,
And eke I ne had that thing that I wold.

But finally my spirite at last,
For wearie of my labour all that day,
Tooke rest, that made me to slepe fast,
And in my sleepe I met, as that I lay,
How Affrikan, right in the selfe aray
That Scipion him saw, before that tide,
Was come, and stode right at my beds side.

The wearie hunter sleping in his bedde,
The wood ayen his mind goeth anone,
The Judge dremeth how his pleas be spedde,
The Carter dremeth, how his cartes gone,
The rich of gold, ỹ knight fight with his fone,
The sicke mette he drinketh of the tonne,
The louer mette, he hath his lady wonne.

Can I not saine, if that the cause were,
For I had radde of Affrikan before,
That made me to mete that he stood there,
But thus said he: thou hast thee so wel bore
In looking of mine old booke all to tore,
Of which Macrobie raught not a lite,
That some dele of thy labour would I quite.

Cithera, thou blisfull Lady swete,
That with thy fire brond, daūtest whē the lest
That madest me this sweuen for to mete,
Be thou my helpe in this, for thou maist best,
As wisely as I seigh the North Northwest,
When I began my sweuen for to write,
So yeue me might, to rime it and endite.

This foresaid Affrikan me hent anone,

And

And forthwith him to a gate brought,
Right of a Parke, walled with grene stone,
And ouer ꝑ gate, with letters large twrought,
There were verse ywritten, as me thought
On either halfe, of full great difference,
Of which I shall you say the playne sentence:

Through me men gon into ꝑ blisfull place,
Of harts heale and dedly wounds cure,
Through me men gon into the well of grace,
There grene & lusty Maie shall euer endure,
This is the way to all good auenture,
Be glad thou reader, and thy sorow off cast,
All open am I, passe in and spede thee fast,

Through me mē gon (then spake thother side)
Unto the mortall stroke of the speare,
Of which disdaine and danger is the gide,
There neuer tree shall fruit ne leaues beare,
This streme you ledeth to the sorowful were,
There as the fish in prison is all drie,
The ekewing is onely the remedie.

These verses of gold & Asure ywrittē weare,
Of which I gan astonied to behold,
For with that one, encreased all my feare,
And with that other gan my hart to bold,
That one me het, that other did me cold,
No wit had I, for errour for to chese,
To enter or flie, or me to saue or lese.

Right as betwene Adamants two,
Of euen weight, a peece of yron set,
Ne hath no might to moue to ne fro,
For what that one may hale, that other let,
So fared I, that I nist where me was bet
To entre or leaue, till Affrikan my gide,
Me hent and shoue in at the gates wide.

And said, it standeth written in thy face,
Thine errour, though thou tell it not me,
But dread thee not, to come into this place,
For this writing is nothing meant by thee,
Ne by none, but he Loues seruaunt bee,
For thou of Loue, hast lost thy tast I gesse,
As sicke man hath, of swete and bitternesse.

But natheles, although thou be dull,
That thou canst not doe, yet maiest thou see,
For many a man that may not stand a pull,
Yet liketh it him at the wrestlyng for to be,
And demeth yet, whether he doe bet, or he,
And if thou haddest cunnyng for tendite,
I shall thee shew matter of to write.

And with that my hād in his he toke anon,
Of which I comfort caught, and went in fast,
But Lord so I was glad, and well begon,
For ouer all, where I mine yen cast,
Were trees clad with leaues, that aie shal last
Eche in his kind, with colour fresh and grene,
As Emeraude, that ioy it was to sene.

The bilder Oke, and eke the hardie Asshe,
The piller Elme, the coffer vnto caraine,
The Boxe pipe tree, Holme to whips lasshe,
The sailing Firre, the Cipres death to plaine,
The shooter Ewe, the Aspe for shaftes plaine,
The Oliue of peace, and eke the dronken vine,
The victor Palme, the Laurer to diuine.

A gardein saw I, full of blosomed bowis,
Upon a Riuer, in a grene Mede,
There as swetenesse euermore inough is,
With floures white, blewe, yelowe, and red,
And cold Welle streames, nothing dede,
That swommen full of smale fishes light,
With finnes rede, and scales siluer bright.

On euery bough the birdes heard I sing,
With voice of angell, in her armonie,
That busied hem, her birdes for to bring,
The little prety Conies, to her play gan hie,
And further all about I gan espie,
The dredful Roe, the Buck, the Hart, & Hind,
Squirels, and beasts small, of gentle kind.

Of instruments, of strings in accord,
Heard I so play, a rauishyng swetnesse,
That God, that maker is of all and Lorde,
Ne heard neuer better, as I gesse,
Therewith a wind, vnneth it might be lesse,
Made in the leaues greene, a noise soft,
Accordant to the foules song on loft.

The aire of the place, so attempre was,
That neuer was ther greuance of hot ne cold,
There was eke euery holsome spice and gras,
Ne no man may there waxe sicke ne old,
Yet was there more ioy a thousand fold,
Than I can tell, or euer could or might,
There is euer clere day, and neuer night.

Under a tree, beside a well I say,
Cupide our Lorde, his arrowes forge and file,
And at his feete his bowe all ready lay,
And well his doughter tempred all the while,
The heddes in the well, with her wile,
She couched hem after, as they should serue
Some to slea, and some to wound and serue.

Tho was I ware of pleasance anon right,
And of array, lust, beauty, and curtesie,
And of the craft, that can hath the might
To doen by force, a wight to doen folie:
Disfigured was she, I will not lie,

And by himselfe, vnder an Oke I gesse,
Sawe I Delite, that stood with gentilnesse.

Then saw I beautie, with a nice atire,
And youth, full of game and iolitee,
Foole hardinesse, flatterie, and desire,
Messagerie, mede, and other three,
Her names shall not here be tolde for me,
And vpon pillers great of Jasper long,
I sawe a temple of Brasse ifounded strong.

And about the temple, daunced alway
Women inow, of some there were
Faire of hemselfe, and some of hem were gay,
In kirtils all dishevele went they there,
That was their office euer, fro yere to yere,
And on the temple, saw I white and faire,
Of Doues sitting, many a thousand paire.

And before the temple doore full soberly,
Dame peace sat, a curtaine in her honde,
And her beside wonder discretly,
Dame Pacience, sitting there I fonde,
With face pale, vpon an hill of sonde,
And altherr next, within and without,
Behest and Arte, and of her folke a rout.

Within the temple, of sighes hote as fire,
I heard a swough, that gan about ren,
Which sighes were engendred with desire,
That made euery harte for to brenn
Of newe flambe, and well espied I then,
That all the cause of sorowes, that they drie,
Come of the bitter Goddes Jalousie.

The God Priapus, saw I as I went
Within the temple, in soueraine place stonde,
In such array, as when the Alle him shent
With erie by night, and with sceptre in honde,
Full busilie men gan assay and fonde,
Vpon his hedde to set of sondrie hewe,
Garlandes, full of freshe floures newe.

And in a priuie corner, in disport
Found I Venus, and her porter Richesse,
That was full noble, and hauten of her port,
Darke was that place, but after lightnesse
I sawe a lite, vnnethes it might be lesse,
And on a bed of golde, she lay to rest,
Till that the hote Sonne gan to west.

Her gilte heeres, with a gold threde
Ibound were, vntressed as she lay,
And naked from the brest vnto the hede,
Men might her see, and sothly for to say,
The remnaunt couered well to my pay,
Right with a little kerchefe of Valence,
There was no thicker clothe of defence.

The place gaue a thousand sauours soote,
And Bacchus God of Wine, sate her beside,
And Ceres next, that doeth of hunger boote,
And as I saied, a middes lay Cupide,
To whom on knees, the yong folkes cride
To be their helpe, but thus I let her lie,
And farther in the temple I gan espie.

That in dispite of Diane the chaste,
Full many a bowe ibroke, hing on the wall,
Of maidens, such as gone her times waste
In her seruice: and painted ouer all,
Of many a storie, of which I touch shall
A fewe, as of Calixte, and Athalant,
And many a maide, of which ỹ name I want.

Semyramus, Candace, and Hercules,
Biblis, Dido, Tisbe, and Piramus,
Tristram, Isoude, Paris, and Achilles,
Helaine, Cleopatre, and Troilus,
Silla, and eke the mother of Romulus,
All these were paynted on that other side,
And all her loue, and in what plite they dide.

When I was commen ayen into the place
That I of spake, that was so soote and grene,
Forth walked I tho, my selfen to solace,
Tho was I ware, where there sate a Quene,
That as of light, the Sommer sunne shene,
Passeth the Sterre, right ouer measure,
She fairer was than any creature.

And in a launde, vpon an hill of floures,
Was set this noble Goddesse Nature,
Of braunches were her halles & her boures
Iwrought, after her craft and her measure,
Neither nas foule ỹ commeth of engendrure,
That there ne were prest, in her presence,
To take her dome, and yeue her audience.

For this was on sainct Valentines day,
When euery foule cõmeth to chese her make,
Of euery kind, that men thinke may,
And that so huge a noise gan they make,
The yearth, sea, and tree, and euery lake,
So full was that vnneth there was space,
For me to stand, so full was all the place.

And right as Alaine, in the plaint of kind,
Deuiseth Nature, of such arate and face,
In sothe aray, men might her there find,
This noble Empresse full of all grace,
Bad euery foule take her owne place,
As they were wont alway, fro yere to yere,
On sainct Valentines day, standen there.

That is to say, the foules of rauine
Were highest set, and then the foules smale,

That

That eaten, as that Nature would encline,
As worme or thing, of which I tell no tale,
But water foule, sat lowest in the dale,
And foules that liueth by seed, sat on ẏ grene,
And that so many, that wonder was to sene.

There might men the royall Egle find,
That with his sharpe looke, perseth the son,
And other Egles of a lower kind,
Of which that clerkes well deuisen con,
There was the tyrant with his fethers don,
And grene, I mean the goshauke ẏ doth pine
To birdes, for his outragious rauine.

The gentle faucon, ẏ with his fete distreineth
The kings hand, the hardy Sperhauke eke,
The Quales foe, the Merlion that peineth
Himself full oft, the Larke for to seke,
There was the Doue, with her iyen meke,
The ielous Swan, ayenst his deth ẏ singeth,
The Oule eke, that of deth the bode bringeth.

The Crane, ẏ Geant, with his trōpes soune,
The theif the Chough, and the chattring Pie,
The scorning Jaie, the Eles foe the Heroune
The false Lapwing, full of trecherie,
The Stare, that the counsaile can bewrie,
The tame Ruddocke, and the coward Kite,
The Cocke, that horiloge is of thropes lite.

The Sparow Uenus son, & the Nightingale
That cleapeth forth the fresh leaues new,
The Swalow murdrer of the Bees smale,
That maken honie of floures fresh of hew,
The wedded Turtell, with his harte true,
The Pecocke, with his angel fethers bright,
The Fesaunt, scorner of the Cocke by night.

The waker Gose, the Cuckowe euer vnkind,
The Popingeie, full of delicasie,
The Drake stroier of his owne kind,
The Storke wreker of aduoutrie,
The hote Cormeraunt, ful of glotonie, (care,
The Rauin and the Crowe, with her voyce of
The Throstell old, and the Frostie feldfare.

What should I say, of foules of euery kind,
That in this world haue fethers and stature,
Men might in that place assembled find,
Before that noble Goddes of Nature,
And eche of them did his busie cure,
Benignely to chese, or for to take
By her accorde, his formell or his make.

But to the poinct, Nature held on her hōd,
A formall Egle, of shape the gentillest,
That euer she emong her workes fond,
The most benigne, and eke the goodliest,
In her was euery vertue, at his rest
So farforth, that nature her selfe had blisse,
To looke on her, and oft her beeke to kisse.

Nature, the vicare of the almightie Lord,
That hote, colde, heuie, light, moist, and drie,
Hath knit, by euen nomber of accord,
In easie voice, began to speake and say,
Foules take hede of my sentence I pray,
And for your own ease, in fordrīg of your need,
As fast as I may speake, I will me speed.

Ye know wel, how on S. Ualentines day,
By my statute, and through my gouernance,
Ye doe chese your makes, and after flie away
With hem, as I pricke you with pleasaunce,
But nathelesse, as by rightfull ordinaunce,
May I not let, for all this world to win,
But he that most worthiest is, shall begin.

The tercell Egle, as ye know full wele,
The foule royall, aboue you all in degre,
The wise and worthie, the secret true as stele,
The which I haue formed, as ye may see,
In euery parte, as it best liketh mee,
It nedeth not his shape you to deuise,
He shall first chese, and speaken in his gise.

And after him, by order shall ye chese,
After your kind, euerich as you liketh,
And as your hap is, shall ye win or lese,
But which of you, that loue most entriketh;
God sende him her, that sorest for him siketh:
And therewithall, the Tercell gan she call,
And saied, my sonne the choise is to thee fall.

But nathelesse, in this condicion
Must be the choice, of eueriche that is here,
That she agree to his election,
Who so he be, that should been her fere,
This is our vsage alway, fro yere to yere,
And who so may at this time haue his grace,
In blissfull time he came into this place.

With hed enclined, & with full hūble chere,
This roial Tercell spake, and taried nought,
Unto my soueraine Lady, and not my fere,
I chose and chese, with will, hart, & thought,
The Formell on your hand, so wel iwrought,
Whose I am all, and euer will her serue,
Doe what her luste, to doe me liue or sterue.

Besechyng her of mercy, and of grace,
As she that is my Ladie souerain,
Or let me die, here present in this place,
For certes, long may I not liue in pain,
For in my harte is coruen euery vain,
Hauing regard onely to my trouth,

My dere harte, haue on my wo some routh.

And if I be found to her vntrue,
Disobeisaunt, or wilfull negligent,
Auauntour, or in processe loue a newe,
I pray to you this be my iudgement,
That with these foules I be all to rent,
That ilke day, that she me euer find
To her vntrue, or in my gilte vnkind.

And sith that none loueth her so well as I,
Although she neuer of loue me behet,
Then ought she be mine, through her mercy,
For other bonde, can I none on her knet:
For well nor wo, neuer shall I let
To serue her, how farre so that she wende,
Say what you list, my tale is at an ende.

Right as the fresh redde Rose newe,
Against the Sommer Sunne coloured is,
Right so for shame, all waxen gan the hewe
Of this Formell, when she heard all this,
Neither she answerde well, ne saied amis,
So sore abashed was she, till that Nature
Saied, doughter drede you not, I you assure.

An other Tercell Egle spake anon,
Of lower kind, and sayed that should not be,
I loue her better than ye doe, by sainct Iohn,
Or at the least, I loue her as well as ye,
And lenger haue serued her in my degree,
And if she should haue loued for long louing,
To me alone had be the guerdoning.

I dare eke say, if she me finde false,
Vnkind, iangler, or rebell in any wise,
Or ielous, doe me hang by the halse,
And but I beare me in her seruise
As well as my wit can me suffise,
Fro poinct to poinct, her honour for to saue,
Take she my life, and all the good I haue.

The third Tercell Egle answerde tho,
Now sirs, ye see the little leaser here,
For euery foule crieth out to be ago
Forth with his make or with his Lady dere:
And eke nature her self, ne will not here
For tariyng her, not half that I would seie,
And but I speake, I must for sorrow deie.

Of long seruice, auaunt I me nothing,
But as possible is me to die to day,
For wo, as he that hath be languishing
This twenty winter, and wel it happen may,
A man may serue better, and more to pay,
In halfe a yere, although it were no more,
Than some man doth, ẏ hath serued ful yore.

I ne say not this by me, for I ne can
Do no seruise that may my lady please,
But I dare say, I am her trewest man,
As to my dome, and fainest wold her please:
At short wordes, til that death me cease,
I wil be hers, whether I wake or winke,
And trewe in all that hert may bethinke.

Of al my life sith that day I was borne,
So gentle plee, in loue or other thing,
Ne herde neuer no man me beforne,
Who so that had leiser and conning,
For to reherse their chere, & their speaking,
And from the morrow gan this speech last,
Till downward went the sunne wonder fast.

The noyse of foules for to be deliuerd,
So loude rang, Haue don and let vs wende,
That well weend I, ẏ wood had al to shiuerd:
Come off they cried, alas, ye wil vs shende,
When shal your cursed pleding haue an end,
How should a iudge, eyther partie leue,
For ye or nay, without any preue?

The goos, the ducke, and the cuckow also,
So cried keke keke, cuckow, queke queke hie,
Through mine eares the noyse went tho.
The goos saide then al this nys worth a flie,
But I can shape hereof a remedie,
And will say my verdite, faire and swithe,
For water foule, who so be wroth or blithe.

And I for worme foule, said the fole cuckow
For I will of mine owne authorite,
For cōmon spede, take on me the charge now,
For to deliuer vs, it is great charite.
Ye may abide a while, yet perde,
(Qd. the turtel) if it be your will,
A wight may speake, it were as good be still.

I am a sede foule, one the vnworthiest,
That wote I wel, and leest of conning,
But better is, that a wightes tonge rest,
Than entremete him of soch doing
Of which he neither rede can nor sing,
And who so it doth, full foule himself acloyeth,
For office vncommitted, oft anoyeth.

Nature, which that alway had an eare,
To murmure of the leudenesse behind,
With facōd voice said, hold your tōges there,
And I shal soone, I hope, a counsaile find,
You for to deliuer, & fro this noyse vnbind:
I charge of euery flocke ye shall one call,
To say the verdite of you foules all.

Assented were to this conclusion,
The birdes all: and foules of rauine

Haue

Haue chosen first by plaine election,
The Tercelet, of the faucon to define
All her sentence, and as him lust to termine,
And to Nature him they did present,
And she accepteth him with glad entent.

The tercelet said then in this manere,
Full hard it were to preue it by reason,
Who loueth best this gentle Formell here,
For euerich hath such replicatioun,
That by skils may none be brought adoun,
I cannat see that arguments auaile,
Then seemeth it there must be battaile.

All ready (qd. these Eagle tercels tho:)
Nay sirs (qd. he) if that I durst it say,
Ye do me wrong, my tale is not ydo:
For sirs, taketh nat a greeke I pray,
It may not be as ye would, in this way,
Ours is the voice, ỹ haue the charge in hand,
And to the Iudges dome ye must stand.

And therefore peace I say, as to my wit,
Ye would thinke, how that the worthiest
Of knighthood, and lengest had vsed it,
Most of estate, of blood the gentillest,
Were sitting for her, if that her lest,
And of these three, she wote her selfe I trow
Which that he be, for it is light to know.

The water foules haue their heads laid
Togider, and of short auisement,
When eueriche had his verdite said,
They said soothly all by one assent,
How that the goos, with the facond gent,
That so desireth to pronounce our nede,
Shal tel her tale, and praied to God her spede.

And for these water foules tho began
The Goose to speake, and in her cakeling,
She said, peace now, take keepe euery man,
And herken which a reason I shall forth bring,
My witte is sharpe, I loue no tarrying,
I say I rede him, tho he were my brother,
☞ But she will loue him, let him loue another.

Lo here a parfite reason of a goose
(Qd. the sperhauke) neuer mote she thee,
Lo such a thing it is to haue a tongue lose:
Now parde foole, yet were it better for thee
Haue held thy peace, than shewed thy nicete,
It lieth nat in his wit, nor in his will,
☞ But sooth is said, a foole cannot be still.

The laughter arose of gentill foules all,
And right anone the seed foules chosen had
The Turtle true, and gan her to hem call,
And prayed her to say the sooth sad
Of this matter, and asked what she rad:
And she answerd, that plainly her entent
She would shew, and soothly what she ment.

Nay, God forbede a louer (hould chaunge,
The Turtle said (and wext for shame all red)
Though that his lady euermore be straunge,
Yet let him serue her alway, till he be deed,
For sooth, I praise not the gooses reed,
For tho she died, I would none other make,
I will be hers, till that the death me take.

Well yhourded (qd. the ducke) by my hat,
That men should loue alway causeles,
Who can a reason find or wit in that.
Daunceth he merry, that is mirthles,
Who should recke of that is retchles,
Ye queke yet (qd. the duck) full well and faire,
There be mo sterres in the skie than a paire.

Now fie churle (qd. the gentle Tercelet)
Out of the dunghill came that word aright,
Thou canst not see which thing is well beset,
Thou farest by loue, as owles do by light,
The day hem blindeth ful wel they se by night
Thy kind is of so low wretchednesse,
That what loue is, thou canst not se nor gesse.

Tho gan ỹ cuckow put him forth in preace,
For foule that eateth worme, and said bliue:
So I (qd. he) may haue my make in peace,
I retch nought how long that ye striue,
Let ech of hem be soleine all her liue,
This is my rede, sens they may nat accord,
This short lesson needeth not record.

Ye, haue the glutton filde his paunch,
Then are we well, said the Emerlon,
Thou murderer of the heisugge, on the braunch
That brought thee forth, thou rufull glutton,
Liue thou solein, worms corruption,
For no force is of lacke of thy nature,
Go, leud be thou while the world may dure.

Now peace (qd Nature) I commaund here,
For I haue heard all your opinion,
And in effect yet be we neuer the nere,
But finally, this is my conclusion,
That she her selfe shall haue her election
Of whom her list, who so be wroth or blithe,
Him ỹ she cheseth, he shall her haue as swithe.

For sith it may not here discussed be
Who loueth her best, as said the Tercelet,
Then woll I done this fauour to her, that she
Shall haue right him, on whō her hert is set,
And he her, that his hert hath on her knet,
This iudge I nature, for I may not lie

To none eſtate, I haue none other eie.

But as for counſaile, for to chuſe a make,
If I were reaſon, then would I
Counſaile you, the royall Tercell take,
As ſaid the Tercelet, full ſkilfully,
As for the gentilleſt, and moſt worthy,
Which I haue wrought ſo wel to my pleſaunce,
That to you it ought ben a ſuffiſaunce.

With dredeful voice ꝑ Formell her anſwerd,
My right full lady, goddeſſe of Nature,
Sooth is, that I am euer vnder your yerd,
As is eueriche other creature,
And muſt be yours while my life may dure,
And therfore graunt me my firſt boone,
And mine entent, you woll I ſay right ſoone.

I graunt it you (qd. ſhe) and right anone
This formell Eagle ſpake in this degree:
Almighty queen, vnto this yeare be done
I aſke reſpite for to auiſen mee,
And after that to haue my choice all free,
This all and ſome, that I would ſpeake & ſey,
Ye get no more, although ye do me dey.

I woll not ſeruen Venus, ne Cupide,
For ſooth as yet, by no manner way.
Now ſens it may none other waies betide
(Qd. Nature) here is no more to ſay,
Then would I that theſe foules were away,
Ech with his make, for tarying longer here,
And ſaid hem thus, as ye ſhall after here.

To you ſpeke I, ye Tercelets (qd. Nature)
Be the of good hart, and ſerueth all three,
A yeare is not ſo long to endure,
And ech of you paine him in his degree,
For to do well, for God wote quit is ſhe
Fro you this yere, what after ſo befall,
This entremes is dreſſed for you all.

And when this werk brought was to an end,
To euery foule Nature yaue his make,
By euen accord, and on her way they wend,
And lord the bliſſe and ioy that they make,
For ech of hem gan other in his wings take,
And with her neckes ech gan other wind,
Thanking alway the noble goddeſſe of kind.

But firſt were choſen foules for to ſing,
As yere by yere was alway her vſaunce,
To ſing a roundell at her departing,
To do Nature honour and pleaſaunce,
The note I trow maked was in Fraunce,
The words were ſuch, as ye may here find,
The next verſe, as I now haue in mind.

Qui bien ayme tard oublye.

Now welcome ſummer, with thy ſunnes ſoft,
That haſt this winter weathers ouerthake,
Saint Valentine, thou art full high on loft,
Which driueſt away the long nights blake,
Thus ſingen ſmale foules for thy ſake,
Well haue they cauſe for to gladen oft,
Sens ech of hem recouered hath his make,
Full bliſſfull may they ſing when they awake.

And with the ſhouting when her ſong was do,
That the foules made at her flight away,
I woke, and other bookes tooke me to
To rede vpon, and yet I rede alway,
I hope ywis to read ſo ſome day,
That I ſhall meet ſome thing for to fare
The bet, and thus to rede I nill not ſpare.

Explicit.

The Floure of Courteſie,

made by Iohn Lidgate.

In this Booke is ſet foorth the rare vertues of a certaine Ladie: made by Iohn Lidgate, as ſome thinke, in the behalfe of ſome gentlewoman in the Court.

IN Feuerier, when the froſtie Moone
Was horned, full of Phebus fierie light,
And that ſhee gan to reyſe her ſtreames ſoone,
Saint Valentine, vpon thy bliſſfull night
Of dutie, when glad is euery wight,
And foules cheſe to void her old ſorrow,
Eueriche his make vpon the next morrow.

The ſame time I heard a larke ſing
Full luſtely, againe the morrow gray,
Awake ye louers out of your ſlumbring
This glad morrow, in all the haſt ye may,
Some obſeruaunce doth vnto this day,
Your choiſe ayen of hart to renew
In confirming, for euer to be trew.

And ye that be of choſing at your large
This luſtie day, by cuſtome of nature,
Take vpon you the bliſſfull holy charge,
To ſerue loue, while your life may dure,
With heart, body, and all your buſie cure,
For euermore, as Venus and Cupide

For

For you disposeth, and the god Cupide.

For ioy owe we plainly to obey
Unto this lords mighty ordinaunce,
And merciesse rather for to dey,
Than euer in you be founden variaunce,
And though your life be medled with greuaunce
And at your heart closet be your wound,
Bethe alway one, there as ye are bound.

That when I had heard and listed long
With deuout heart the lusty melodie
Of this heauenly comfortable song,
So agreeable, as by ermonie,
I rose anone, and fast gan me hie
Toward a groue, and the way take,
Foules to seene, euerich choose his make.

And yet I was full thrustie in languishing,
Mine ague was so feruent in his hete,
When Aurora for dyerie complaining
Can distill her chrystall teares wete
Upon the soyle, with siluer dew so swete,
For she durst for shame not appeare
Under the light of Phebus beames clere.

And so for anguish of my paines kene,
And for constraint of my sighes sore,
I set me downe vnder a laurer greene
Full pitously, and alway more and more,
As I beheld into the holtes hore,
I gan complaine mine inward deadly smert,
That aye so sore crampesh at mine hert.

And while that I in my dyery paine
Sate, and beheld about on euery tree,
The foules sit alway twaine and twaine,
Then thoght I thus, alas, what may this be,
That euery foule hath his liberte
Freely to chuse after his desire
Euerich his make, thus fro yere to yere.

The sely wren, the Tytemose also,
The little Redbrest haue free election
To flien ysere, and together go
Where as hem list, about enuiron,
As they of kind haue inclination,
And as Nature, empresse and guide
Of euery thing, list to prouide.

But man alone, alas the hard stound,
Full cruelly, by kinds ordinaunce
Constrained is, and by statute bound
And debarred from all such pleasaunce.
What meneth this, what is this purueiaunce
Of God aboue, againe all right of kind,
Without cause so narrow man to bind.

Thus may I seene and plaine, alas
My wofull houre, and my disaventure,
That dulfully stond in the same cass,
So ferre behind from all healthy and cure,
My wound abideth like a sursanure,
For me fortune so felly list dispose,
My harme is hid, that I dare not disclose.

For I my hart haue set in such a place,
Where I am neuer likely for to spede,
So farre I am hindred from her grace,
That saue daunger, I haue none other mede:
And thus alas, I not who shall me rede,
Ne for mine helpe shape remedie,
For male bouche, and for false enuie.

The which twaine aye stondeth in my wey
Maliciously, and false suspection
Is very cause also that I dey,
Ginning and root of my destruction,
So that I fele in conclusion,
With her traines that they woll me shend,
Of my labour that death mote make an end.

Yet or I die, with hert, will, and thought,
To god of loue this auow I make,
As I best can, how dere that it be bought,
Where so it be that I sleepe or wake,
While Boreas doth the leaues shake,
As I haue hight, plainly till I sterue,
For wele or wo, that I shall her serue.

And for her sake now this holy time,
Saint Valentine, somewhat shall I write,
Although so be that I can nat rime,
Nor curiously by no craft endite,
Yet leuer I haue, that she put the wite
In vnconning, than in negligence,
What euer I say of her excellence.

What euer I say, it is of dutee
In soothfastnesse, and no presumption,
This I enclure to you that shall it see,
That it is all vnder correction,
What I rehearse in commendation
Of her, that I shall to you as blue,
So as I can, her vertues here discrue.

Right by example, as the summer sunne
Passeth the sterre, with his beames shene,
And Lucifer among the skies dunne
Amorrow sheweth, to void nights tene,
So verily, withouten any wene,
My lady passeth, who so taketh hede,
All tho aliue, to speake of womanhede.

And as the Ruby hath the soueraignetie
Of rich stones, and the regalie,

And the rose of sweetnesse and beautie
Of fresh floures, without any lie,
Right so in sooth, with her goodly eie,
She passeth all in bountie and fairenesse
Of manner eke, and of gentilnesse.

For she is both the fairest and the best,
To reken all, in very soothfastnesse,
For euery vertue is in her at rest:
And furthermore, to speake of stedfastnesse,
She is the root, and of seemelinesse
The very mirrour, and of gouernaunce,
To all example, withouten variaunce.

Of port benigne, and wonder glad of chere,
Hauing euermore her trew aduertence
Alway to reason, so that her desire
Is brideled aye by wit and prouidence,
Thereto of wit, and of high prudence
She is the well, aye deuoid of pride,
That vnto vertue her seluen is the guide.

And ouer this, in her dalliaunce,
Lowly she is, discreet, and wise,
And goodly glad, by attemperaunce,
That euery wight, of high and low degree,
Are glad in heart with her to be,
So that shortly, if I shall not lie,
She named is, the Floure of Courtesie.

And there to speake of feminitie,
The least mannish in comparison,
Goodly abashed, hauing aye pitie
Of hem that ben in tribulation,
For she alone is consolation
To all that arne in mischeefe and in nede,
To comfort hem of her womanhede.

And aye in vertue is her busie charge,
Sad and demure, and but of words few,
Dredefull also of tongues that ben large,
Eschewing aye hem, that listen to hew
Aboue her head, her words for to shew,
Dishonestly to speake of any wight
She deadly hateth, of hem to haue a sight.

The hart of whom so honest is and cleane,
And her entent so faithfull and entere,
That she ne may for all the world sustene,
To suffer her eares any word to here
Of friend nor foe, neither ferre ne nere,
Amisse resowning ẏ hinder should his name,
And if she do, she wexeth red for shame.

So truly in meaning she is set
Without chaunging, or any doublenesse,
For bountie and beautie are together knet
In her person, vnder faithfulnesse,
For void she is of newfanglenesse,
In heart aye one, for euer to perseuer
There she is sette, and neuer to disseuer.

I am too rude, her vertues euerychone
Cunningly to discriue and write,
For well ye wote colour haue I none,
Like her discretion craftely to endite,
For what I say, all it is too lite,
Wherefore to you, thus I me excuse,
That I acquainted am not with no muse.

By Rhetoricke my stile to gouerne,
And her preise and commendation,
I am too blind so highly to description
Of her goodnesse to make discerne,
Saue thus I say in conclusion,
If that I shall shortly commend,
In her is naught that nature can amend.

For good she is, like to Polixene,
And in fairenesse to the queene Helaine,
Stedfast of heart, as was Dorigene,
And wifely trouth, if I shall nat faine,
In constaunce eke and faith she may attaine
To Cleopatra, and thereto as setrone,
As was of Troy the white Antigone.

As Hester meke, like Judith of prudence,
Kind as Alceste, or Marcia Catoun,
And to Grisilde like in patience,
And Ariadne of discretioun,
And to Lucrece, that was of Rome toun,
She may be likened as for honeste,
And for her faith vnto Penelope.

To faire Phillis, and to Hipsiphile,
For innocence, and for womanhede,
For seemelinesse vnto Canace,
And ouer this, to speake of goodlyhede,
She passeth all that I can of rede,
For word and deed, that she naught ne fall,
Accord in vertue, and her werkes all.

For though that Dido with wit sage,
Was in her time stedfast to Enee,
Of hastinesse yet she did outrage,
And so for Jason did also Medee,
But my lady is so auisee,
That bounty & beauty both in her demaine,
She maketh bountie alway soueraine.

This is to meane, bountie goth afore,
Lad by prudence, and hath the souerainte,
And beautie followeth, ruled by her lore,
That she ne fende her in no degree,
So that in one, this goodly fresh free
Surmounting all, withouten any were,

Is

Is good and faire in one persone yfere.

And though that I for very ignorannce
Ne may discriue her vertues by and by,
Yet on this day for a remembrannce,
Onely supported vnder her mercy,
With quaking hond I shall full humbly
To her highnesse, my rudenesse for to quite,
A little ballade here beneath endite.

Euer as I can suppryse in mine hert
Alway with feare, betwixt dreede and shame,
Least out of lose any word astert
In this metre, to make it seeme lame,
Chaucer is dead, that had such a name
Of faire making, that without wene
Fairest in our tongue, as the Laurer grene.

We may assay for to countrefete
His gay stile, but it woll not be,
The well is dry, with the licour swete,
Both of Clye, and of Caliope.
And first of all I woll excuse me
To her that is ground of goodlihede,
And thus I say vntill her womanhede.

¶ Ballade simple.

WIth all my might, and my best entent,
With all the faith that mightie God of kind
Me yaue, sith hee mee soule and knowing sent,
I chese, and to this bond euer I me bind
To loue you best, while I haue life and mind,
Thus heard I foules in the dawning,
Upon the day of saint Valentine sing.

Yet chese I at the beginning, in this entent
To loue you, though I no mercy find,
And if you list I died, I would assent,
As euer I winne I quicke of this line,
Sufficeth me to seene your feathers ynde,
Thus heard I foules in the morning
Upon the day of saint Valentine sing.

And ouer this, mine hearts lust to bent
In honour onely of the wood bind,
Holly I yeue, neuer to repent,
In ioy or wo, where so that I wind,
To serue Cupide, with his eyen blind,
The foules all, when Titan did spring,
With deuout heart me thought I heard sing.

¶ Lenuoye.

Princesse of beautie, to you I represent
This simple ditie, rude as in making,
Of heart and will, faithfull in mine entent,
Like as this day foules heard I sing.

¶ Here endeth the Flowre of Courtesie, and hereafter followeth, How Pitie is dead, and buried in gentle heart.

PItie that I haue sought so yore ago,
With hert sore, and full of busie paine,
That in this worlde was neuer wight so wo
Without death, and if I shall not faine,
My purpose was, pitie to complaine
Upon the cruelties and tyrannie
Of loue, that for my trouth doth me die.

And that I by length of certaine yeres
Had euer in one sought a time to speake,
To Pitie ran I, all bispreint with teares,
To prayen her on Cruelties me awreake,
But or I might with any word out breake,
Or tell her any of my paines smert,
I found her dead, and buried in an hert.

Adowne I fell, when I saw the herse,
Dead as a stone, while that ỹ swoune me last,
But vp I rose, with colour full diuerse,
And pitously on her mine eyen I cast,
And neerer the corse I gan preasen fast,
And for the soule I shope me for to pray,
I was but lorne, there was no more to say.

Thus am I slaine, sith that Pitie is dead,
Alas that day that euer it should fall,
What maner mã dare now hold vp his head,
To whom shall now any sorrowfull hert call,
Now Cruelties hath cast to slee vs all
In idle hope, folke redelesse of paine,
Sith she is dead, to whom shal we complain.

But yet encreaseth me this wonder new,
That no wight wote that she is dead but I,
So many men as in her time her knew,
And yet she died so suddainly,
For I haue sought her euer full busily,
Sith I had first wit or mind,
But she was dead, ere I could her find.

About

About her herse there stooden lustely,
Withouten any mo, as thought me,
Bountie, perfitely well armed and richely,
And fresh Beaute, Lust, and Iolite,
Assured manner, Youth and Honeste,
Wisedome, Estate, Drede, and Gouernaunce,
Confedred both by bond and alliaunce.

A complaint had I written in my hond,
To haue put to Pitie as a bill,
But I there all this company fond,
That rather would all my cause spill,
Than doe me helpe: I held my plaint still,
For to those folke withouten faile,
Without pitie, there may no bill auaile.

Then leaue all vertues saue onely pitie,
Keeping the corse, as ye haue heard me saine,
Confedred by bond vnto Crueltie,
And be assented when I shall be slaine,
And I haue put my complaint vp againe,
For to my foes my bill I dare not shew
The effect, which saith thus in words few.

Humblest of heart, highest of reuerence,
Benigne floure, croune of vertues all,
Sheweth vnto your royall excellence
Your seruaunt, if I durst me so call,
His mortall harme, in which he is ifall,
And nought all onely for his wofull fare,
But for your renome, as he shall declare.

It standeth thus ẏ your contrary crueltie
Allied is ayenst your regallie,
Under colour of womanly beautie,
(For men should not know her tyrannie)
With Bountie, Gentillesse, and Courtesie,
And hath depriued you of your place,
That is hie beautie, appertenāt to your grace.

For kindly, by your heritage right,
Ye be annexed euer vnto bountie,
And verely ye ought to doe your might
To helpe trouth in his aduersitie:
Ye be also the croune of beautie,
And certes, if ye want in these twaine,
The world is lore, there is no more to saine.

Eke what auaileth manner and gentillesse
Without you, benigne creature?
Shall crueltie be your gouernesse,
Alas, what heart may it long endure?
Wherefore but ye rather take cure
To breake that perillous alliaunce,
Ye sleen hem that been in your obeysaunce.

And further, if ye suffer this,
Your renome is fordo in a throw,
There shall no man wete what pitie is,
Alas, that euer your renome is fall so low,
Ye be also fro your heritage ithrow
By crueltie, that occupieth your place,
And we dispaired that seeken your grace.

Haue mercy on me thou Herenus, Queene,
That you haue sought so tenderly and sore,
Let some streame of light on me be seene,
That loue and drede you euer longer the more,
For soothly to saine, I beare so sore,
And though I be not conning for to plaine,
For Gods loue haue mercy on my paine.

My paine is this, that what so I desire,
That haue I not, ne nothing like thereto,
And euer setteth desire mine hart on fire,
Eke on that other side where that I go,
What maner thing that may encrease my wo,
That haue I ready vnsought euery where,
Me lacketh but my death, and then my bere.

What needeth to shew percell of my paine,
Sith euery wo, that hart may bethinke,
I suffer, and yet I dare not to you plaine,
For well I wote, though I wake or winke,
Ye recke not whether I flete or sinke,
And nathelesse yet my trouth I shall susteine
Unto my death, and that shall well be sene.

This is to saine, I will be yours euer,
Though ye me slea by crueltie your so,
Algate my spirit shall neuer disceuer
Fro your seruice, for any paine or wo,
Sith ye be yet dead, alas that it is so,
Thus for your death I may wepe and plaine
With hart sore, and full of busie paine.

Explicit.

La belle Dame sans Mercie.

M. *Aleyn*, secretarie to the king of France, framed this Dialogue betweene a gentleman and a gentlewoman, who finding no mercie at her hand, dieth for sorrow.

Halfe in a dreame, not fully well awaked,
The golden sleep me wrapped vnder his wing,
Yet not for thy, I rose, and well nigh naked,

All

All suddainly my selfe remembring
Of a matter, leauing all other thing,
Which I must doe withouten more delay
For hem, which I durst not disobay.

My charge was this, to translate by & by,
(All thing forgiue, as part of my pennaunce)
A booke, called La bel dame sans mercy,
Which Maister Alcine made of remẽbraunce,
Clerke secretarie with the king of Fraunce,
And herevpon a while I stood musing,
And in my selfe greatly imagining,

what wise I should performe the said processe,
Considering by good aduisement
My vnconning, and my great simplenesse,
And ayenward, the strait commaundement
Which that I had, and thus in mine entent
I was vexed and tourned vp and doun,
And yet at last, as in conclusioun,

I cast my clothes on, and went my way,
This forsaid charge hauing in remẽbraunce,
Till I came to a lustie greene vallay
Full of flowres, to see a great pleasaunce,
And so boldly, with their benigne sufferaunce
Which rede this booke, touching this matere,
Thus I began, if it please you to here.

NOt long agoe, riding an easie paas,
I fell in thought of ioy full desperate,
With great disease and paine, so that I was
Of all louers the most vnfortunate,
Sith by his dart, most cruell full of hate,
The death hath take my Lady and maistresse,
And left me sole thus discomfite and mate,
Sore languishing, and in way of distresse.

Then saied I thus, it falleth me to cesse,
Either to rime, or dities for to make,
And surely to make a full promesse
To laugh no more, but wepe in clothes blake,
My ioifull time alas) now doeth it slake,
For in my selfe I feele no manner of ease,
Let it be written, such fortune (as I take)
Which neither me nor none other doth please.

If it were so, my will or mine entent
Constrained were a ioyfull thing to write,
My pen could neuer know what it ment,
To speake thereof my tongue hath no delite,
Tho with my mouth I laugh much or lite,
Mine eien should make a countenance vntrue,
My heart also would haue thereof dispite,
The weeping teares haue so large issue.

These sick louers I leue that to hem longs,
Which lead their life in hope of allegeaunce,
That is to say, to make Balades and songs,
Euery of hem as they feele their greuaunce,
For she that was my ioy and my pleasaunce,
Whose soule I pray God of his mercy saue,
She hath my will, mine hearts ordinaunce,
Which lieth here within this tombe ygraue.

Fro this time forth, time is to hold my pees,
It wearieth me this matter for to trete,
Let other louers put themselfe in prees,
Their season is, my time is now forgete,
Fortune by strength the forcer hath vnshete,
Wherein was sperde all my worldly richesse,
And all the goods which that I haue gete
In my best time of youth and lustinesse.

Loue hath me kept vnder his gouernaunce,
If I misdid, God graunt me forgiuenesse,
If I did well, yet felt I no pleasance,
It caused neither ioy nor heauinesse,
For when she died, that was my maistresse,
My welfare then made the same purchase,
The death hath shet my bonds of witnesse,
Which for nothing mine hart shal neuer pase.

In this great thought, sore troubled in mind,
Alone thus rode I all the morrow tide,
Till at the last it happed me to find
The place, wherein I cast me to abide,
When that I had no further for to ride,
And as I went, my loding to purueay,
Right soone I heard, a little me beside,
In a garden, where minstrels gan to play.

With that anone I went me backer more,
My selfe and I, me thought we were inow,
But twain, that were my friends here before,
Had me espied, and yet I wote not how,
They came for me, awayward I me drow,
Som what by force, som what by her request,
That in no wise I coud my selfe restow,
But needs I must come in and see the feast.

At my comming the Ladies euerychone
Bad me welcome God wote right gentilly,
And made me there, euery one by one,
A great deale better than I was worthy,
And of their grace shewed me great courtesie,
With good disport, because I shold not mourn:
That day I bode still in their companie,
Which was to me a gracious soiourne.

The bords were spred in right little space,
The Ladies sat each as she seemed best,

There were no deadly ſeruaunts in the place,
But choſen men, right of the goodlieſt,
And ſome there were, peraũture moſt freſheſt,
That ſaw their Iudges full demure,
Without ſemblaunt, either to moſt or leſt,
Notwithſtanding they had hem vnder cure.

Emong all other, one I gan eſpie,
Which in great thoght ful often came & went,
As one that had ben rauiſhed vtterly,
In his language not greatly diligent,
His countenance he kept with great turment,
But his deſire farre paſſed his reaſon,
For euer his eye went after his entent,
Full many a time, when it was no ſeaſon.

To make chere, ſore himſelfe he pained,
And outwardly he fained great gladneſſe,
To ſing alſo, by force he was conſtrained,
For no pleaſaunce, but very ſhamefaſtneſſe,
For the complaint of his moſt heauineſſe,
Came to his voice, alway without requeſt,
Like as the ſoune of birds doth expreſſe,
When they ſing loud in frithe or in foreſt.

Other there were, that ſerued in the hall,
But none like him, as after mine aduiſe,
For he was pale, and ſomwhat leane withall,
His ſpeech alſo trembled in fearefull wiſe,
And euer alone, but when he did ſeruiſe,
All blacke he ware, and no deuiſe but plaine,
Me thought by him, as my wit could ſuffiſe,
His heart was nothing in his owne demaine.

To feaſt hem all, he did his diligence,
And well he coud right as it ſeemed me,
But euermore, when he was in preſence,
His chere was doen it nolde none other be,
His Schoolemaiſter had ſuch authorite,
That all the while he bode ſtill in the place,
Speake coud he not, but vpon her beaute
He looked ſtill, with a right pitous face.

With that his head he tourned at the laſt
For to behold the Ladies euerichone,
But euer in one he ſet his eye ſtedfaſt
On her, which his thought was moſt vpon,
For of his eyen the ſhot I knew anone,
which fearful was, with right humble requeſts,
Then to my ſelfe I ſaied, by God alone,
Such one was I, or that I ſaw theſe reſts.

Out of the preaſe he went full eaſely
To make ſtable his beauie countenance,
And wote ye well, he ſighed wonderly
For his ſorrowes and wofull remembrance,
Then in himſelfe he made his ordinance,
And forthwithall came to bring in the meſſe,
But for to iudge his moſt wofull pennance,
God wote it was a pitous entremeſſe.

After dinner anone they hem auanced
To daunce aboue the folke euerichone,
And forthwithall, this heauy man he daunced,
Sometime with twaine, & ſomtime with one,
Unto hem all his chere was after one,
Now here, now there, as fell by auenture,
But euer emong he drew to her alone
Which he moſt dread of liuing creature.

To mine aduiſe good was his purueiance,
When he her choſe to his maiſtreſſe alone,
If that her hart were ſet to his pleaſance,
As much as was her beauteous perſon,
For who ſo euer ſetteth his truſt vpon
The report of the eyen, withouten more,
He might be dead, and grauen vnder ſtone,
Or euer he ſhould his hearts eaſe reſtore.

In her failed nothing that I coud geſſe,
One wiſe nor other, priuie nor apert,
A garriſon ſhe was of all goodlineſſe,
To make a frontier for a louers hert,
Right yong and freſh, a woman full couert,
Allured wele of port and eke of chere,
Wele at her eaſe withouten wo or ſmert,
All vnderneath the ſtanderd of dangere.

To ſee the feaſt, it wearied me full ſore,
For heauy ioy doeth ſore the heart trauaile:
Out of the preaſe I me withdraw therefore,
And ſet me downe alone behind a traile,
Full of leaues, to ſee a great meruaile,
With greene wreaths ybounden wonderly,
The leaues were ſo thicke withouten faile,
That throughout no man might me eſpie.

To this Ladie he came full courteſly,
whē he thoght time to dance with her a trace,
Set in an herber, made full pleaſantly,
They reſted hem fro thens but a little ſpace,
Nigh hem were none of a certain compace,
But onely they, as farre as I could ſee,
Saue the traile, there I had choſe my place,
There was no more betweene hem two & me.

I heard the louer ſighing wonder ſore,
For aye the more the ſorer it him ſought,
His inward paine he coud not keepe in ſtore,
Nor for to ſpeake, ſo hardie was he nought,
His leech was nere, ỹ greater was his thoght,
He muſed ſore to conquere his deſire,
For no mã may to more pennance be brought,
Than in his heat to bring him to the fire.

The hart began to ſwell within his cheſt,

So

So ſore ſtrained for anguiſh and for paine,
That all to peeces almoſt it to breſt,
When both at ones ſo ſore it did conſtraine,
Deſire was bold,but ſhame it gan refraine,
That one was large,the other was full cloſe,
No little charge was laied on him certaine,
To keepe ſuch werre,and haue ſo many foſe.

Full oftentimes to ſpeak himſelfe he pained,
But ſhamefaſtneſſe and dreede laied euer nay,
Yet at the laſt,ſo ſore he was conſtrained,
When he full long had put it in delay,
To this Lady, right thus then gan he ſay,
With dredefull voice,weeping,halfe in a rage,
For me was purueyed an vnhappy day,
When I firſt had a ſight of your viſage.

I ſuffer pain God wote, full hote brenning,
To cauſe my death,all for my true ſeruiſe,
And I ſee well ye recke thereof nothing,
Nor take no heed of it in no kind wiſe,
But when I ſpeake after my beſt aduiſe,
Ye ſet it at nought,but make thereof a game,
And though I ſewe,ſo great an enterpriſe,
It peireth not your worſhip nor your fame.

Alas,what ſhould it be to you preiudice,
If that a man doe loue you faithfully
To your worſhip,eſchewing euery vice,
So am I yours,and will be verely,
I challenge nought of right,and reaſon why,
For I am hole ſubmit vnto your ſeruice,
Right as you liſt it be,right ſo will I,
To bind my ſelfe,where I was in fraunchiſe.

L'amant.

Though it be ſo,that I cannot deſerue
To haue your grace,but alway liue in drede,
Yet ſuffer me you for to loue and ſerue,
Withouten maugre of your moſt goodlyhede,
Both faith & trouth I giue your womanhede,
And my ſeruice without any calling,
Loue hath me bound without wage or mede,
To be your man,and leue all other thing.

La dame.

When this lady had heard all this language,
She gaue anſwere ful ſoft and demurely,
Without chaunging of colour or courage,
Nothing in haſt,but meaſurably.
Me thinketh ſir,your thoght is great folly,
Purpoſe ye nought your labour for to ceaſe,
For thinketh not, whiles ye liue and I,
In this matter to ſet your heart in peaſe.

L'amant.

There may none make the peace,but only ye,
Which are the ground & cauſe of all this war,
For with your eyen the letters written be,
By which I am defied and put a farre,
Your pleaſaunt looke,my very lodeſtarre,
Was made herauld of thilke ſame deſtaunce,
Which vtterly behight me for to barre
My faithfull truſt,and all mine affiaunce.

La dame.

To liue in wo,he hath great fantaſie,
And of his heart alſo ſlipper hold,
That onely for beholding of an eie,
Cannot abide in peace as reaſon would:
Other or me,if ye liſt ye may behold,
Our eien ar made to look, why ſhold we ſpare,
I take no keepe neither of yong ne old,
Who feeleth ſmart,I counſaile him beware.

L'amant.

If it be ſo,one hurt another ſore,
In his defaut that feleth the greuaunce,
Of very right,a man may doe no more,
Yet reaſon would it were in remembraunce,
And ſith fortune onely by her chaunce
Hath cauſed me to ſuffer all this paine
By your beautie,with all the circumſtaunce,
Why liſt ye haue me in ſo great diſdaine.

La dame.

To your perſon ne haue I no diſdaine,
Nor neuer had truly,ne nought will haue,
Nor right great loue,nor hatred in certaine,
Nor your counſaile to know, ſo God me ſaue,
If ſuch loue be in your mind ygraue,
That little thing may doe you diſpleſaunce
You to begule,or make you for to raue,
I will not cauſe no ſuch encombraunce.

L'amant

What euer it be þ me hath thus purchaſed,
Wening hath not deceiued me certaine,
But feruent loue ſo ſore hath me ichaſed,
That I vnware am caſten in your chaine,
And ſith ſo is,as fortune liſt ordaine,
All my welfare is in your hands fall
In eſchewing of more miſchecuous paine,
Who ſooneſt dieth,his care is leaſt of all.

La dame.

This ſickneſſe is right eaſie to endure,
But few people it cauſeth for to die,
But what they meane,I know it very ſure,
Of more comfort,to draw the remedie,
Such be there now plaining full pitouſly,
That fele God wote not alther greateſt pain,
And if ſo be loue hurt ſo greeuouſly,
Leſſe harme it were one ſorowful than twain.

L'amant.

Alas Madame, if that it might you pleaſe,
Much better it were by way of gentilneſſe,
Of one ſorrie, to make twaine well at eaſe,
Than him to deſtroy that liueth in diſtreſſe,
For my deſire is neither more nor leſſe,
But my ſeruice to doe for your pleaſaunce,
In eſchewing all manner doubleneſſe,
To make two ioies in ſtede of one greuaunce.

La dame.

Of loue I ſeek neither pleaſaunce nor eaſe,
Nor haue therein no great affiaunce,
Though ye be ſicke, it doth me nothing pleaſe,
Alſo I take no heed of your pleaſaunce,
Thoſe who ſo will her harts to aduaunce,
Free am I now, and free will I endure,
To be ruled by mans gouernaunce
For yearthly good, Nay, that I you enſure.

L'amant.

Loue, which that ioy & ſorrow doth depart,
Hath ſet the Ladies out of all ſeruage,
And largely doeth graunt hem for her part,
Lordſhip and rule of euery manner of age,
The poor ſeruant nought hath of auauntage,
But what he may get onely by purcheſſe,
And he that ones to loue doeth his homage,
Full oftentimes, dere bought is the richeſſe.

La dame.

Ladies be not ſo ſimple, thus I meane,
So dull of wit, ſo lotted in folly,
That for words, which ſaid be of the ſpleene,
In faire language painted full pleaſauntly,
Which ye and mo hold ſchooles of daily,
To make hem all great wonders to ſuppoſe,
But ſoone they can away their heads wrie,
And to faire ſpeech lightly their eares cloſe.

L'amant.

There is no man that iangleth buſily,
And ſetteth his heart & all his mind therefore,
That by reaſon may plaine ſo pitouſly,
As he that hath much heauineſſe in ſtore:
Whoſe head is hole, and ſayth that it is ſore,
His fained chere is hard to keepe in mew,
But thought, which is vnfained euermore,
The workes preueth as the words ſhew.

La dame.

Loue is ſubtill, and hath a great await,
Sharp in working, in gabbing great preſãce,
And can him benge of ſuch as by deceit
Would feele & know his ſecret gouernance,
And maketh hem to obey his ordinance,
By cherefull waies, as in hem is ſuppoſed,
But when they fall into repentance,
Then in a rage her counſaile is diſcloſed.

L'amant.

Sith for as much as God and eke nature
Hath auaunced loue to ſo high degree,
Much ſharpe is the point, thus am I ſure,
Yet greeueth more the faut where euer it be,
Who hath no cold, of heat hath no deinte,
The one for that other, aſked is expreſſe,
And of pleaſaunce knoweth none certaincte,
But it be one, in thought and heauineſſe.

La dame.

As for pleaſaunce, it is not alway one,
That you think ſweete, I think it bitter paine,
Ye may not me conſtraine, nor yet right none,
After your luſt to loue, that is but vaine,
To challenge loue by right, was neuer ſeine,
But hart aſſent before bond and promiſe,
For ſtrength and force may not attaine
A will that ſtandeth enfeoffed in franchiſe.

L'amant.

Right faire lady, God mote I neuer pleaſe,
If I ſeeke other right in this caſe,
But for to ſhew you plainly my diſeaſe,
And your mercy to abide, and eke your grace,
If I purpoſe your honour to deface,
Or euer did, God and fortune me ſhend,
And that I neuer vnrightfully purchace
One onely ioy vnto my liues end.

La dame.

Ye and other, that ſweare ſuch othes faſt,
And ſo condemne, and curſen to and fro,
Full likerly ye wene your othes laſt
No lenger than the words ben ago,
And God and eke his ſaints laugh alſo,
In ſuch ſwearing there is no ſtedfaſtneſſe,
And theſe wretches that haue ful truſt thereto,
After they weepe and wailen in diſtreſſe.

L'amant.

He hath no courage of a man truly,
That ſeeketh pleaſaunce, worſhip to diſpiſe,
Nor to be called forth, is not worthie
The yearth to touch, the aire in no kind wiſe,
A truſtie hart, a mouth without feintiſe,
Thus by the ſtrength of euery manner name,
And who that laieth his faith for little priſe,
He leſeth both his worſhip and his fame.

La dame.

A curſed hart, a mouth that is curteiſe,
Full well ye wote they be not according,
Yet fained chere right ſone may hem apeiſe,
Where of malice is ſet all her working,
Ful falſe ſemblant they bere, and true ſeming,

Her

Her name, her fame, her tongues but fained,
Worſhip in hem is put in forgetting,
Nought repented, nor in no wiſe complained.

L'amant.

Who thinketh ill, no good may him befall,
God of his grace graunt each man his deſart,
But for his loue, among your thoughts all,
As thinke vpon my wofull ſorrowes ſmart,
For of my paine, whether your tender hart
Of ſweet pitie be not therewith agreued,
And of your grace, to me were diſcouart,
That by your meane ſoon ſhould I be releued.

La dame.

A lightſome hart, a follie of pleaſaunce,
Are much better, the leſſe while they abide,
They make you think, & bring you in a traunce,
But that ſickeneſſe will ſoone be remedide,
Reſpite your thought, and put all this aſide,
Full good diſport werieth me all day,
To helpe nor hurt, my will is not aplide,
Who troweth me not, I let him paſſe away.

L'amant.

Who hath a bird, a faucon, or a hound,
That followeth him for loue in euery place,
He cheriſheth him, and kepeth him full ſound,
Out of his ſight he will not him enchace,
And I that ſet my wits in this caſe
On you alone, withouten any chaunge,
Am put vnder, much farther out of grace,
And leſſe ſet by, than other that be ſtraunge.

La dame.

Thogh I make chere to euery man about,
For my worſhip, & for mine owne fraunchiſe,
To you I nill doe ſo withouten doubt,
In eſchewing all manner preiudiſe,
For wote ye well, loue is ſo little wiſe,
And in bileue ſo lightly will be brought,
That he taketh all at his owne deuiſe,
Of thing God wote, ꝑ ſerueth him of nought.

L'amant.

If I by loue and by my trew ſeruiſe
Leſe the good chere ꝑ ſtrangers haue alway,
Whereof ſhall ſerue my trouth in any wiſe,
Leſſe than to him ꝑ commeth & goeth all day,
Which holdeth of you nothing, ꝑ is no nay,
Alſo in you is loſt, as to my ſeeming,
All courteſie, which of reaſon will ſay,
That loue for loue were lawfull deſiring.

La dame.

Courteſie is alied wonder nere
To worſhip, which him loueth tenderly,
And he will not be bound for no praiere,
Nor for no gifts I ſay you verely,
But his good chere depart full largely,
Where him liketh, as his conceit will fall:
Guerdon conſtrained, a gift doen thankfully,
Theſe twain can neuer accord, nor neuer ſhall.

L'amant.

As for guerdon, I ſeeke none in this caſe,
For that deſert to me it is to hie,
Wherefore I aſke your pardon and your grace,
Sith me behoueth death, or your mercy.
To giue the good where it wanteth truly,
That were reaſon, and a courteiſe manere,
And to your owne much better were worthy,
Than to ſtrangers, to ſhew hem lonely chere.

La dame.

What call ye good, faine would I ꝑ I will,
That pleaſeth one, another ſmerteth ſore,
But of his owne, too large is he that lift
Giue much, and leſe his good name therefore,
One ſhould not make a graunt, little ne more,
But the requeſt were right well accoyding:
If worſhip be not kept and ſet before,
All that is left, is but a little thing.

L'amant.

Into this world was founden neuer none,
Nor vnder heauen creature thore,
Nor neuer ſhall, ſaue onely your perſone,
To whō your worſhip toucheth halfe ſo fore,
But me which haue no reaſon leſſe ne more
Of youth ne age, but ſtill in your ſeruice,
I haue no eyen, no wit, nor mouth in ſtore,
But all be giuen to the ſame office.

La dame.

A full great charge hath he withouten faile,
That his worſhip kepeth in ſikerneſſe,
But in daunger he ſetteth his trauaile,
That keſſeth it with others buſineſſe,
To him that longeth honour and nobleſſe,
Upon none other ſhould not be await,
For of his owne ſo much hath he the leſſe,
That of other much followeth the conceit.

L'amant.

Your eyen hath ſet the print, which ꝑ I feele
Within my hart, that where ſo euer I go,
If I doe thing that ſouneth vnto wele,
Needs muſt it come from you, & fro no more,
Fortune will this, that I for wele or wo
My life endure, your mercy abiding,
And very right will, that I thinke alſo
Of your worſhip, aboue all other thing.

La dame.

To your worſhip ſee well, for that is need,

That ye spend not your season all in vaine,
As touching mine, I rede you take no hede,
By your folly to put your selfe in paine,
To ouercome is good, and to restraine
An heart, which is deceiued follily,
For worse it is to breake than bow certaine,
Better bow, than to fall sodainly.

L'amant.

Now faire lady, thinke sith it first began,
That loue hath set mine hart vnder his cure,
It neuer might, ne truly I ne can
None other serue, while I shall here endure,
In most free wise thereof I make you sure,
Which may not be withdraw, this is no nay,
I must abide all manner aduenture,
For I may neither put to nor take away.

La dame.

I hold it for no gift in sooth fastnesse,
That one offereth, where it is forsake,
For such a gift is abandoning expresse,
That with worship ayen may not be take,
He hath an hart full fell, that list to make
A gift lightly, that put is to refuse,
But he is wise, that such conceit will slake,
So that him need neither to study ne muse.

L'amant.

He should not muse, ỹ hath his seruice spent
On her which is a Lady honourable,
And if I spend my time to that entent,
Yet at the least, I am not reprouable
Of fained hart, to thinke I am vnable,
Or I mistooke, when I made this request,
By which loue hath of enterprise notable
So many harts gotten by conquest.

La dame.

If that ye list do after my counsaile,
Seeche a fairer, and of more higher fame,
Which in seruice of loue will you preuaile
After your thought, according to the same,
He hurteth both his worship and his name,
That follily for twaine himselfe will trouble,
And he also leseth his after game,
That surely cannot set his points double.

L'amant.

This your counsail, by ought that I can see,
Is better said than doen, to myne aduise,
Though I beleeue it not, forgiue it me,
Mine hart is such, so hole without feintise,
That I ne may giue credence in no wise,
To thing, which is not souning vnto truth,
Other counsaile I see be but fantasise,
Saue of your grace to shew pity and ruth.

La dame.

I hold him wise that worketh no folly,
And when him list can leaue and part therefro,
But in conning he is to learne truly,
That would himselfe conduit and cannot so,
And he that will not after counsaile do,
His sute he putteth into disperaunce,
And all the good that should fall him to,
Is lost and dead, cleane out of remembraunce.

L'amant.

Yet woll I shew this matter faithfully
Whiles I liue, what euer be my chaunce,
And if it hap that in my truth I die,
Then death shall do me no displeasaunce,
But when that I, by your hard suffraunce,
Shall die so true, and with so great a paine,
Yet shall it do me much the lesse greuaunce,
Than for to liue a false louer certaine.

La dame.

Of me get ye right nought, this is no fable,
I will to you be neither hard nor streit,
And right will not no man customable,
To thinke ye should be sure of my conceit,
Who seecheth sorrow, his be the receit,
Other counsaile can I not feele nor see,
Nor for to learne, I cast me not to await,
Who will thereof, let him assay for me.

L'amant.

Ones must it be assayed, that is no nay
With such as be of reputation,
And of true loue the right honour to pay
Of free harts gotten by due raunsome,
For free will holdeth this opinion,
That it is great duresse and discomfort,
To keepe a hart in so strait a prison,
That hath but one body for his disport.

La dame.

I know so many causes maruelous,
That I must need of reason thinke certaine,
That such aucnture is wonder perillous,
And yet well more, the comming back againe,
Good or worship, thereof is seldome seene,
Where I ne will make any such array,
As for to find a pleasaunce, but barraine,
When it shall cost so dere the first assay.

L'amant.

Ye haue no cause to doubt of this matter,
Nor you to meue with no such fantasie,
To put me farre all out as a straunger,
For your goodnesse can thinke & well aduise,
That I haue made aprise in euery wise,
By which my truth sheweth open euidence,

My

My long abiding, and my true ſeruice,
May well be knowen by plaine experience.

La dame.

Of very right he may be called true,
And ſo muſt he be take in euery place,
That can diſcerne, and let as he ne knew,
And keepe the good, if he it may purchaſe:
For who that prayeth, or ſweareth in any caſe,
Right well ye wote, in ẏ no trouth is preued,
Soch hath there been, & ar, that getten grace,
And leſe it ſone, when they haue it acheued.

L'amant.

If truthe me cauſe, by vertue ſouerain,
To ſhew good loue, and alway find contrarie,
And cheriſh ẏ, which ſleeth me with the pain,
This is to me a louely aduerſarie,
When ẏ pitie, which long on ſleep doth tarie,
Hath ſet the fine of all my heuineſſe,
Yet her comfort to me moſt neceſſarie,
Shall ſet my will more ſure in ſtableneſſe.

La dame.

The woful wight, what may he think or ſay
The contrary of all ioy & gladneſſe,
A ſicke body, his thought is alway,
From him that feleth no ſore nor ſickneſſe,
Thus hurtes been of diuers buſineſſe,
Which loue hath put to great hindraunce,
And truth alſo, put in forgetfulneſſe,
When they full ſore begin to ſigh alkaunce.

L'amant.

Now God defend, but he be harmeleſſe,
Of all worſhip or good that may befall,
That to werſt tourneth by his leudneſſe,
A gift of grace, or any thing at all,
That his Ladie vouchſafe vpon him call,
Or cheriſheth him in honourable wiſe,
In that defaute, what euer he be that fall,
Deſerueth more than death to ſuffre twiſe.

La dame.

There is no iudge ſet on ſoch treſpace,
By which of right, loue may recouered be,
One curſeth faſt, another doeth manace,
Yet dieth none, as farre as I can ſee,
But kepe her courſe alway in one degree,
And euer more, their labour doeth encreaſe,
To bring Ladies by their great ſubtelte,
For others gilte, in ſorow and diſeaſe.

L'amant.

All be it ſo, one doeth ſo great offence,
And is not dedde, nor put to no iuſtice,
Right well I wote him gayneth no defence,
But he muſt end in full miſcheuous wiſe,
And all euer ſaied, God will him diſpiſe,
For falſhed is full of curſednеſſe,
That his worſhip may neuer haue enterpriſe
Where it reigneth, and hath the wilfulneſſe.

La dame.

Of ẏ haue they no great fere now adaiſe,
Soch as will ſay and maintain it thereto,
That ſtedfaſt truth is nothing for to praiſe,
In hem that kepe it long in wele or wo,
Their buſie harts paſſen to and fro,
They be ſo well reclaimed to the lure,
So well learned hem to withhold alſo,
And al to chaūge, whē loue ſhould beſt endure.

L'amant.

When one hath ſet his hart in ſtable wiſe,
In ſuch a place, as is both good and true,
He ſhould not flit, but doe forth his ſeruice,
Alway withouten chaunge of any newe,
As ſoone as loue beginneth to remewe,
All pleaſaunce goeth anone in little ſpace,
As for my partie that ſhall I eſchue,
While the ſoule abideth in his place.

La dame.

To loue truely, there as it ought of right,
Ye may not be miſtaken doubteleſſe,
But ye be ſoule diſceiued in your ſight,
By light vnderſtanding, as I geſſe,
Yet may we well repele your buſineſſe,
And to reaſon haue ſome attendaunce,
Moch better thā to abide by folie ſimpleneſſe,
The feble ſoccour of diſperaunce.

L'amant.

Reaſon, coūſaile, wiſedome, & good aduiſe,
Been vnder loue areſted euerichone,
To which I can accorde in euery wiſe,
For they been not rebell, but ſtill as a ſtone,
Their will and mine be medled all in one,
And therwith boundē with ſo ſtrong a chaine,
That as in hem, departing ſhall be none,
But pitie breake the mighty bonde at waine.

La dame.

Ye loue not your ſelfe, what euer ye bee,
That in loue ſtand ſubiect in euery place,
And of your wo, if ye haue no pitee,
Others pitee bileue ye not to purchace,
But be fully aſſured, as in this caſe,
I am alway vnder one ordinaunce,
To haue better truſt not after grace,
And all that leueth, take to your pleaſaunce.

L'amant.

I haue my hope ſo ſure and ſo ſtedfaſt,
That ſoch a Lady ſhould not lacke pitie,

But now alas, it is shit vp so fast,
That daunger sheweth on me his crueltie,
And if she see the vertue kayle in me,
Of true seruice, though she doe faile also,
No wonder were, but this is my surete,
I must suffre, which way that euer it go.

La dame.

Leaue this purpose, I rede you for the best,
For the longer ye kepe, it is in vaine,
The lesse ye get, as of your hartes rest,
And to reioyce it shall you neuer attaine,
When ye abide good hope to make you faine,
Ye shall be found alotted in dotage,
And in the end, ye shall know for certaine,
Hope shall pay the wretches for her wage.

L'amant.

Ye say as falleth most for your pleasaunce,
And your power is great, all this I see,
But hope shall neuer out of my remẽbraunce,
By which I fele so great aduersitee,
For when nature hath set in you plentee,
Of all goodnesse, by vertue and by grace,
He neuer assembled hem, as seemed mee,
To put pitie out of his dwellyng place.

La dame.

Pitie of right ought to be reasonable,
And to no wight do no great disauauntage,
There as is nede, it should be profitable,
And to the pitous shewing no domage,
If a Lady will doe so great outrage,
To shew pitie and cause her owne debate,
Of such pitie commeth dispitous rage,
And of such loue, also right deadly hate.

L'amant.

To comfort hem that liue all comfortlesse,
That is no harme, but comfort to your name,
But ye that haue a hart of such duresse,
And a faire Ladie, I must affirme the same,
If I durst say, ye winne all this defame,
By cruceltie, which sitteth you full ill,
But if pitie, which may all this attain,
In your high harte may rest and tary still.

La dame.

What euer he be that saieth he loueth me,
And parauenture I leue well it be so,
Ought he be wrothe, or should I blamed be,
Though I did not as he would haue me do,
If I medled with such or other moe,
It might be called pitie merciless,
And afterward if I should liue in woe,
Then to repent, it were to late I gesse.

L'amant.

O marble harte, and yet more hard parde,
Which mercy may not perce for no labour,
More strong to bowe than is a mightie tree,
What auaileth you to shew so great rigour,
Pleaseth you more to see me die this houre,
Before your yen, for your disport and play,
Than for to shewe some comfort and soccour,
To respite death, which chaseth me alway.

La dame.

Of your disease, ye may haue allegeaunce,
And as for mine, I let it ouer slake,
Also ye shall not die for my pleasaunce,
Nor for your heale, I can no suretie make,
I will not hurt my selfe for others sake,
Wepe they, laugh they, or sing they, I warãt,
For this matter, so will I vndertake,
That none of hem shall make thereof auant.

L'amant.

I can not skill of loue by God alone,
I haue more cause to wepe in your presence,
And well ye wote, auauntour am I none,
For certainly, I loue better silence,
One should not loue by his hartes credence,
But he were sure to kepe it secretly,
For a bauntour is of no reuerence,
When that his tongue is his most enemy.

La dame.

Male bouch in court, hath great cõmaũdmẽt
Eche man studieth to say the worst he may,
These false louers, in this time now present,
They serue best to iangle as a Jaie,
The most secrete wis, yet some men saie,
How he mistrusted is in some partise,
Wherfore to ladies what so mẽ speake or saie,
It should be bileued in no wise.

L'amant.

Of good and ill shall be, and is alway,
The world is such, the yearth is not all plain,
They that be good, ỹ prose sheweth euery day
And otherwise great billony certain:
It is no reason, though one his tong distain
With curled speach, to do himselfe a shame,
That such refuse should wrongfully remain
Upon the good renomed in their fame.

La dame.

Sochas be nought, whẽ thei here tidigs new
That eche trespas shall lightly haue pardon,
They that pursuen to be good and true,
Will not set by none ill disposition,
To continue in euery good condicion,
They are the first that fallen in domage,
And full freely the hartes habandon,
To little faith, with soft and faire language.

L'amant.

L'amant.

Now know I well of very certaintee,
If one doe truely, yet ſhall he be ſhent,
Sith all maner of Juſtice and pitee,
Is baniſhed out of a Ladies entent,
I can not ſee, but all is at one ſtent,
The good, the ill, the vice, and eke the vertue,
Soch as be good, ſoch haue the puniſhment,
For the treſpace of hem that liue vntrue.

La dame.

I haue no power you to doe grcuaunce,
Nor to puniſh none other creature,
But to eſchewe the more encombraunce,
To kepe vs from you all, I hold it ſure,
Falſe ſemblaunce, hath a face full demure,
Lightly to catch theſe Ladies in a waite,
Wherefore we muſt, if we will here endure,
Make right good watch, lo this is my cõceit.

L'amant.

Sith that of grace, a goodly word not one,
May now be had, but alway kept in ſtore,
I appeale to God, for he may heare my mone,
Of the dureſſe, which greueth me ſo ſore,
And of pitee, I complaine further more,
Which he forgate, in all his ordinaunce,
Or elſ my life to haue ended before,
Which ſo ſone am put out of remembraunce.

La dame.

My hart nor I, haue doen you no forfeit,
By which ye ſhould complaine in any kind,
Nothyng hurteth you, but your owne conceit,
Be iudge your ſelfe, for ſo ye ſhall it find,
Thus alway let this ſinke in your mind,
That your deſire ſhall neuer recouered be,
Ye nope me fore, in waſting all this wind,
For I haue faſted inough, as ſeemeth me.

L'amant.

This wofull man roſe vp in all his paine,
And ſo departed with weping countenaunce,
His wofull harte, almoſt to braſt in twaine,
Full like to die, walking forth in a traunce,
And ſayed death come forth, thy ſelfe auaunce,
Or that myne harte forget his propertie,
And make ſhorter all this wofull penaunce,
Of my poore lyfe full of aduerſitie.

Fro thens he wẽt, but whither wiſt I nought
Nor to what part he drew in ſothfaſtneſſe,
But he no more was in his ladies thought,
For to the daunce anone ſhe gan her dreſſe,
And afterward, one tolde me thus expreſſe,
He rent his heer, for anguiſh and for paine,
And in himſelfe toke ſo great heauineſſe,
That he was dedde within a day or twaine.

Lenuoy.

THE true louers thus I beſeech you all,
Soch aduentures flie hem in euery wiſe,
And as people deſamed ye hem call,
For they truely doe you great preiudice,
His caſtels ſtrong ſtuffed with ordinaunce,
For they haue had long tyme by their office,
The whole countrey of loue in obeyſaunce.

And ye Ladies, or what eſtate ye be, (place,
Of whom worſhip hath choyſe his dwellyng
For Goddes loue doe no ſoch crueltie,
Nor in nowiſe ne foule not the trace
Of her that here is named right wiſely,
Which by reaſon me ſemeth in this cace,
May be called, *La belle dame ſans mercy.*

Go little boke, God ſend thee good paſſage,
Theſe well thy way, be ſimple of manere,
Looke thy clothyng be like thy pugremage,
And ſpecially let this be thy prayere,
Unto hem all that thee will rede or here,
Where thou art wrong after her helpe to call,
Thee to correct in any parte or all.

Pray hem alſo with thine humble ſeruice,
Thy boldneſſe to pardon in this cace,
For elſ thou art not able in no wiſe,
To make thy ſelfe appere in any place,
And furthermore beſeech hem of her grace,
By her fauour and ſupportacion,
To take in gree this rude tranſlacion.

The which God wote ſtãdeth ful deſtitute,
Of eloquence, of metre, and colours,
Like as a beaſt naked without refute,
Upon a plain to abide all maner ſhowers,
I can no more, but aſke of hem ſocours,
At whoſe requeſt thou were made in this wiſe,
Commaunding me with body and ſeruice.

Right thus I make an end of this proſſes,
Beſechyng him, that all hath in balaunce,
That no true man be vexed cauſeleſſe,
As this man was, which is of remẽbraunce,
And all that doen her faithfull obſeruaunce,
And in her trouth purpoſe him to endure,
I praie God ſende hem better auenture.

Explicit.

Of Queene Annelida,

and falſe Arcite.

Arcite a Theban Knight, forſaketh Queene Annelida, who loued him intirely, and taketh a new Lady: whereupon Annelida maketh this great complaint.

THou fiers God of armes Mars the rede,
That in thy frostie countrey called Thrace,
Within thy grisly temples full of drede,
Honoured art as patrone of that place,
With the Bellona Pallas full of grace,
Be present, and my song continue and gie,
At my beginning thus to thee I crie.

For it full depe is sonken in minde,
With pitous harte in English to endite,
This old storie, in Latine which I finde,
Of Queene Annelida and falſe Arcite,
That elde, which all can frete and bite,
And it hath freten many a noble storie,
Hath nigh deuoured out of our memorie.

Be fauourable eke thou Polimnia
On Pernaso that hath thy sisters glade,
By Elicon, not farre from Cirla,
Singest with voice memoriall in the shade,
Under the Laurer, which that may not fade,
And doe that I my ship to hauen winne,
First follow I Stace, and after him Corinne.

Iamque domos patrias Cithiæ poſt aſpera gentis,
Prelia laurigeo ſubeuntem Theſea curru
Letifici plauſus miſſuſque ad ſidera vulgi, &c.

When Theseus with warres long & great,
The aspre folke of Cithe hath ouercome,
The Laurer crowned in his chaire gold beat,
Home to his countrie houses is icome,
For which the people blisfull all and some,
So griden, that to the Sterres it went,
And him to honouren did all her entent.

Before this Duke, in signe of victorie,
The Trompes come, and in his baner large,
The Image of Mars, and in token of glorie,
Men might see of treasure many a charge,
Many a bright helme, & many a spere & targe,
Many a fresh knight, & many a blisfull rout,
On horse and on foote, in all the field about.

Ipolita his wife, the hardie Queene
Of Cithia, that he conquered had,
With Emelie her young suster shene,
Faire in a chaire of gold he with him lad,
That al the croũd about her chare he spread
With brightnesse of beautie in her face,
Fulfilled of largesse and of grace.

With his triumph & laurer crowned thus,
In all the floure of Fortunes yeuing,
Lete I this noble prince Theseus,
Toward Athenes in his way riding,
And fonde I woll in shortly to bring,
The sle way of that I gan to write,
Of Queene Annelida and falſe Arcite.

Mars ỹ through his furious course of ire,
The old wrath of Iuno to fulfill,
Hath set the peoples hartes both on fire,
Of Thebes and Grece, euerich other to kill
With bloody speres, rested neuer still,
But thrõg now here now ther emõg hẽ both,
That euerich other slue, so were they wroth.

For when Amphiorax and Tideus,
Ipomedon, and Partinope also
Were dedde, and slain proude Campaneus,
And whẽ ỹ wretched Thebans brethrẽ two,
Were slain, and king Adrastus home ago,
So desolate stood Thebes and so bare,
That no wight could remedie his care.

And when the old Creon gan espy,
How ỹ the blood roiall was brought adoun,
He helde the citee by his tyranny,
And did the gentils of that regioun
To been his frends, and dwell in the toun,
So what for loue of him, and what for awe,
The noble folke were to the toune idrawe.

Emong all these, Annelida the queene
Of Ermonie, was in that toune dwellyng,
That fairer was than the Sonne sheene,
Throughout ỹ world so gan her name spring,
That her to see had euery wight liking,
For as of trouth is there none her liche,
Of all the women in this world riche.

Yong was this queene, of twenty yere old,
Of middle stature, and of soch fairenesse,
That nature had a ioy her to behold,

And for to ſpeaken of her ſtedfaſtneſſe,
She paſſed hath Penelope, and Lucreſſe,
And ſhortly if ſhe ſhall been comprehended,
In her might nothyng been amended.

This Theban knight eke ſothe to ſain,
Was yong, and therto withal a luſtie knight,
But he was double in loue, & nothing plain,
And ſubtill in that craft ouer any wight,
And with his conning wan this Lady bright:
For ſo ferforth he gan her trouth aſſure,
That ſhe him truſteth ouer any creature.

What ſhould I ſain, ſhe loueth Arcite ſo,
That when that he was abſent any throwe,
Anone her thought her harte braſt atwo,
For in her ſight to her he bare him lowe,
So that ſhe wende haue all his hart iknowe,
But he was falſe, it nas but fayned chere,
As nedeth not ſoch craft men to lere.

But neuertheleſſe full mikell buſineſſe
Had he, er that he might his Ladie winne,
And ſwore he would dien for diſtreſſe,
Or from his witte he ſaied he would twinne:
Alas the while, for it was routh and ſinne,
That ſhe vpon his ſorowes would rue,
But nothing thinketh ẏ falſe as doth ẏ true.

Her fredome found Arcite in ſoch manere,
That all was his, that ſhe hath, moch or lite,
Ne to no creature made ſhe chere,
Further than it liked to Arcite, (wite,
There was no lack, with which he might her
She was ſo ferforth peuen him to pleaſe,
That all that liked him, did her eaſe.

There nas to her no maner letter ſent,
That touched loue, from any maner wight,
That ſhe ne ſhewed hym or it was brent,
So plain ſhe was, and did her full might,
That ſhe nill hide nothing from her knight,
Leſt he of any vntrouth her vpbreide,
Without bode his harte ſhe obeide.

And eke he made him ialous ouer her,
That what that any man had to her ſaied,
Anon he would praien her to ſwere
What was ẏ word, or make him iuell apaied,
Then wende ſhe out of her witte haue braied,
But all was but ſleight and flatterie,
Without loue he fained iclouſte.

And all this tooke ſhe ſo debonairly,
That al his will, her thought it ſkilful thing,
And euer the lenger ſhe loued him tenderly,
And did him honour as he were a king,
Her harte was to him wedded with a ring,
For ſo ferforth vpon trouth is her entent,
That where he goeth, her hart with him wēt.

Whē ſhe ſhal eat, on him is ſo her thought,
That well vneth of meate toke ſhe keepe,
And when ſhe was to her reſt brought,
On him ſhe thought alway till that ſhe ſlepe,
Whan he was abſent, priuely doth ſhe wepe,
Thus liueth faire Annelida the queene,
For falſe Arcite, that did her all this tene.

This falſe Arcite, of his newfanglenеſſe,
For ſhe to him ſo lowly was and trewe,
Tooke leſſe deintee for her ſtedfaſtneſſe,
And ſaw another lady proude and newe,
And right anon he clad him in her hewe,
Wote I not whether in white, reed, or grene,
And falſed faire Annelida the queene.

But neuertheleſſe, great wonder was it none,
Though he were falſe, for it is ẏ kind of man,
Sith Lamech was, that is ſo longe agone,
To be in loue as falſe as euer he can,
He was the firſt father that began
To louen two, and was in bigamie,
And he found tentes firſt, but if men lie.

This falſe Arcite, ſomewhat muſt he faine,
Whan he was falſe, to coueren his traiourie,
Right as an horſe, ẏ can both bite and plaine,
For he bare her in honde of treacherie,
And ſwore he coude her doublenеſſe eſpie,
And all was falſeneſſe that ſhe to him ment,
Thus ſwore this theefe, & forth his way he wēt.

Alas what herte might endure it,
For routhe or wo, her ſorow for to tell,
Or what man hath the conning or the wit,
Or what mā might within the chābre dwell,
If I to him reherſen ſhall the hell
That ſuffreth layne Annelida the queene,
For falſe Arcite, that did all this tene.

She wepeth, waileth, & ſwouneth pitouſly,
To ground deed ſhe falleth as a ſtone,
Crampiſheth her limmes crokedly,
She ſpeketh as her witte were all agone,
Other colour than aſhen hath ſhe none,
Ne none other word ſpeketh ſhe moch or lite,
But mercy cruell hart mine Arcite.

And thus endureth, til that ſhe was ſo mate
ẏ ſhe ne hath foote, on which ſhe may ſuſtene,
But forth languiſhyng euer in this eſtate,
Of which Arcite hath neyther rothe ne tene,
His hert was elſ where newe and grene,
That on her wo, ne deineth him not to think,
Him recketh neuer whether ſhe flete or ſinke.

This

This new lady holdeth him so narowe,
Up by the bridel, at the staues end.
That euery worde he dred it as an arowe,
Her daunger made him bothe bowe & bend,
And as her luste, made him turne or wend,
For she ne graunted him in her liuing,
No grace, why that he hath to sing.

But drowe him forth, vnneth list her know
That he was seruaunt vnto her ladyship,
But leste he were proude, she held him lowe,
Thus serueth he, without meate or sip,
She sent him now to land, and now to ship,
And for she paue him daunger all his fill,
Therfore she had him at her owne will.

Ensample of this, ye thriftie women all,
Take hede of Annelida and false Arcite,
That for her list him her dere herte call,
And was so meke, therefore he loued her lite,
The kinde of mans herte is to delite
On thing that straunge is, also God me saue,
For what they may not get, þ̄ wold they haue.

Now turne we to Annelida ayen,
That pyneth day by day in languishing,
But whan she saw that her ne gate no geyn,
Upon a day sorowfully wepping,
She cast her for to make a complainyng,
And with her owne hand she gan it write,
And sent it to her Theban knight Arcite.

The complaint of Annelida to false Arcite.

SO thirled with the point of remembraunce,
The swerde of sorowe, whette with false pleasaunce,
Myne herte bare of blisse, and blacke of hewe,
That turned is to quaking all my daunce,
My sewertie in waped countenaunce,
Sens it auayleth nought to ben trewe:
For who so trewe is, it shall her rewe,
That serueth loue, and doth her obseruaunce
Alway to one, and chaungeth for no newe.

I wote my selfe as well as any wight,
For I loued one, with all mine hert & might
More than my self an hundred thousand sith,
And called him my hertes lyfe, my knight,
And was all his as ferre as it was right,
And when þ̄ he was glad than was I blithe,
And his disease was my death as swithe,
And he ayen his trouth hath me plight,
For euermore hys lady me to kithe.

Now is he false alas, and causeles,
And of my wo he is so routhles,
That with a worde him list not ones daine
To bring ayen my sorowfull herte in pees,
For he is caught vp in another lees,
Right as he list, he laugheth at my paine,
And I ne can mine hert not restraine
For to loue him yet alway neuertheles,
And of all this I not to whom to plaine.

And shuld I playne, alas the hard stound,
Unto my foe, that paue myne hert a wound,
And yet desireth that mine harme be more,
Now certes ferther woll I neuer found
None other helpe, my sores for to sound,
My destany hath shaped so full yore,
I woll none other medecine ne lore,
I woll ben aye there I was ones bound,
That I haue said, be said for euermore.

Alas, where is become your gentilnesse,
Your words full of pleasaunce & humblenesse,
Your obseruaunce in so lowe manere,
Your awayting, and your besinesse,
On me that ye called your maistresse,
Your soueraine lady in this world here?
Alas, is there neyther worde ne chere,
Ye vouchsafe vpon myne heuinesse?
Alas your loue, I bye it all to dere.

Now certes swete, though that ye
Thus causeles the cause be,
Of my deedly aduersite,
Your manly reason ought it to respite,
To slee your frende, and namely me,
That neuer yet in no degre,
Offended you, as wisly he
That all wote, of wo my soule quite.

But for I was so playne, Arcite,
In all my workes moch and lite,
And was so besie you to delite,
Myne honour saue, meke, kinde, and fre,
Therefore ye put in me this wite:
Alas, ye recche not a mite,
Though that the swerde of sorow bite
My wofull hert, through your cruelte.

My sweet fo, why do ye so for shame,
And thinke ye that furthered be your name,
To loue a newe, and ben vntrew aye,
And put you in slander now and blame,
And do to me aduersitie and grame,
That loue you most, God thou wost alway,
Yet turne ayen, and yet be playne some day,
And than shall this þ̄ now is mis, ben game,
And all forgeue, while I lyue may.

Lo hert myne, al this is for to saine,
As whether shall I pray or els playne,
Which is the way to done you to be trew,
For eyther mote I haue you in my chayne,
Or with the deth ye mote depart vs twayne,
There bethe none other meane wayes new,
For God so wisely on my soule rewe,
As verely ye staine me with the payne,
That mowe ye see vnfained on mine hewe.

For thus ferforth haue I my deth sought,
My selfe I murder with my priuie thought,
For sorow and routh of your vnkindnesse,
I wepe, I wayle, I fast, all helpeth naught,
I voide ioy that is to speake of aught,
I voide company, I flie gladnesse,
Who may auaunt her better of heuinesse,
Than I? & to this plite haue ye me brought,
Without gilte, me needeth no witnesse.

And should I pray, & weiuen womanhede,
Nay rather death, than do so foule a dede,
And aske mercy and giltlesse, what nede,
And if I plaine what ipse I lede,
You recketh not, that know I out of drede,
And if I vnto you mine othes bede,
For mine excuse, a scorne shall be my mede,
☞ Your chere floureth, but it woll not sede,
Ful long agon I might haue taken hede.

For though I had you to morow agayne,
☞ I might as well hold Aprill from rayne,
As holde you to maken stedfast,
Almighty God, of trouth the souerayne,
Where is ỹ trouth of man, who hath it slayne,
☞ She that hem loueth, shall hem find as fast,
As in a tempest is a rotten mast,
Is that a tame beest, that is aye fayne
To renne away, when he is lest agast.

Now mercy sweete, if I missay,
Haue I aught sayd out of the way,
I not, my witte is al away,
I fare as doth the songe of chantepleure,
For now I plaine, and now I pley,
I am so mased that I dey,
Arcite hath borne away the key
Of al my world, and my good auenture.

For in this world there is no creature,
Walking in more discomfiture,
Than I, ne more sorowe endure,
For if I sleepe a furlonge way or twey,
Then thinketh me that your figure,
Before me stante clad in asure,
Eke to profre a newe assure,
For to ben trewe, and mercy me to prey.

The long night, this wonder sight ydryue,
That on the day for such affray I die,
And of all this right naught ywis ye recche,
Ne neuermore mine eyen to ben drye,
And to your routh, & to your trouth I crye,
But wel away, to ferre been they to fetch,
Thus holdeth me my destiny a wretch,
But me to rede out of this drede or gye,
Ne may my wit (so weake is it) not stretch.

Then end I thus, sith I may do no more,
I yeue it vp for now and euermore,
For I shall neuer eft be putten in balaunce
My sikernesse, ne lerne of loue the lore,
But as the swan, I haue herde say ful yore,
Ayenst his deth woll sing in his penaunce,
So sing I here the destinie and chaunce,
How that Arcite, Anelida so sore
Hath thrilled with the point of remẽbraunce.

When that Anelida this wofull queene,
Hath of her hand written in this wise,
With face deed, betwixt pale and greene,
She fell a swoune, and sith she gan to rise,
And vnto Mars auoweth sacrifise
Within the temple, with a sorowful chere,
That shapen was, as ye may plainly here.

Explicit.

The Assemblie of *Ladies.*

A Gentlewoman dreameth that she seeth a great number of Ladies put vp their billes of complaint before a Iudge, who promiseth to releeue their greeuaunces.

IN September at the falling of the leefe,
The fresh season was altogider done,
And of the corne was gathered the sheefe,
In a gardine about twaine after none,
There were ladies walking, as was her wone
Foure in nombre, as to my mind doth fall,
And I the fifth, the simplest of hem all.

Of gentil women fayre there were also,

Disporting hem, euerich after her gise,
In crosse alies walking by two and two,
And some alone, after her fantasie,
Thus occupied we were in diuerse wise,
And yet in trouth we were not all alone,
There were knights and squires manie one.

Whereof I serued, one of hem asked me,
I said ayen, as it fel in my thought,
To walke about the mase in certainte,
As a woman that nothing rought,
He asked me ayen whom that I sought,
And of my colour, why I was so pale,
Forsoth (qd. I) and thereby lithe a tale.

That must me wete (qd. he) and that anone,
Tel on let see, and make no tariyng.
Abide (qd. I) ye ben a hastie one,
I let you wete it is no litel thing,
But for bicause ye haue a great longing,
In your desire, this processe for to here,
I shall you tell thee plaine of this matere.

It happed thus, that in an after noone,
My felawship and I by one assent,
When all other besinesses were doone,
To passe our time, in to this mase we went,
And tooke our waies, eche after our entent,
Some went inward, & wēt they had gon out,
Some stond in the mid, & looked all about.

And soth to say, some were full ferre behind,
And right anon as ferforth as the best,
Other there were so mased in her mind,
Alwaies were good for hem bost Est & West,
Thus went they forth, and had but little rest,
And some her courage did hem sore assaile,
For very wrath, they did step ouer the raile.

And as they sought hem selfe to and fro,
I gate my selfe a little auantage,
Al forweried, I might no further go,
Though I had won right gret for my viage,
So came I forth into a strait passage,
Which brought me to an herber faire & grene,
Made with benches ful craftie and cleane.

That as me thought, there might no creature
Deuise a better, by dewe proporcioun,
Safe it was closed well I you ensure,
With masonry, of compace enuiroun,
Ful secretly with staires goyng down,
In middes the place, with turning whele cer=
And vpon that a pot of Margelaine. (taine,

With Margarets growing in ordinance,
To shew hem selfe, as folke went to an fro,
That to behold it was a great pleasance,
And how they were accompanied with mo,
Ne momblisnesse and sonenesse also,
The poure penses were not disloged there,
Ne God wote her place was euery where.

The flore & bench was paued faire & smoth,
With stones square, of many diuers hew,
So wel ioyned, that for to say the soth,
Al semed one, that none other knew,
And vnderneth the stremes new and new,
As siluer bright, springing in such a wise,
That whence it came, ye coud it not deuise.

A little while was I all alone,
Beholding well this delectable place,
My felawship were comming euerychone,
So must we needs abide for a space,
Remembring of many diuers cace,
Of time passed, with sighes depe,
I set me downe, and there I fell aslepe.

And as I slept, me thought ther came to me,
A gentill woman, metely of stature,
Of great worship she seemed for to be,
Atyred wel, not high but by measure,
Her countenaunce full sad and demure,
Her colours blewe, all that she had vpon,
There came no mo but her selfe alone.

Her gowne wel was embraudred certainly,
With stones after her owne deuise,
In her purfill, her word by and by,
Bien & loyalement as I coud deuise,
Then praide I her in any maner wise,
That of her name I might haue remēbraūce,
She said she was called Perseueraunce.

So furthermore to speake was I bold,
Where she dwelled, I prayed her for to say,
And she againe ful curtesly me told,
My dwelling is, and hath be many a day,
With a lady: what lady I you pray?
Of great estate, thus warne I you (qd. she)
What call ye her? Her name is Loyalte.

In what office stand ye, or in what degree,
(qd. I to her) that wold I wete right faine,
I am (qd. she) vnworthy though I bee,
Of her chambre her husher in certaine,
This rodde I beare, as for a token plaine,
Like as ye know the rule in soch seruice,
A pertainyng is to the same office.

She charged me by her commaundement,
To warne you, and your felawes euerichone,
That ye should come there she is present,
For a counsaile, which shall be now anone,
Or seuen daies be commen and gone,

And

And furthermore, she bad that I should saie,
Excuse there might be none, nor delay.

Another thing was not forget behind,
Which in no wise I wold but yee knew,
Remembre well, and beare it in your mind,
All your felawes and ye must come in blew,
Ducriliche able, your maters for to sew:
With more, which I pray you thinke vpon,
Your words on your selues euerychon.

And be not abashed in no maner wise,
As many ben, in soch an high presence,
Make your request, as ye can best deuise,
And she gladly woll yeue you audience,
There is no greke, nor no maner offence,
Wherin ye kele that your herte his displeased,
But with her help, right sone ye shal be eased.

I am right glad (qd. I) ye tell me this,
But there is none of vs, that knoweth ỹ way,
As of your way (qd. she) you shall not mis,
Ye shall haue to gide you day by day,
Of my felawes, I cannot better say,
Soch one as shall tell you the way full right,
And Diligence this gentilwoman hight.

A woman of right famous gouernaunce,
And wel cherished, I tell you in certaine,
Her felawship shal do you great pleasaunce,
Her porte is soch, her maners trewe & plaine,
She with glad chere wold do her beste paine,
To bring you there, now farewel I haue done,
Abide said I, ye may not go so sone.

Why so (qd. she) and I haue ferre to go,
To yeue warning in many diuers place,
To your felawes, and so to other mo,
And well ye wote I haue but litell space.
Ne wee yet (qd. I) ye must tell me this cace,
If we shall any men vnto vs call?
Not one (qd she) may come amongs you all.

Not one? then said I, eigh Benedicite,
What haue I done, I pray you tell me that,
Now by my life, I trowe but wel (qd. she)
But euer I can bileue there is somewhat,
And for to saie you trouth more can I not,
In questions I may nothing be to large,
I meddle no further than my charge.

Then thus (qd. I) do me to vnderstand,
What place is there this ladie is dwelling,
Forsoth (qd. she) and one sought all this land,
Fairer is none, though it were for a king,
Deuised well, and that in euery thing,
The toures hie ful pleasaunt shal ye find,
With phanes fresh, turning with euery wind.

The chābres & parlers of a sort, (thought,
With bate windowes, goodly as may bee
As for daunsing, and other wise disport,
The galeries right well wrought,
That wel I wote, if ye were thider brought,
And take good hede thereof in euery wise,
Ye woll it thinke a very paradise.

What hight ỹ place (qd. I) now saie me ỹ?
Pleasaunt regard (qd. she) to tell you plaine.
Of verie trouth (qd. I) and wote ye what,
It may right well be called so certaine:
But furthermore this wold I wit right faine,
What I should do as soone as I come there,
And after whom I may best enquere?

A gentilwoman, a porter of the pate,
There shall ye find, her name is Coūtenaūce,
If ye so hap ye come early or late,
Of her wer good to haue some acquaintaūce,
She can you tell how ye shal you auaunce,
And how to come to her ladies presence,
To her words I rede ye geue credence.

Now it is time I parte you fro,
For in good faith I haue great businesse.
I wote right well (qd. I) that it is so,
And I thanke you of your great gentilnesse,
Your comfort hath yeuen me hardinesse,
That now I shall be bold without faile,
To do after your aduice and good counsaile.

Thus parted she, and I left all alone.
With that I saw (as I beheld aside)
A woman come, a verie goodlie one,
And forth withal as I had her aspide,
Me thought anone it should be the gide:
And of her name anone I did enquere,
Full womanlie she gaue me this answere:

I am (qd. she) a simple creature,
Sent from the court, my name is Diligence,
As sone as I might come I you ensure,
I taried not after I had licence,
And now that I am come to your presence,
Looke what seruice I can do or may,
Commaund me, I can no further say.

I thanked her, & praied her to come nere,
Because I would see how she was arai'd,
Her gown was blew dressed in good maner,
With her deuise, her word also that said,
Tant que ie puis and I was well apaid,
And then wist I without en anie more,
It was ful true that I had herde before.

Though we toke now before a little space,
It were ful good (qd. she) as I could gesse,

How farre (qd. I) haue we vnto the place?
A daies iourney qd. she but litte lesse,
Wherfore I rede that we outward dresse,
For I suppose our felawship is past,
And for nothing I wold not we were the last.

Thē departed we at the springing of ỳ day
And forth we went soft and easie pace,
Till at the last we were on our iourney,
So far outward, that we might see the place,
Now let vs rest (qd. I) a litte space,
And say we as deuoutly as we can,
A Pater noster for saint Iulian.

With al my herte I assent with good will,
Woth better shal we spede, when we haue
Then taried we, and said it euery dyl, (done,
And when the day was past farre after none
We saw a place, and thider came we sone,
Which round about was closed with a wall,
Seeming to me full like an hospitall.

There found I one had brought al mine aray,
(A gentill woman of mine acquitaunce)
I haue meruaile (qd. I) what maner way,
Ye had knowlege of al this ordenaunce,
Yes yes (qd. she) I herde Perseueraunce,
How she warned her felawes euerichone,
And what aray ye should haue vpon.

Now for my loue (qd. I) this I you pray,
Sith ye haue take vpon you all the paine,
That ye would helpe me on with mine aray,
For wit ye well, I wold be gone right faine,
All this prater needeth not certaine,
(qd. she) a paine, come off and hie you sone,
And ye shall see anone it shall be done.

But this I dout me greatly, wote ye what,
That my felawes be passed by and gone:
I warne you (qd. she) that are they nat,
For here they shall assemble euerichone,
Notwithstanding I counsaile you anone,
Make you redy and tary you no more,
It is no harme though ye be there before.

So then I dressed me in mine aray,
And asked her whether it were well or no,
It is right well (qd. she) vnto my pay,
Ye nede nat care to what place euer ye go.
And whiles that she and I debated so,
Came Diligence and saw me all in blew,
Sister (qd she) right well broke ye your new.

Discrecion, purueiour.

Then went we forth and met at auenture,
A yong woman, an officer seeming,
What is your name (qd. I) good creature,
Discrecion (qd. she) without leasing,
And where (qd. I) is your most abiding,
I haue (qd. she) this office of purchace,
Chicke purueiour that longeth to this place.

Faire loue (qd. I) in all your ordenaunce,
What is her name that is the herbigere,
Forsoth (qd. she) her name is Acquaintaunce,
A woman of right gracious manere,
Then thus (qd. I) what strāgers haue ye here,
But few (qd. she) of high degree ne low,
Ye be the first, as forsoth as I know.

Countenaunce, porter.

Thus with tales we came streight to ỳ gate,
This yong woman departed was and gone,
Came Diligence and knocked fast thereat,
Who is without (qd. Countenaunce) anone,
Truly (qd. I) faire sister here is one,
Which one (qd. she) & there withall she lough,
I Diligence, ye know me wel inough.

Then opened she the gate, and in we go,
With wordes faire she said full gentilly,
Ye are welcome ywis, are ye no mo?
Nat one (qd. she) saue this woman and I,
Now then (qd. she) I pray you hertely,
Take my chambre for a while to rest,
Till your felawes come, I hold it best.

I thanked her, & forth we go euerichone,
Till her chambre without wordes mo,
Came Diligence and toke her leaue anone,
Where euer ye list (qd. I) now may ye go,
And I thanke you right hertely also,
Of your labour, for which God do you mede,
I can no more, but Iesu be your spede.

Then Countenaunce asked me anone,
Your felawship, where be they (qd. she)
Forsoth (qd. I) they be comming euerichone,
But where they are I know no certainte,
Without I may hem at this window se,
Here will I stand awaiting euer among,
For well I wote they will not be long.

Thus as I stode musing full busily,
I thought to take good hede of her araie,
Her gowne was blewe, this wote I verely,
Of good faction, and furred wel with graie,
Upon her slue her worde this is no naie,
Which said thus, as my penne can endite,
A moy, qui voy, written with letters white.

Then forth withal she came streight to me,
Your wordes (qd. she) fain would I ỳ I knew,
Forsoth (qd. I) ye shall well know and see,
And for my worde I haue none, this is trewe,

It

It is inough that my clothing be blew,
As here before I had commaundement,
And so to do, I am right well content.

Largesse steward.

But tell me this I pray you hertely,
The steward here, say me what is her name?
She hight Largesse I say you surely,
A faire lady and of right noble fame,
When ye her see ye will reporte the same,
And vnder her to bid you welcome all,
There is Beleyter, marshal of the hall.

Now all this while that ye here tary still,
Your owne maters ye may well haue in mind,
But tel me this, haue ye brought any bill?
Ye ye (qd. I) and els I were behind,
Where is there one tell me that I may find,
To whom ꝑ I may shew my maters plaine?
Surely (qd. she) vnto the chamberlaine.

Remembraunce chamberlaine.

The chamberlaine (qd. I) say ye trewe,
Ye verely (said she) by mine aduise,
Ben nat aferde, vnto her lowly sewe,
It shall be done (qd. I) as ye deuise,
But ye must know her name in any wise,
Trewly (qd. she) to shew you in substaunce,
Withoutē faining her name is Remēbraunce.

The Secretary she may not yet be forget,
For she doth right moch in euery thing,
Wherfore I rede, whē ye haue with her ymet,
Your matere hole tell her without fayning,
Ye shall her find full good and full louing.
Tell me her name (qd. I) of gentlenesse,
By my good fothe (qd. she) Auisenesse.

That (qd. I) for her is passing good,
For euery bill and sedule she must see,
Now good (qd. I) come stand there as I stood,
My felawes be comming, ponder they bee,
Is it pape, or say ye soth (qd. she)
In pape, nay nay, I say you for certaine,
Se how they come togither twain & twaine.

Ye say ful sothe (qd. she) that is no nay,
I see comming a goodly company,
They ben soch folke (qd. I) dare I say,
That list to loue thanke it verely,
And for my loue I pray you faithfully,
At any time, when they vpon me call,
That ye wol be good frend to hem all.

Of my frendship (qd she) they shal not misse,
And for their ease to put therto my paine.
God yeld it you (qd. I) but take you this,
How shal we know who is the chāberlaine,
That shal ye wel know by her word certaine
What is her worde sister, I pray you saie,
(Plus ne pourroye) thus writeth she alwaie.

Thus as we stode togider she and I,
Euen at the gate my felawes were echone,
So met I hem (as me thought was goodly)
And badde hem welcome all by one and one,
Then came forth Countenaunce anone,
Full hertely, faire sisters all (qd. she)
Ye be right welcome into this countree.

I counsaile you to take a litell rest
In my chambre, if it be your pleasaunce,
When ye be there, me thinke it for the best,
That I go in, and cal Perseueraunce,
Bicause she is of your acquaintaunce,
And she also will tell you euery thing,
How ye shal be ruler of your comming.

My felawes all and I, by one aduise
Were wel agreed, to do like as she said,
Then we begā to dresse vs in our gise, (ueid,
That folke should say we were nat vnpur-
And good wagers among vs there we laid,
Which of vs was atired most goodlest,
And of vs all which should be praised best,

The porter came & brought Perseueraūce,
She welcomed vs in curteise manere,
Thinke ye not long (qd. she) of your attēdaūce,
I will go speke vnto the herbigere,
That she puruey for your lodging here,
Then will I go vnto the Chamberlaine,
To speke for you, and come anone againe.

And when she departed was and gone,
We saw folkes comming without the wall,
So great people, that nombre coude we none,
Ladies they were, and gentel women all,
Clothed in blewe echone her worde withall,
But for to know her word or her deuise,
They came so thicke, ꝑ I ne might in no wise,

With that anone came in Perseueraunce,
And where I stode, she came streight to mee,
Ye ben (qd. she) of mine old acquaintaunce,
You to enquere the bolder would I bee,
What word they bere echo after her degree,
I you pray tell it me in secrete wise,
And I shall keepe it close on warrantise.

We ben fiue ladies (qd. I) al in fere,
And gentilwomen foure in company,
When they begin to open her mattere,
Then shall ye know her wordes by and by,
But as for me I haue none verely,

And so I tolde Countenaunce here before,
All myne aray is blewe, what needeth more.

Now then (qd. she) I woll go againe,
That ye may haue knowledge, what ye shuld
In soth (qd. I) if ye wold take the paine, (do,
Ye did right moch for vs, if ye do so
The rather speed, the soner may we go,
Great coste alway there is in tarying,
And long to sewe it is a wery thing.

Then parted she, and came againe anon,
Ye must (qd. she) come to the chamberlaine,
We be now redy (qd. I) euerychone,
To folow you, whan euer ye list certaine,
We haue none eloquence to tell you plaine,
Beseching you we may be so excused,
Our trewe meaning, that it be not refused.

Then went we forth after Perseueraūce,
To see the prees it was a wonder cace,
There for to passe it was great combraunce,
The people stode so thicke in euery place,
Now stand ye still (qd. she) a litte space,
And for your ease somewhat I shall assay,
If I can make you any better way.

And forth she goeth, amōg hem euerychone,
Making a way, that we might through passe
More at our ease, and when she had so done,
She beckend vs to come, where as she was,
So after her we folowed more and las,
She brought vs streight vnto ẏ chāberlaine,
There left she vs, and then she went againe.

We salued her as reason would it so,
Full humble beseching her great goodnesse,
In our matters that we had for to do,
That she would be good lady and maistresse.
Ye be welcome (qd. she) in sothfastnesse,
And see what I can do, you for to please,
I am redy, that may be to your ease.

We folowed her vnto the chamber dore,
Sisters (qd. she) come ye in after mee.
But wete ye well, there was a paued flore,
The godliest, that any wight might see,
And further more about then loked wee,
On eche corner, and vpon euery wall,
Which was made of Burel and Crustall.

Wherein was grauen of stories many one,
First how Phillis, of womanly pite,
Died pitcously for loue of Demophone,
Next after was the story of Tisbe,
How she slewe her self vnder a tree,
Yet saw I more, how in a right pitous caas,
For Antony was slaine Cleopatras.

That other side was Hawes the shene,
Full vntrewly disceiued in her paine.
There was also Annelida the queene,
Upon Arcite how sore she did complaine,
All these stories were graued there certaine,
And many mo than I reherse you here,
It were to long to tell you all in fere.

And bicause the walles shone so bright,
With fine vmple they were al ouer spred,
To ẏ entent folke shuld not hurt her sight,
And through it the stories might be red,
Then further more I went as I was lad,
And there I sawe without any faile,
A chaire set, with full rich aparaile.

And fiue stages it was set fro the ground,
Of Calsidony full curiously wrought,
With foure pomelles of gold, & very round,
set with saphirs, as good as coude be thought
That wot ye what, if it were through sought,
As I suppose, fro this countrie to Inde,
Another soch it were right hard to finde.

For wete ye well, I was right nere that,
So as I durst, beholding by and by,
Aboue there was a riche cloth of estate,
Wrought with the needle ful straungely,
Her worde theron, and thus it said truely,
I endure to tell you in words few,
With great letters, the better I hem knew.

Thus as we stode, a dore opened anone,
A gentil woman, semely of stature,
Bering a mace, came out her selfe alone,
Sothly me thought a goodly creature,
She speake nothing to lowde, I you ensure,
Nor hastely, but with goodly warning,
More rome (qd. she) my lady is comming.

With that anone I saw Perseueraunce,
How she held vp the tapet in her hand,
I saw also right in goodly ordenaunce,
This great lady within the tapet stand,
Comming outward, I wol ye vnderstand,
And after her a noble company,
I coude not tell thee nombre sikerly.

Of their names I wolde nothing enquere,
Further than soch as we wolde sewe vnto,
Saue a lady which was the chauncellere,
Attemperaunce sothly her name was so,
For vs nedeth with her haue moche to do
In our matters, and alway more and more,
And so forth to tell you furthermore.

Of this lady, her beautie to discriue,
My conning is to simple verely,

For neuer yet the daies of my liue
So inly faire I haue seene none truly,
In her estate assured vtterly,
There wanted nought, I dare well assure,
That longed to a goodly creature.

And furthermore, to speake of her array,
I shall tell you the manner of her gowne,
Of cloth of gold, full rich it is no nay,
The colour blew, of right goodly fashioun,
In taberde wise, the sleues hanging adoun,
And what purfill there was, & in what wise,
So as I can, I shall it you deuise.

After a sort, the coller and the bent,
Like as Armine is made in purfeling,
With great pearles full fine and orient,
They were couched all after one worching,
With diamonds in steed of powdering,
The sleeues and purfell of assise,
They were made like in euery wise.

About her necke a sort of faire rubies
In white floures of right fine enamaile,
Upon her head set in the fairest wise
A cercle of great balais of entaile,
That in earnest to speake without faile,
For young and old, and euery manner age,
It was a world to looken on her visage.

Thus comming forth to sit in her estate,
In her presence we kneeled down euerychone,
Presenting our bils, and wote ye what,
Full humbly she tooke hem by one and one,
When we had done, then came they all anone,
And did the same each after her manere,
Kneeling at ones, and rising all in fere.

And when this was don, & she set in her place,
The chamberlaine she did vnto her call,
And she goodly comming vnto her apace,
Of her entent knowing nothing at all,
Void backe the preasse (qd. she) vp to the wall,
Make large roome, but looke ye do not tary,
And take these bils to the secretary.

The chamberlaine did her commaundement,
And came againe, as she was bid to do,
The secretary there being present,
The bils were deliuered her also,
Not only ours, but many other mo,
Then the lady with good aduise againe,
Anone withall called her chamberlaine.

We woll (qd. she) the first thing that ye do,
The secretarie ye do make come anone
With her bils, and thus we will also,
In our presence she rede hem euerychone,
That we may take good aduise thereon
Of the ladies that ben of our counsaile,
Looke this be done withouten any faile.

When the chamberlain wist of her entent,
Anone she did the secretarie call,
Let your bils (qd. she) be here present,
My lady it will: Madame (qd. she) I shall,
And in presence she will ye hem call,
With good will I am ready (qd. she)
At her pleasure, when she commandeth me.

And vpon that was made an ordinaunce,
They that came first, her bils should be red,
Full gentilly then said Perseueraunce,
Reason it will they were soonest sped,
Anone withall, vpon a tapet spred
The secretarie laid hem downe echone,
Our bils first she red one by one.

The first lady bearing in her deuise,
Sans que iamays, thus wrote she on her bill,
Complaining sore, and in full pitous wise
Of promise made, with faithful hart and will,
And so broken ayenst all manner skill,
Without desert, alwaies on her partie
In this matter desiring a remedie.

Her next folowing, her word was in this wise
Vn sans changer, and thus she did complaine,
Though she had be guerdoned for her seruice,
Yet nothing like as she that tooke the paine,
Wherfore she coud in no wise her restraine,
But in this case sue vntill her presence,
As reason would, to haue recompence.

So furthermore, to speake of other twaine,
One of hem wrote after her fantasie,
Onques puis leuer, and for to tell you plaine,
Her complaint was full pitous verely,
For as she said, there was great reason why,
As I can remember this matere,
I shall you tell the processe all in fere.

Her bill was made complaining in her gise,
That of her ioy her comfort and gladnesse
Was no suretie, for in no manner wise
She said therein no point of stablenesse,
Now ill, now wele, out of all sikernesse,
Full humbly desiring of her high grace,
Soone to shew her remedie in this case.

Her fellaw made her bill, and thus she said,
In plaining wise there as she loued best,
Whether she were wroth or wele apaid,
She might not see when she woll faines,
And wroth she was in very earnest
To tell her word, as ferforth as I wote,

Entierement vostre, right thus she wrote.

And vpon that she made a great request,
With hart and will, & all that might be done,
As vntill her that might redresse it best,
For in her mind there might she find it soone
The remedy of that which was her boone,
Rehearsing that she had said before,
Beseeching her it might be so no more.

And in like wise as they had done before,
The gentlewomen of our company
Put her bils, and for to tell you more,
One of hem wrote (C'est sans dire) verely,
And her matere hole to specifie,
Within her bill she put it in writing,
And what it said, ye shall haue knowing.

It said God wote, and that full pitously,
Like as she was disposed in her hert,
No misfortune that she tooke greuously,
All one to her was the ioy and smert,
Sometime no thanke for all her good desert,
Other comfort she wanted none comming,
And so vsed, it greeued her nothing.

Desiring her, and lowly beseeching
That she would forsake a better way,
As she that had ben her daies liuing
Stedfast and true, and will be alway.
Of her k. law somewhat I shall you say,
Whose bill was red next forth withall,
And what it meant, rehearsen you I shall.

En Dieu est, she wrote in her deuise,
And thus she said withouten faile,
Her trouth might be take in no wise,
Like as she thought, wherfore she had meruaile,
For trouth somtime wes wont to take auaile
In euery matere, but all that is ago,
The more pitie that it is suffred so.

Much more there was, wherof she should com=
But she thoght it too great encombrance (plain,
So much to write, and therfore in certain,
In God and her she put all her affiaunce,
As in her word is made a remembraunce,
Beseeching her, that she would in this cace
Shew vnto her the fauour of her grace.

The third she wrote, rehersing her greuaunce,
Ye, wote ye what, a pitous thing to here,
For as me thoght she felt great displesaunce,
One might right wel perceiue it by her chere,
And no wonder, it sate her passing nere,
Yet loth she was to put it in writing,
But need woll haue course in euery thing.

Soyes asseure, this was her word certaine,
And thus she wrote in a little space,
There she loued, her labour was in vaine,
For he was set all in another place,
Full humbly desiring in that cace,
Some good comfort her sorrow to appease,
That she might liue more at hearts ease.

The fourth surely me thought she liked wele,
As in her port, and in her behauing,
And bien moneste, as ferre as I could fele,
That w[illegible]s her word till her well belonging,
Wherefore to her she prayed aboue all thing,
Full heartely to say you in substaunce,
That she would send her good countenaunce.

Ye haue rehearsed me these bils all,
But now let see somwhat of your entent,
It may so hap, parauenture ye shall,
Now I pray you while I am here present,
Ye shall haue knowledge parde what I ment,
But this I say in trouth, and make no fable,
The case it selfe is inly lamentable.

And well I wote ye woll thinke the same,
Like as I say, when ye haue heard my bill,
Now good tel on, I here you by saint Iame,
Abide, a while, it is not yet my will,
Yet must ye wete by reason and by skill,
Sith ye haue knowledge of ỹ was don before,
And thus it is said without words more.

Nothing so lefe as death to come to me,
For final end of my sorrowes and paine,
What should I more desire as seeme ye,
And ye knew all afore it for certaine,
I wote ye would, and for to tell you plaine
Without her helpe, ỹ hath all thing in cure,
I cannat thinke that it may long endure.

As for my trouth, it hath be proued wele,
To say the sooth, I can say no more,
Of full long time, and suffered euerydele
In patience, and keepe it all in store
Of her goodnesse, beseeching her therefore,
That I might haue my thanke in such wise,
As my desert serueth of iustice.

When these bils were rad euerychone,
The ladies tooke a good aduisement,
And hem to answere by one and one,
She thought it was too much, in her entent,
Wherefore she gaue hem commaundement,
In her presence to come both one and all,
To geue hem her answere in generall.

What did she then, suppose ye verely?
She spake her selfe, and said in this manere:

Wle

We haue well seene your bils by and by,
And some of hem pitous for to here,
We woll therefore ye know all this in fere,
Within short time, our court of parliment
Here shall be hold in our pallais present.

And in all this, wherein you find you greued,
There shall ye find an open remedy,
In such wise as ye shall be releeued
Of all that ye rehearse here, throughly:
As for the date ye shall know verely,
That ye may haue a space in your comming,
For Diligence shall it tell you by writing.

We thanked her in our most humble wise,
Our felawship ech one by one assent
Submitting vs lowly till her seruise,
For as we thought, we had our trauaile spent
In such wise as we held vs content,
Then each of vs tooke other by the sleue,
And forthwithall, as we should take our leue,

All suddainly the water sprang anone
In my visage, and therewithall I woke,
Where am I now, thought I, all this is gone,
All mased, and vp I gan to loke,
With that anon I went and made this boke,
Thus simply rehearsing the substaunce,
Because it should not be out of remembraunce.

Now verely your dreame is passing good,
And worthy to be had in remembraunce,
For though I stand here as long as I stood,
It should to me be none encombraunce,
I tooke therein so inly great pleasaunce.
But tell me now what ye the booke do call,
For I must wete: With right good wil ye shal.

As for this booke, to say you very right,
Of the name to tell you in certainte,
Lassemble de dames, thus it hight,
How thinke ye, that name is good parde,
Now go farewell, for they call after me
My felawes all, and I must after sone,
Rede well my dreme, for now my tale is done.

¶ Finis.

The conclusions of the Astrolabie.

This booke (written to his sonne in the yeare of our Lord 1391, and in the 14 of K. Richard 2) standeth so good at this day, especially for the Horizon of Oxford, as in the opinion of the learned, it cannot be amended.

LIttle Lowis my sonne, I perceiue well by certaine euidences, thine abilitie to learne sciences, touching numbers and proportions, and also wel consider I thy busie prayer in especiall to learne the Treatise of the Astrolabie. Then for as much as a Philosopher saith, hee wrapeth him in his friend, that condiscendeth to the rightfull prayers of his friend: Therefore I haue giuen thee a sufficient Astrolabie for our orizont, compouned after the latitude of Oxenford: Upon the which, by mediation of this little treatise, I purpose to teach thee a certaine number of conclusions pertayning to this same instrument. I say a certaine of conclusions, for three causes, the first cause is this: Trust well, that all the conclusions that haue be founden, or els possibly might bee found in so noble an instrument as in the Astrolaby, ben vnknowen perfitly to any mortall man in this region, as I suppose. Another cause is this, that soothly in any carts of the Astrolabie that I haue yseene, there ben some conclusions, that woll not in all thyngs performe her behests: and some of hem beene too hard to thy tender age of ten yeare, to conceiue. This treatise deuided in fiue parts, will I shewe the woonder light rules and naked words in English, for Latine ne canst thou nat yet but smale, my little sonne. But neuertheless, suffiseth to thee these true conclusions in English, as well as sufficeth to this noble clerkes, Greekes, these same conclusions in Greeke, and to the Arabines in Arabike, and to Iewes in Hebrewe, and to the Latin folke in Latine: which Latin folke had hem first out of other diuers languages, and writ hem in her owne tongue, that

is

is to saine, in Latine.

And God wote that in all these languages, and in many mo, haue these conclusions been sufficiently learned and taught, and yet by diuers rules. Right as diuers pathes leaden diuers folke the right way to Rome.

Now woll I pray meekely euery person discreet, that redeth or heareth this little treatise, to haue my rude ententing excused, and my superfluitie of wordes, for two causes: The first cause is, for that curious enditing, and hard sentences, is full heauy at ones for such a child to learne: And the second cause is this, that sothly, me semeth better to writen vnto a child twice a good sentence, than he forgete it once. And Lowis, if it so be that I shew thee in my lith English, as true conclusions touching this matter, and not only as true, but as many and subtill conclusions, as ben yshewed in Latine, in any common treatise of the Astrolabie, conne me the more thanke, and pray God saue the king, that is lord of this langage, and all that him faith beareth, and obeyeth, eueriche in his degree, the more and the lasse. But considereth well, that I ne vsurpe not to haue founde this werke of my labour or of mine engine: I nam but a lewd compilatour of the labour of olde Astrologiens, and haue it translated in mine English, only for thy doctrine: and with this swerde shall I sleen enuie.

The first party.

THe first partie of this treatise shall rehearse the figures, and the membres of thine Astrolabie, because that thou shalt haue the greater knowing of thine own instrument.

The second party.

THe second partye shall teach thee to werken ỹ very practike of the forsaid conclusions, as ferre forth, and also narrow, as may bee shewed in so small an instrument portatife about. For well wote euery Astrologien, that smallest fractions ne woll not bee shewed in so small an instrument, as in subtill tables, calculed for a cause.

The third party.

THe third party shall contayne diuers tables of longitudes and latitudes of sterres, fixe in the Astrolabie. And tables of the declinations of the Sun, and tables of the longitude of cities and townes: and tables, as well for the gouernation of the clocke, as for to finde the altitude meridian, and many another notable conclusion, after the kalenders of the reuerent clerks, Frere Iohn Som, and Frere N. Lenne.

The fourth party.

THe fourth party shall be a theorike, to declare the meaning of the celestiall bodies, with the causes, the which the fourth party in speciall shall shew in a table of the very meuing of the moone, from one to one, euery day and euery signe, after thine almanacke. Upon the which table, there followeth a canon, sufficient to teach, as well in manner of working in the same conclusions, as to know in our horizont, with which degree of Zodiake the moone ariseth in any latitude, and the arising in any planet after his latitude, fro the ecliptike line.

The fift party.

THe fift party shall been an introductorie, after ỹ statutes of our doctors, on which, thou mayest learne a great part of the generall rules of theorike in Astrologie. In which fift party, thou shalt find tables of equations of houses, after ỹ latitude of Oxenford, and tables of dignities of planets, and other notefull things, if God vouchsafe, and his mother the maiden, mo than I behete.

The ring.

THy Astrolabie hath a ringe to putten on thy thombe, on thy right honde, in taking of the height of thynges. And take keepe, from hence forward I woll clepe the height of heauie thing that is take by the rule, the altitude, withouten mo wordes.

The turet.

THis ring renneth in a manner of a turet, fastened to the moder of thine Astrolabye, in a roume or space, that it distroubleth not the instrument to hangen after his right centure. The moder of thine Astrolabie, is thickest by the brinkes, that is, the vtmost ring with degrees: and all the middle within the ring, shall bee thinner, to receyue the plates for diuers clymates, and also for the rethe, that is shape in manner of a net, or lis after the webbe of a loppe.

The moder.

THe moder of thine Astrolabye, is the thickest plate, pierced with a large hole, that receyueth in her wombe the thinne plates, compowned of diuers clymates, and thy reete shapen in manner of a nette, or of a webbe of a loppe.

Of the foure lines.

This moder is deuided on the backe halfe with a line, that commeth discending fro the ring downe to the nethereſt boꝛdure, the which line, fro the foꝛesaid ring vnto the centre of the large hole amidde, is cleaped the South line, oꝛ elꝭ the line Meridionall: and the remenaunt of this line, downe to the boꝛdure, is cleaped the Noꝛth line, oꝛ all the line of the Midnight.

Of foure lines, East, West, North, and South.

Ouerthwart this foꝛesaid long line, there crosseth him another line of the same length, fro East to West, of the whych line, from a little crosse in the boꝛdure, vnto the centure of the large hole, is cleaped the East line, oꝛ elꝭ the line Oꝛientall: and the remenaunt of the line, fro the foꝛesaid Oꝛientall vnto the boꝛdure, is ycleaped the West line, oꝛ the line Occidentall.

Now hast thou here the foure quarters of thine Astrolabie, deuided after the foure pꝛincipall plages oꝛ quarters of the firmament.

Which is the right side, and which is the left.

The East side of the Astrolabie is cleaped the right side, and the West side is cleaped the lefte side. Foꝛyet not this little Lowis. But the ringe of thine Astrolabie vpon the thombe of thy right hand, and then woll his right side be toward thy left side, and his left side woll be toward thy right side. Take this rule generall, as well on the backe, as on the wombe side. Upon the ende of this East line (as I first said) is ymarked a little crosse, where as euermoꝛe generally is considered the entering of the East degree, in the whych the Sunne ariseth.

The degrees fro the East line to the South.

FRO the little crosse, vp to the end of the Meridionall line, vnder the ring shalt thou finde the boꝛdure, deuided with xc. degrees, and by that same pꝛopoꝛtion is euery quarter of thine Astrolabye deuided, ouer the whych degrees, there beene numbers of Augrime, that deuiden thilke same degrees fro fiue to fiue, as sheweth by long strikes betweene, of the whych, by long strikes, the space betweene conteyneth a mile way, and euery degree of thilke boꝛdure conteyneth foure minutes, that is to say, foure minutes of an houre.

Of the twelue signes, Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, and the others.

VNder the compasse of thilk degrees been wꝛitten the names of ỹ twelue signes, as Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo Virgo, Libza, Scoꝛpio, Sagittarius, Capꝛicoꝛnus, Aquarius, and Piſces. And the nombers of the degrees of the signes been wꝛitten in Augrime aboue, and with long diuisions, from fiue to fiue, deuideth from the time that the signe entereth vnto the last end. But vnderstand well, that these degrees of signes been eueriche of hem considered of foꝛtie Minutes, and euery Minute of foꝛtie seconds, and so foꝛth into small fractions infinite, as sayeth Alcabucius. And theꝛefoꝛe know well, that a degree of the boꝛdure contayneth foure Minutes, and a degree of a signe containeth foꝛtie Minutes, and haue this in mind.

The cercle of the daies.

NExt this followeth the cercle of ỹ daies, that been figured in manner of the degrees, that conteynen in number thꝛee hundꝛed, thꝛeescoꝛe and fiue, deuided also with long strikes, from fiue to fiue, and the numbers of Augrime, wꝛitten vnder the cercle.

The cercle of the twelue moneths.

NExt the cercle of dayes, followeth the cercle of the twelue names of ỹ months, that is to say, Januarius, Febꝛuarius, Marcius, Apꝛill, Maius, Junius, Julius, August, September, October, Nouember, Decembeꝛ.

The names of these Moneths taken heꝛ names, some foꝛ pꝛopeꝛties, and some by statutes of Empeꝛoꝛs, and some by other Loꝛds of Rome. Eke of these Moneths, as liked to Julius Cesar, and Cesar Augustus, some were icompouned of diuers nombers of daies, as Julie and August. Then hath Januarius xxxi. daies, Febꝛuarius xxviii. Marcius xxxi. Apꝛill xxx. May xxxi. Junius thirtie. August xxxi. September xxx. October thirtie and one. Nouember thirtie. December thirtie and one. Natheleſſe, although that Julius Cesar took two daies out of Feuereꝛe, and put hem in his Moneth of July, and Augustus

Cesar

Cesar cleped the Moneth of August after his name, and ordained it of one and thirty daies: yet trust well, that the Sunne dwelleth therefore neuer the more, ne the lasse, in one signe than in another.

The names of the holy daies.

Then followeth the names of the holye dayes in the Kalender, and next hem the letters, A. B. C. on which they fallen.

The scale of the Astrolabie.

Next the foresaid cercle of the A.B.C. vnder the crosse line is marked the scale, in manner of two Squires, or els in manner of ledders, that serueth by his xxii. poines, and his diuisions of full many a subtell conclusion of this foresaied scale: For the crosse line vnto the very angle, is cleaped Vmbra recta, or els Vmbra extensa, & the nether party Vmbra versa.

The Rule.

Then hast thou a broad rule, that hath on euery ende a square plate, parted with certaine holes, some more, and some lesse, to receyuen the stremes of the Sunne by day, and eke by mediation of thine eye, to know the altitude of the sterres by night.

The pin, which is imagined to be Pole artike, and the Horse.

Then is there a large pin, in manner of an exiltre, that goeth through the hole that halt the tables of the climathes in the reeth, in the wombe of the moder, thorow which pinne there goeth a little wedge, the which is cleped ẏ Horse, that straineth all these parts together. This foresayd great pin, in manner of an exiltre, is imagined to be the Pole artike in thine Astrolabie.

For lines on the wombe side.

The wombe side of thyne Astrolabie is also diuided, with a long crosse in foure quarters, from the East to West, and from the South to North, from right side to left side, as is the backeside.

The degrees of the wombe side.

The border of whyche wombe side, is deuided fro the pointe of the East line, vnto the poynt of the South line, vnder the ryng, in 90 degrees, and by the same proportion is euery quarter deuided, as is the backeside, that amounteth 360 degrees. And vnderstand well, that the degrees of this border, beene aunswering and consenting to the degrees of Equinoctiall, that is deuided in the same number, as euery other cercle is in the high heauen.

This border is deuided also with 23 letters, and a small crosse aboue the South line, that sheweth the 24 houres equals of ẏ clocke. And I haue saied, siue of these degrees maken a myle way, and three myle way maken an houre, and euery degree of this border contayneth foure Minutes, and euery Minute fourtie seconds. Now haue I told thee twice, and for the more declaration.

Of the principall Cercles.

The plate vnder the reete, is discriued with three cercles, of which, the least is cleaped the Cercle of Cancer, because that the head of Cancer tourneth euermore concentrike vppon the same Cercle. In this halfe of Cancer is the greatest declination Northward of the Sunne, and therefore is he ycleped Solsticium of Summer, which declination, after the Ptholome, is 23. degrees, and fiftie Minutes, as well in Cancer, as in Capricorne. This signe of Cancer is cleped the Tropick of Summer, of Tropos, that is to saine ayenward. The middle cercle in widenesse of this three, is cleaped the cercle Equinoctiall, vpon which tourneth euermore the heads of Aries and Libra. And vnderstande well, that euermore this cercle Equinoctiall tourneth iustly fro verye East to very West, as I haue shewed in the sphere solid. This same cercle is cleaped also the wayer of the day: For when the Sunne is in the head of Aries and Libra, then been daies and nightes like of length in all the worlde, and therfore ben these two signes called Equinoctis. And all that mooueth within these heads of Aries and Libra, is ycalled Northward: and all that mooueth without these heades, his meuing is cleped Southward: as for the Equinoctiall, take kepe of ẏ latitudes, North and South, and forget it not: but this cercle Equinoctiall, beene considered the 24. houres of the clocke. For euermore, the arising of 15. degrees of the Equinoctiall, maketh an houre equall of the clocke. This Equinoctiall is cleped the mid way of the first meuing, or els of the Sunne. And note, that the first meuing is cleaped meuyng of the first mouable of the eight Sphere, whych meuyng is fro East to

West,

West, and againe into East. Also it is cleaped girdle of the first meuing: For it departeth the first meuable, that is to sain, the sphere in two like parties, euen distant fro the Poles of this world. The widest of these three cercles principall, is cleped the cercle of Capricorne, and tourneth euermore concentrike vpon the same cercle. In the head of this foresaid Capricorne is the greatest declination Southward of the Sunne: And therefore it is cleaped Solsticium of Winter. This signe of Capricorne is also cleped the Tropick of Winter. For then beginneth the Sunne to come again to vs ward.

Of the almicanteras, the signet, and what is thine Orizont.

VPon this foresaied plate been compassed certain cercles, that highte almicanteras: of which some of hem seemen parfit cercles, and some seemen imparfite. The centure that standeth amidst the narrowest cercle, is cleaped the signet. And the nethereste cercle, that deuideth the two emispheries, that is the party of the heuen aboue the earth, and the party beneath. These almicanteras been compounde by two & two, all be it so, that on diuers Astrolabies, some almicanteras been deuided by one, and some by two, and some by three, after the quantitie of the Astrolabie. This foresaid signet is imagined to be the very point ouer the croune of thy head, and also this signet is the very pole of the orizont in euery region.

What been thine azimutes.

FRom this signet (as it seemeth) there commen crooked strikes, like to the clawes of a loppe, or els like to the werke of a womans calle, in keruyng ouerthwart the almicanteras, and these same strikes or diuisions ben cleaped Azimutes, and they deuiden the Orizonts on thine Astrolabie in 24 diuisions. And these Azimutes serue to know the costes of the firmament, and to other conclusions, as for to knowe the signet of the Sunne, and of euery sterre.

Of the xij. houres of the Planets.

NExt these Azimutes, vnder the cercle of Cancer, been the twelue diuisions embolite, much like to the shape of the Azimutes, that shewen the spaces of houres of Planets.

Thy Reete or els thy Zodiake.

THy Reete of thine Astrolabie, which is thy Zodiake, shapen in manner of a nette, or of a lop webbe, after the old description, which thou mayest tourne vp and doun, as thy self liketh, conteyneth certaine number of Sterres fixe, with her longitudes and latitudes determinate, if so be that the maker haue not erred. The names of the Sterres been writen in the margine of thy Reete, there they sit, of the whych Sterres, the small poynt is cleaped the Centure. And vnderstande, that all the Sterres sitting within the Zodiake of thyne Astrolabie, ben cleped Sterres of the North, for they arisen by the Northeast line, and all the remenaunt fixed out of the Zodiake, been ycleaped Sterres of the South, but I say not that they arisen all by the Southeaste line, witnesse of Aldeberan, and also Algomisa.

Generally vnderstond this rule, that thilke sterres, that been cleaped sterres of the North, arisen rather than the degree of her longitude, and all the sterres of the South arisen after the degree of her longitude, that is to sayne, sterres in thine Astrolabie.

The measure of longitude of sterres, ytaken in the line eclipticke of heauen, vnder the which line, when the Sunne and the Moone beene line right, els in the superficie of this line, then is the eclipse of the Sunne or of the Moone, as I shall declare, and eke the cause why: but soothly, the ecliptick line of the Zodiake, is the vttereste bordure of the zodiake, there thy degrees been marked. The zodiake of thy Astrolabye is shapen as a Compasse, whych that conteyneth a large brede, as after the quantitie of thy Astrolabie, in ensample, that the zodiake of heauen is imagined to bee a superficies, conteyning the latitude of twelue signes, where as all the remenaunte of cercles in heauen, ben imagined very lines, withouten any latitude, amiddes the celestiall zodiake is imagined a line, whyche that is cleped the Ecliptick line, vnder the whych line is euermore the way of the sunne. Thus been there sixe degrees of the zodiake on that one side of the line, and sixe degrees on that other. The zodiake is deuided in twelue principall diuisions, that departen the xii. signes, and for the straitnesse of thine Astrolabie, then is euery small diuision in a signe yparted by two degrees and two, I meane degrees, contayning fourtie Minutes, and this foresayed heauenish zodiake is cleaped the circle of the

Signes, or the circle of beastes. For Zodiake in language of Greeke, sounneth beastes in Latine tongue, and in the Zodiake beene the xii. Signes, that haue names of beasts, because when the Sunne entereth in any of the Signes, he taketh the property of such beasts, or els for that the sterres that been there, been fixed, been disposed in signe of beastes, or shape like beasts, or els when Planets beene vnder the Signes, they transmue vs by her influence, operations, and effects. And vnderstand also, that when an hote Planet commeth into an hote Signe, then entereth his heat, and if a Planet bee cold, then amenuiseth his coldenesse, because of the hote Signe. And by this conclusion mayest thou taken ensample in all Signes, be they moist or drie, mouable or fixe, reckening the qualitie of the Planets, as I first said. And euerich of these xii. signes, hath respect to a certaine parcell of the bodye of a man, & hath it in gouernaunce: as Aries hath thine head, and Taurus thy necke and thy throte, Gemini thine arm holes & thine arms, and so forth, as shall be shewed more plainely in the fift part of this treatise. The Zodiake, the which is partie of the eight Sphere, ouerkeruеth the Equinoctiall, and he ouerkeruеth hym agayne in euen partes, and that one halfe declineth Southward, and that other Northward, as plainely declareth the Treatise of the Sphere.

The Labell.

THen hast thou a labell, that is shapen like a rule, saue that it is strait, and hath no plates on eyther ende, but with the small point of the foresayd labell shalt thou calcule the equations in the bordure of thyne Astrolabie, as by thyne almurie.

The Almurie, the denticle of Capricorne, or els the calculere.

THine almurie is cleped the denticle of Capricorne, or els the calculere, this same almurie set fix in the head of Capricorne, and it seruеth of many a necessarie conclusion in equation of thynges, as shall be shewed.

Here beginneth the conclusions of thine Astrolabie, to find the degree in the which the Sunne is day by day, after his course about.

SEeken and know which is the day of the Moneth, and lay thy rule vppon the same day, and then woll the very point of thy rule verely sitten on the bordure, vpon the degree of the Sunne. Ensample as thus. The yere of our Lord, a thousand three hundred nynetie & one, the xii. day of March at midday, I wouldе know the degree of the Sunne, I sought in the backe halfe of mine Astrolabie, and found the circle of the dayes, the whych I knew by the names of the Months, written vnder the same Circle: Tho laied I my Rule ouer the foresaid day, and found the point of my Rule in the bordеr, vpon the first degree of Aries, a litle within the degree: and thus knew I this conclusion.

Another day I would know the degree of my Sonne, and this was at Midday in the xiii. day of December, I founde the day of the moneth in manner as I saied: tho laied I my Rule vppon the foresaied xiii. day, and founde the poynt of my Rule vppon the firste degree of Capricorne, a little within the degree, and then had I of this conclusion the very experience.

To know the altitude of the Sunne, either of celestiall bodies.

PUt the ring of thyne Astrolabye vpon thy right thombe, and tourne thy left side against the light of the Sunne, and remeue thy Rule vp and downe, till the streame of the Sunne shine through both holes of the Rule: looke then howe many degrees this Rule is areised fro the litle crosse vpon the East line, and take there the altitude of thy sunne: and in this same wise mayest thou knowe by night the altitude of the Moone, or of the bright sterres. This Chapiter is so generall euer in one, that there needeth no more declaration, but forget it not.

To know the degree of the Sunne, and of thy Zodiake, by the daies in the backside of thine Astrolabie.

THen if thou wilt wete the reckening, to know which is the day in thy Kalender of the month that thou art in, lay thyne Astrolabie, that is to say, the alidatha, vpon the day in the Kalender of thine Astrolabie, and he shall shew thee thy degree of the Sunne.

To

To knowe euery time of the day, by light of the Sunne, and euery time of the night by the Sterres fixe, and eke to know by night or by day the degree of the signe that ascendeth on the East Orizont, which is cleped commonly ascendent.

TAke the altitude of the Sunne when thee list, as I haue sayd, and set the degre of the Sunne (in case that it be before ỹ middle of the day) emong thyne almicanteras, on the East side of thine Astrolabie: and if it bee after the middle of the day, set the degree of the Sun vpon the West side. Take this manner of setting, for a generall rule ones for euer.

And when thou hast yset the degree of the Sunne, vpō as many almicanteras of height, as was the Sunne, taken by thy rule, lay ouer thy Labell vpon the degree of the Sunne, and then woll the point of the Labell sitten in the bordure, vpon the very tide of the day. Ensample of this.

The yeare of our Lorde, a thousand three hundred ninetie and one, the twelfth daye of March, I would know the tide of the day, I tooke ỹ altitude of my Sunne, and found that it was 25 degrees, and 30 Minutes of height of the bordure in the backe side, tho tourned I mine Astrolabye, and because it was before midday, I tourned my reete, and set the degree of the Sunne, that is to say, the first degree of Aries, in the right side of mine Astrolabie, vpon the 25 degree, and 30 minutes of heyght, emong my almicanteras: Tho laied I my Labell vpon the degree of my Sunne, and found the point of my Labell in the bordure, on the capitall letter, that is cleped an E. Tho reckened I all the capitall letters, fro the line of Midnight, vnto the forsaid letter E. and found it was nine of the Clocke of the day. Tho looked I ouer my East Orizont, and found there the twelue degree of Geminus ascending, which that I tooke for mine ascendent, and in this wise had I the experience for euermore, in wyech manner I should knowe the tide of the day, and eke myne ascendent. Tho would I wete that same night following the houre of the night, and wrought in this wise: emong an heape of Sterres, it lyked me to take the altitude of the fayre white Sterre, that is cleped the Alhaboz, and found her sitting on the West side of the line of Midday, eightcene degrees of height, taken by my Rule on the backside. Tho set I the Centure of this Alhaboz, vpon eightcene degrees, among my almicanteras, vpon the West side, because that hee was found vpon the West side: tho laied I my Labell ouer the degree of the Sun, that was discended vnder the West Orizont, and reckened all the letters capitals, fro the line of Midday, vnto the point of my labell in the bordure, and found that it was after noon, passed seuen of the clocke, the space of eleuen degrees. Tho looked I downe vpon my East Orizont, and found there twentie degrees of Libra ascending, whom I tooke for myne ascendent, and thus learned ones for euer, to know in which manner I should come to the houre of the night, and to mine ascendent, as verely as may be taken by so smale an instrument. But natheless, this rule in generall wil I warne thee for euer: ne make thou neuer none ascendent at noone of the day. Take a iust ascendent of thine Astrolabie, and haue set iustly a cloke, when any celestiall body, by the which thou weenest gouerne thilke thynges, been nigh the South line, for trust well, when the Sunne is neare the Meridionall line, the degree of the Sunne remaynyeth so long concentrike vpon thine almicanteras that soothly thou shalt erre fro the iust ascendent. The same conclusion say I, by my centure of my Sterre fix by the night: and moreouer, by experience I wote well, that fro our Orizont, fro eleuen of the clocke, vnto one, in taking of the iust ascendent, in a portatife Astrolabye, it is too hard to know. I meane from eleuen of the clocke before noone, till one of the clocke next following: and for the more declaration, loe here thy figure next after this rule, that followeth.

To knowe the degree of the Sunne in thy Zodiake, by the daies, in the backside of thine Astrolabie.

WHen thou wilt weten, to reckon and know, which is the day of the month that thou art in, and lay the rule of thy Astrolabie, that is to say, the alidatha, vpon the day, in the Kalender of thine Astrolabie, and hee shall shewe thee thy degree of Sunne.

Speciall declaration of the Ascendent.

THe ascendent soothly is as well in all natiuities, as in questions, and as in elections of times is a thing whyche that these Astrologians greatly obserue, wherfore me seemeth

meth conuenient, sens I speake of the ascendent, to make of it a speciall declaration. The ascendent soothly, to take it at the largest, is thilke degree that ascendeth, at anye of these forsaid times, on the East Orizon: and therfore, if that any Planet ascend at thilke same time in the forsaid same gree of his longitude, men say that thilke Planet is in Horoscopo, but soothly, the house of that ascendent, that is to say, the first house, or the East angle, is a thyng more broad and large, for after the statutes of Astrologiens, what celestial body, that is fiue degrees aboue thilke degree, that ascendeth on the Orizont, or within that number, that is to saine, nere the degree that ascendeth, yet recken they thilke planet in the ascendent, and what Planet that is vnder thilke degree, that ascendeth the space of 15 degrees, yet sain they, that Planet is like to him, that is the houre of the ascendent. But soothly, if he passe the bounds of the forsaid spaces, aboue or beneath, they sayne, that thilke Planet is falling fro the Ascendent: yet sayne these Astrologiens, that the Ascendent, and eke the Lord of the Ascendent, may be shapen for to be fortunate, or infortunate, as thus: A fortunate Ascendent cleapen they, when that no wicked Planet of Saturne or Mars, or els the taile of the Dragon, is in the house of the Ascendent, ne that no wicked Planet haue no aspect of enmitie vpon the Ascendent: But they will cast, that they haue fortunate Planet in her Ascendent, and yet in his felicitie, and then say they that it is well. Furthermore, they sayne, that Fortune of an Ascendent, is the contrarie of these forsaid thyngs. The Lord of the Ascendent, sayne they, that he is fortunate, when he is in good place for the Ascendent, and eke the Lord of the Ascendent is in an angle, or in a succedent, where he is in his dignitie, and comforted with friendly aspectes receyued, and eke that he may seene the Ascendent not retrograde, ne combust, ne ioyned with no shrewe in the same signe, ne that he be not in his discention, ne reigned with no Planet in his discentions, ne haue vpon him none aspect infortunate, and then they sayne that he is well.

Natheless, there been obseruaunces of iudiciall matter, and rites of Painims, in which my spirite hath no fayth, ne knowinge of her Horoscopum, for they sayne, that euery signe is departed in three euen parts, by 10 degrees, and the like portion they cleapen a face. And although a Planet haue a latitude fro the Ecliptike, yet sain some folke, so that the Planet arise in that same signe, with any degree of the forsaid face, in which his longitude is reckened. And yet is the Planet in Horoscopo, be in natiuities or in election.

To know the very equacion of the degrees of the Sunne, if it so be that it fall betwixt two almicanteras.

FOr as much as the almicanteras of thine Astrolabie been compowned by two and two, whereas some almicanteras in some Astrolabies bee compouned by one, or else by two, it is necessarie to thy learning, to teache thee first to knowe, and wytche with thyne instrument: wherefore, when that the degree of the Sunne falleth betweene two almicanteras, or els, if thyne almicanteras ben grauen with ouergreat a point of a Compace, for both these thyngs may cause errour, as well in knowing of the tide of the day, as of the very ascendent. Thou must werken in this wise: set the degree of the Sunne vpon the higher almicanteras, as of both. And wait wel where the almurie toucheth the bordure, & set there a pricke of ynke, set adoune againe the degree of the Sunne vpon the nether almicanteras, or both, and set there another pricke: remeue then thy almurie in the bordure, euen amiddes both prickes, and this woll leaden iustly the degree of the Sunne, to sit betweene both the almicanteras in his right place. Lay then the label on the degree of the Sunne, and find in the bordure the very tide of the day, or of the night. And also verely shalt thou find vpon thy East orizont thine ascendent.

To know the spring of the dawning, and the end of the euening, the which beene cleaped the two crepusculis.

SEt the nadyre of thy Sunne vpon 18 degrees of height among thine almicanteras on the west side, and lay thy label on the degree of the Sunne, and then shall the point of the label shew the spring of the day: also set the nadire of the Sunne vpon the 18 degrees of height among thine almicanteras on the East side, and lay ouer thy label vpon the degree of the Sunne, and with the poynt of thy label find in the bordure the end of thine euening that is very night. The nadire of the Sonne is thilke degree that is opposite to the degree of the Sunne in the 320. sign, as thus. Euery degree of Aries, by order, is nadire to euery degree of Libra by order, and Taurus to Scorpion, Gemini to Sagitarius, Cancer to Capricorne, Leo to Aquary, Virgo to Pisces.

And

And if any degree in thy Zodiake be derke, his nadire shall declare him.

To know the arch of the day, that some folke callen the day artificiall, fro the Sunne rising, till it goe downe.

SEtte the degree of the Sunne vpon thine East orizont, and lay thy labell on the degree of the Sunne, and at the point of thy labell in the bordure set a pricke: turne then thy reete about, till the degree of the Sun sit vpon the West orizont, and lay the labell vpon the same degree of the Sunne, and at the point of the labell set another pricke. Reeken then the quantitie of time in the bordure betwixe both prickes, and take there thine arche of the day: the remenaunt of the bordure vnder the orizont, is the arch of the night. Thus maist thou reeken both arches of euery portion wher that thou likest, and by this manner of werkyng mayest thou see howe long that any sterre fixe dwelleth aboue the earth, fro the time that he riseth, till he go to rest. But the day naturell, that is to sayne, 24 houres, is the reuolution of the Equinoctiall, with as much partye of the Zodiake, as the Sunne of his proper mouing passeth in the meane while.

To turne the houres inequals, and the houres equals.

TO know the number of the degrees in the houres inequals, and depart hem by 15, and take there thine houres equals.

To know the quantitie of the day vulgare, that is to say, fro spring of the day vnto the very night.

KNowe thy quantitie of thyne crepuscu-lis, as I haue it taught in the chapiter before, and adde hem to the arche of the day artificiall, and take there thy space of all that hole day vulgare vnto the very night. In the same manner mayest thou werke to know the vulgare night.

To know the houres inequals by day.

VNderstand well, that these houres inequals ben cleaped houres of the planets: And vnderstond well, that sometime been they longer by day than they be by night, and sometime contrary. But vnderstand thou wel, that euermore generally the houres inequale of the daye, with the houres inequale of the night, conteyneth 30 degrees of the bordure, the which bordure is euermore answering to the degrees of the equinoctiall, wherefore depart the arche of the day artificiall in 12, and take there the quantitie of the houre inequale by day, and if thou abate the quantitie of the houre inequale by daye, out of 360 degrees, then shall the remenant that leaueth, performe the houre inequale by night.

To knowe the quantitie of houres equalles.

THe quantities of houres equales, that is to sayne, the houres of the clock ben departed by 15 degrees already in the bordure of thy Astrolabie, as well by night as by day, generally for euermore. What needeth any more declaration: wherfore when thee lyst to knowe howe many houres of the clocke been passed, or any part of any of these houres ben to commen, fro such a time to such a time, by day or by nyght, knowe the degree of thy Sunne, and lay thy labell on it: then turne thy reete about ioyntly with thy labell, and with the point of it reeken in the border, fro the Sunne arysing, into the same place there thou desirest by day as by night. This conclusion woll I declare in the fourth partye of the last chapiter of this treatise, so openly, that there shall lacke no worde that needeth declaration.

Speciall declaration of the houres of the Planets.

VNderstand well, that euermore, fro the arising of the Sunne, till it goe to rest, the nadire of the Sunne shal shew the houre of the planet, and fro that time forward, all the nyght, till the Sunne arise, then shall the very degree of the Sunne shew the houre of the planet. Ensample as thus. The 13. day of March fell vpon a saturday paraventure, and at the arising of the Sunne I found the second degree of Aries sitting vpon mine East orizont, all be it was but little. Then found I the second degree of Libra nadire of my Sunne, discending on my West orizont, vpon which West orizont, euery day generally at the Sunne arising, entereth the houre of any planet, vnder the forsayd West orizont, after the which planet, the day beareth his name, and endeth in the next strike of the planet, vnder the forsaid West orizont: and euer as the Sunne clymbeth vpper and vpper, so goeth his nadire downer and downer, and eching fro suche strikes the houres of planets by order, as they sitten in heauen.

The first houre inequale of euery saturday, is Saturne, and the second to Iupiter, the third to Mars, the fourth to the Sunne, the fift to Venus, the sixt to Mercurius, the seuenth to the Moone, and then ayen the eyght to Saturn, the ninth to Iupiter, the tenth to Mars, the eleuenth to the Sunne, the twelfth to Venus. And now is my Sunne gone to rest, as for that saturday, then sheweth the very degree of the Sunne the houre of Mercury, entring vnder my west orizont at euen. And next him succedeth the Moone, and so forth by order, planet after planet, in houre after houre all the night long, till the Sun arise. Now riseth the Sunne the sunday by the morow, and the nadyre of the Sunne vpon the west orizont, sheweth mee the entering of the houre of the forsaid Sunne. And in this manner succedeth planet vnder planet, fro Saturn vnto the Moone, and fro the Moone vp again to Saturne, houre after houre generally, and thus know I this conclusion.

To know with which degree of the Zodiake any sterre fix in thine Astrolaby, ariseth vpon the East orizont, although the orizont be in another signe.

SEt the centure of the sterre vpon the East orizont, and look what degree of any sign that sitteth vpon the same orizont at the same time: and vnderstande well, that with the same degree ariseth the same sterre. And this marualous arising with a strong degree in another signe, is because that the latitude of the sterre fixe is either North or South fro the equinoctiall. But soothly, the latitudes of planets ben commonly reckened fro the ecliptike, because that none of hem declineth but few degrees out fro the brede of the Zodiake. And take good keepe of this chapter of arising of celestiall bodies, for there trusteth well, that neither moone neither sterre in our ambolike orizont, that ariseth with the same degree of his longitude, saue in one case, and that is whē they haue no longitude fro the ecliptike line. But neuertheless, sometime is euerich of these planets vnder the same line.

To know the declination of any degree in the Zodiake, fro the equinoctiall cercle.

SEt the degree of any signe vpon the line Meridionall, and recken his altitude in the almicanteras, fro the East orizont vp to the same degree set in the forsaid line, and set there a pricke: Turne vp then thy reete, and set the head of Aries or Libra in the same Meridionall line, and set there another prick. And when that this is done, consider the altitudes of hem both: for soothly, the difference of thilke altitude, is the declination of thilke degree fro the equinoctiall. And if it so be, that thilk degree be Northward fro the equinoctiall, then is his declination North, and if it bee Southward, then it is South.

To know for what latitude in any region the almicanteras in my tables ben compouned.

REcken how many degrees of almicanteras in the Meridionall line, be from the cercle equinoctiall, vnto the signet, or els from the Pole artike vnto the North orizont, and for so great a latitude, or so small a latitude, is the table compouned.

To knowe the latitude of the Sunne, in the middest of the day, that is cleped the altitude Meridian.

SEt the degree of thy Sunne vpon the line Meridionall, and recken how many degrees of almicanteras been betwixe thine East Horizont and the degree of thy Sunne, and take there thine altitude meridian, that is to sayne, the highest degree of the Sunne, as for that day. So mayest thou knowe in that same line the highest line that any starre fixe clymbeth by night, this is to sayne, that when any sterre fixe is passed the line meridionall, then beginneth it to discend, and so doth the Sunne.

To know the degree of the Sunne, by the reet, for a manner coryosyte.

SEcke busily with thy rule the highest of the Sunne in the middest of the day, tourne then thine Astrolabye, and with a pricke of ynke marke the number of the same altitude in the line meridionall. Tourne then thy reet about, till thou finde a degree of the Zodiake according with the pricke, this is to sayne, sitting on the pricke, and in sooth thou shalt find but two degrees in all the Zodiake, of that condition. And yet thilke two degrees beene in diuers signes. Then mayest thou lightly, by the scalon of the yeare, knowe the signe in which is the Sunne.

To

To know which day is like to other in length through out the yeere.

LOoke which degrees ben like from the heeds of Cancer & Capricorne, and looke when the Sonne is in any of thilke degrees, than been the dayes like of length, that is to saine, that as long is that day in that moneth, as was soch a day in soch a moneth, there varieth but littell. Also if thou take two daies naturelles in the yeere, ilike farre from eyther points of the Equinoctial, in the opposite parties, then as long is the day artificial on that one day as on that other, and eke the contrarie.

This chapiter is a maner declaracion to conclusions that foloweth.

VNderstand well, that thy zodiake is departed into halfe cercles, from the head of Capricorne vnto the head of Cancer, & ayenward from the head of Cancer vnto the head of Capricorne. The head of Capricorne is the lowest point, where as the sonne goeth in winter, and the head of Cancer is the highest point, in which the Sonne goth in Sommer. And therefore vnderstand well, then any two degrees that been ylike farre from any of these two heads, trust wel that thilke two degrees been like declination, be it Southward or Northward, and the dayes of hem ben like of length, & the nights also, & shadowes ylike, and the altitudes ylike at midday for euer.

To know the very degree of any manner Starre straunge after his latitude, though he be indeterminate in thy Astrolaby, sothly to the trouth thus he shall be knowen.

TAke the altitude of thy Starre, when he is on the East side of the line meridional, as nigh as thou maist gesse, and take that ascendent anone right by some maner starre fixe, which thou knowest, and forget not the altitude of the first Starre ne thine ascendent. And when that this is done, aspie diligently when this same first starre passeth any thing to the South westward, and catch him anone right in the same nombre of the altitude on the west side of this lyne meridional, as he was caught on the East side, and take a newe ascendent anone right by some maner fixe, the which that thou knowest, and forget not this second ascendent. And when this is done, reken then how many degrees been bitwixt the first ascendent, and the second ascendent, and reken well the middel degree bitwixt both ascendents, and set thilke middell degree vpon thine East orizont, and then loke what degre sit vpon the lyne meridional, and take there the very degree of the Ecliptike, in which the starre standeth for the tyme. For in the ecliptike is the longitude of a celestiall body, reckened euen fro the halfe of the head of Aries, vnto the end of Pisces, and his latitude is rekened after the quantite of his declinatiõ North or South, towarde the poles of thys werke. As thus, if it be of the Sunne or any fix starre, reken his latitude or his declinacion fro the equinoctial cercle, and if it be of a planete, reken then the quantitee of his latitude from the ecliptike line, al be it so that from the equinoctial, may the declinacion or the latitude of any body celestiall be rekened, after ỹ sight North or South, and after the quantite of his declination. And yet so may the latitude or the declinacion of any body celestiall, saue onely of the Sunne, after his sight North or South. And after the quantite of his declinaciõ be rekened from the ecliptike lyne, fro which line al Planets sometime decline, North or South, saue onely the forsaid Sunne.

To know the degrees of Longitudes of fixe sterres, after that they ben determinate in thine Astrolaby, if it so be that they been trewly set.

SEt the center of the sterre vpon the lyne meridional, & take keepe of thy zodiake, and looke what degree of any signe sitte vpon the same lyne meridional at the same tyme, and there the degree in which the sterre standeth, and with the same degree commeth the same Sterre vnto the same lyne from the orizont.

To know in speciall the Latitude of our centre, I meane after the altitude of Oxenford, and the hight of our people.

VNderstand well that as farre is the head of Aries or Libra in the equinoctial, from our orizont, as is the synet from the pole artike, and as hye as the pole artike from the orizont, as the equinoctiall is farre from the synet: I preue it thus by the latitude of Oxenford, vnderstand well that the height of our pole artike from our North orizont is 51. degrees, and 50. minutes, then is the synet from the pole artike 38. degrees and 10. minutes, then is the equinoctiall from our synet 51. degrees, and 50. minutes, then is our south ori-

zonte frō our equinoctial 38. degrees, and 10. minutes. Understand well this rekening also, forget not that the sunct is 90. degrees of heyght from the orizont, and our equinoctial is 90. degrees from our pole artike. Also this shorte rule is sothe that the latitude of any planet in a region, is the distaunce from the sunct vnto the equinoctial.

To proue the Latitude of any place in a region by the presse of the height of the pole artike in that same place.

IN some winters night, when the firmament is cleere and thicke sterred, wayt a time till that euery ster fixe sit line right perpēdiculer ouer the pole artike, and clepe that ster. A. and wayte another sterre that sit lyne right vnder A. and vnder the pole, and clepe that sterre F. & vnderstand well that F. is not considred but onely to declare that A. that sit euer on the pole. Take then anone right the altitude of A. from the orizonte and forgette it not, let A. and F. go farewel till agaynst the dawnyng a great while, and come then again, and abide till that A. is euen vnder the pole vnder F. for sothely then will F. sit ouer the pole, take then eftsones the altitude of A. from the orizonte, and note as well the seconde altitude as the first altitude. And when that this is done, reken how many degrees that the first altitude A. exceeded his altitude, and take half the like portion that is exceeded, and adde it to his second altitude, and take there the eleuacion of the pole, and eke the altitude of thy region. For these two ben of one nombre that is to same, as many degrees as thy pole is eleuat, so moch is the latitude of thy region. Ensample as thus, Paraucenture the altitude of A. in the euening is 92. degrees of heyght, then will the second altitude or the dawnyng be 21. that is to same, lesse than 92. that was his first altitude at euen. Take then the halfe of 92. and adde to it 21. that was his second altitude, and then hast thou the heyght of the pole and the latitude of thy region. But vnderstād well to preue this conclusion, and many another fayre conclusion, thou mayest haue a plomet hangyng on a lyne hygher than thy head on a perche, & that line mote hang euen perpendiculer betwixt the pole and thine eye, and then shalt thou see if A. sit euen ouer the pole & ouer F. at euen. And also if F. sit euen ouer the pole and ouer A. at day.

Another conclusion to preue the height of the pole artike from the orizont.

TAke any sterre fixe that euer descēdeth vnder the orizont in thilk region, and cōsider his hygheste altitude and his lowest altitude from the orizont, and make a nomber of these altitudes: take then and abate halfe that nombre, and take there the eleuacion of the pole artike in that same region, and for the more declaracion, &c.

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Another conclusion to preue the latitude of a region that ye been in.

VNderstande well that the latitude of any place in a region, is verely the space betwixe the signe of hem that dwellē there, and the equinoctial cercle, North or Southe, takyng the measure in the merydionall lyne, as sheweth in the almicanteras of thin Astrolaby, and thilke space is as moch as the pole artike is hye in the same place frō the orizont. And then is the depression of the pole artentike beneath the orizont, the same quantite of space, neither more ne lesse. Then if thou desire to know this latitude of the region, take the altitude of the sunne in the middle of the day, when ỹ sunne is the heed of Aries or of Libra, forthan moueth the Sunne in the line equinoctial, and abate the nombre of that same Sunnes altitude out of 90. degrees, and then is the remnaunt of the nombre that leueth, the altitude of the region, as thus: I suppose that the Sunne is thilke day at noone 38. Degrees of heyght, abate then 38. degrees out of 90. so leueth there 52. then is 52. degrees the latitude: I say not this but for ensample, for well I wote the latitude of Oxenford is certaine minutes lesse. Now if it so be that thee thinketh too long a tariyng to abide till that the Sunne be in the head of Aries or of Libra, then wayte when the Sunne is in any other degree of the zodiake, and consider the degree of this declinacion be Northward from the equinoctial, abate then from the Sonnes altitude at noone the nombre of his declinacion, and then hast thou the highest of the heeds of Aries and Libra, as thus: My Sonne paraucenture is in the 10. degree of Leo almost 56. of height at noone, and his declinacion is almost 18. degrees Northward from the equinoctial, abate then thilke 18. degrees of declinacō out of the altitude at noone, then leueth 38. degrees, lo there the heed of Aries or Libra and thine equinoctial in that region. Also if it so be that the sunnes Declinacion be southwarde

warde from the equinoctial, adde then thilke declinacion to the altitude of the Sunne at noone, and take there the heeds of Aries and Libra and thine equinoctiall, abate then the height of the equinoctiall out of 90 degrees, and then leueth there 38 degrees, that is the distaunce of the region from the equinoctial of any sterre fix that thou knowest, and take the nether elongacion lengthing from the same equinoctial lyne, and werke after the maner aforesaid.

Declaracion of the ascencion of signes as well in the circle direct, as in oblique.

THe excellencie of the sphere solide amonges other noble conclusions, sheweth manifest the diuers ascencions of signes in diuers places, as well in right cercles as in embolyfe cercle. These auctours write that thilke signe is cleped of right ascencion with which the more part of the cercle equinoctial and the lesse part of the zodiake ascendeth, and thilke signe ascendeth embolyfe, with which the lesse of the zodiake equinoctial, and the more part of the zodiake ascendeth, and euer mo the arche of the day and the arche of the night is there ylike long, and the sonne twise euery yeere passing through the signes of her heed, and two sommers and two winters in a yeere haue these forsaid people, and the almycanteras in her Astrolaby ben streyght as a line, so hath shewed in this figure. The vtilities to know the ascencions of signes in the right circle is this: Trust well that by mediacions of thilke ascencions, these Astrologiens by her table and her instruments, knowen verely the ascencion of euery degree and minute in all the zodiake, in the embolike cercle, as shalbe shewed. And note that this forsayd right orizont that is cleaped orizont rectum, deuideth the equinoctiall into right angles, and embolike Orizont, wheras the people is enhanced vpon the Orizont, ouercommeth the equinoctiall embolike angles.

This is the conclusion to know the ascencions of signes in the right circle, that is, circulus directus.

SEt the heed of what signe thee list to know the ascendyng on the right cercle, vpon the line meridionall, & wayt where thine almury toucheth the bordure, and set there a pricke, tourne then they reet westward till the end of the forsaid signe, set vpon the meridionall lyne, and eftsones wait where thine almury toucheth the bordure, and set there another pricke. Reken then the nombers of degrees in the bordure betwixe both prickes, & take then the ascencion of the signe in ỹ right circle, and thus maist thou werke with euery porcion of the zodiake.

To know the ascencions of signes in the embolike cercle in euery region, I meane in circulo obliquo.

SEt the heed of ỹ signes, which as thee list to know his ascencion vpon the East Orizont, & wayt were thine almury toucheth the bordure, & set there a prick, tourne then thy reet vpward in the end of the same signe, set vpon the East orizont, & wait eftsones where as thine almury toucheth the bordure, and sette there another pricke, reken then the number of the degrees in the bordure betwixe both prickes, and take there the ascencion of the signe in the embolyfe cercle. And vnderstand well that all the signes in the zodiake, from the heed of Aries vnto the end of Virgo, ben cleaped signes of the North from the equinoctiall, and these signes arisen betwixe the very East & the very North in our orizont generally for euer: & all the signs from the heed of Libra, vnto the end of Pisces, been cleaped signes of the south fro the equinoctiall, and these signes arisen euermore betwixe the very East & the very south in our orizõt, also euery signe betwixe the heed of Capricorne vnto the ende of Gemini, ariseth in our Orizonte in lesse than two houres equalles, and these same signes from the heed of Capricorne vnto the ende of Geminy, been called torтuous signes or crooked signes, for they rysen embolyfe in our orizont, and these croked signes been obedient to the signes that been of the right ascencion. These signes of right ascencion, ben fro the heed of Cancer vnto the heed of Sagitary, and these signes arisen more vpright than doth the other, & therefore they bene called Soueraine signes, and euery of hem ariseth in more space than in two houres, of whiche signes Gemini obeyeth to Cancer, & Taurus to Leo, & Aries to Virgo, Pisces to Libra, Aquarius to Scorpio, & Capricorne to Sagitarie, & thus euermore two signes that ben like ferre from the heed of Capricorne, obeyeth euerich of hem to other.

To know iustly the foure quarters of the world, as East, West, South, and North.

Take

TAke the altitude of thy Sunne when thou liste, and note well the quarter of the worlde in which the Sunne is from the time by the alymuters, tourne then thyne Astrolaby, and set the degree of the sonne in the Almicanteras of his altitude, on thilke syde that the Sunne standeth, as is in maner of takyng of houres, and ley thy label on the degree of the Sunne, and reken how many degrees of the Sunne, been betwene the lyne Meridionall and the point of thy label and note well the nombres. Tourne then agayne thyne Astrolabie, and set the poynt of thy great rule there thou takest thin altitudes, vpon as many degrees in hys bordure from his meridionall, as was the point of thy label from the lyne meridionall, on the wombe side. Take then thyne Astrolaby with both handes sadly and slyly, & let the Sunne shine through both holes of thy rule, and slyly in thilke shinyng lay thyne Astrolabie couche a downe euen vpon a playne ground, and then will the meridionall lyne of thine Astrolabie be euen South, and the East lyne will lie euen East, and the West lyne West, and the North lyne North, so that thou werke softly and auisely in the couchyng, and thou hast thus the foure quarters of the firmament, &c.

To know the altitude of Planets from the way of the Sunne, whether they ben North or South fro the way aforesaid.

LOoke when a Planet is on ỹ lyne Meridionall, if that her altitude be of the same height, that is the degree of the sunne for that day, and then is the Planet in the very way of the sunne, and hath no Latitude. And if the altitude of the Planet be hyer than the degree of the sunne, then is the Planet North from the way of the signe Southe, a quantite of Latitude as sheweth by thyne Almycanteras, and if the altitude be lesse than the degree of the sunne, then is the Planet south from the way of the Sunne, soch a quantite of latitude as sheweth by thine Almicanteras: This is to saine fron the way of the sunne in euery place of the zodiake, for on the morow the sunne wil be in another degree.

For to know the signet for the arising of the Sunne, this is to sayne, the party of the Orizont in which the Sunne ariseth.

THou must first cõsider that the Sunne ariseth not in the very Est signet, sometime by North East, and sometime by South East, sothly the sunne ariseth euermore in ỹ very East in our orizont, but if he be in the head of Aries or Libra. Now is thine Orizont departed into 24 parties, of thy minutes, in signification of 24 partes of the world, though it be so, that shipmen reken al that parties in 32. Then is there no more, but waite in the which minute, that the sunne entreth at his arising, and take there the signet of the rising of the sunne.

The maner of deuision of thine Astrolabie, is thus enioyned, as in this case.

FIrst, it is deuided in fower places principally, with the line that commeth fro the East, to the West, and then with another line, that goeth fro the South to the North: then is it deuided in small parties of minutes, as East and East by South, where that is the first minute aboue the East lyne, and so forth fro partie to partie, till that thou come againe to the East lyne. This thou might vnderstand the signet of euery sterre, in which partie he ariseth.

To know in which partie of the firmament, is the coniunction.

COnsider the tyme of the coniunction, by the Kalender, as thus: how many houres that the coniunction is fro midday of the day before, as sheweth the Canon of ỹ Kalender. Reken then that nomber in the bordure of thyne Astrolabie, as thou were wont to do in knowyng of the houres of the day, or of the night, & lay thy label ouer ỹ degree of the sunne, then will the point of the label sit vpõ the houre of the coniunction. Looke then in which minute the degree of the sunne sitteth, & in that partie of the firmament is the coniunction.

To know the signet of the altitude of the Sunne.

THis is no more to say, but any tyme of the day take the altitude of the Sunne, and by the Minutes in which hee ascendeth, thou might see in which partie of the Firmament he is, and in the same wise might thou see by night any Sterre, whether he sit East, West, or South, or any part betwixe, after

after the name of the minutes, in which the sterres standeth.

To know sothly the longitude of the Moone, or any Planet that hath no Latitude, from the time of the Ecliptike line.

TAke the altitude of the Moone and reken thyne altitude vp, emong thyne almicanteras, on which side that the moone standeth, & set there a pricke. Take then anone right vpon the Moones side, the altitude of euery sterre fixe that thou knowest, and set his cercle vpon his altitude, emong thyne almicanteras, there the Sterre is founden, waite then of which degree the zodiake is, to which the prick of the altitude of the Moone, & there take the degree in which the Moone standeth. This conclusion is very soth, of the Starres in thine Astrolaby, & standeth after the trouth. Some treatise of the Astrolaby, maketh none exception, whether the Moone haue latitude or none, nor whether side of the Moone, the altitude of the Sterre be found. And note if the Moone shewe her selfe by day, then thou mayest wooreche the same conclusion by the Sunne, as well as by the starre fixe.

This is the werching of the conclusions to know whether any Planet be direct, or retrograde.

TAke the altitude of any Sterre, that is cleped a Planete, and note it well anone right take the altitude of some sterre fixe, that thou knowest, and note it well also, and come againe the third or the fourth night next folowyng, for then thou shalt perceyue well the meuyng of the Planete whether he meue forward, or backward, and waite well then when the sterre fixe, is in this same altitude that she was, when thou tooke her first altitude, of the forsaid Planet, and note it well, for trust well, if so be that the Planet be in the right side of the meridionall line, so that his second altitude be lesse than ỹ first altitude was, then is the Planet direct, and if he be in the West side in that condicion, then is he retrograde, and if so be that this Planet be in the East side, whē his altitude is take, so that the second altitude, be more than his first altitude, then is he retrograde, and if he be in the West side of the lyne meridionall, then is he direct, but the cōtrary mouing of these parties, is the cours of the Moone, for sothly the moone moueth the contrary fro either Planets, in her ecliptike line, but in none other maner.

The conclusion of equacions of houses, after the Astrolabie.

SEt the beginnyng of the degree that ascēdeth vpon ỹ end of the viii. houre inequall, then will the lyne of the second house, sit vpon the line of midnight, remeue then the degree that ascendeth, and set him vpon the end of the x. houre inequal, then will the beginning of the iii. house, sitte vpon the Midnight lyne, byng vp againe the same degree that ascendeth first, and set hym vpon the East Orizont, and then will the beginnyng of the iiii. hous sit vpon the Midnight lyne. Take then the nadere of the degree, that ascendeth first, and set hym vpon the end of the ii. houre inequall, and then will the beginnyng of the v. house, sit vpon the Midnight lyne. Take then the nadere of the ascendent, and set hym vpon the end of the iiii. houre inequall, and then will the beginnyng of the vi. house set vpon the Midnight line. The beginnyng of the vii. house is nadere of the ascendent, and the beginnyng of the viii. house is nadere of the second, and the beginnyng of the ninth house is nadere of the third, and the beginnyng of the tenth house is nadere of the iiii. and the beginning of the leuenth house is nadere of the fiueth, and the beginning of the xii. house is nadere of the sixt house.

Another maner of equacions of houses, by the Astrolabie.

TAke thyne ascendent, and then thou hast the fower angles, for well thou wotest, that thoppolite is of thine ascendent, that is to say, the beginnyng of the seuenth house sit vpon the West Orizont, and the beginnyng of the tenth house, vpon the lyne meridionall, and his oppolite vpon the line of Midnight, then laie thy labell vpon the degree that ascendeth, & reken then fro the point of thy labell, all the degrees in the bordure, till that thou come to the Meridionall line, & departe all thilke degrees into three euen parts, and take there the euen porcions of three other houses, for to lay thy labell ouer euery of these three parties, and then thou might see by the labell in the zodiake, the beginnyng of these three houses fro the ascendent, that is to say, ỹ twelue next aboue the ascendent, and then the eleuenth house & the tenth house vpon the Meridionall line, as I first said, the same wise werche, fro the ascendent, downe to the line of Midnight, and thus thou hast three houses, that is to say, the beginning of the se-

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cond, the third, and the fourth house: then is the nadire of these three houses, the beginning of these three houses that followeth.

To finde the line Meridionall, to dwell fixe in any certaine place.

TAke a round plate of metall, for warpyng the bozder the better, & make thereupon a iuste compace, a little within the bozdure, and lay this round plate vpon an euen groũd, oz some euen stone, oz on a euen stocke fix in the groũd, and lay it euen by a rule, in the centre of the compace, sticke an euen pinne oz a wire vpright, the smaller the better, and set the pinne oz thy wire, by a plomme rules end vpright euen, & let this pinne be no lenger than a quarter, of thy diameter of the compace fro the pin, and wait busily about tenne oz eleuen of the clocke, when the sunne sheweth, when the shadow of the pinne entereth any thyng within the cercle of the compace one heere bzede, and make there a pricke with pnke: abide still wayting on the sunne, after one of the clocke, til that the shadow of the pinne oz of the wire, passe any thyng out of the cercle oz compace, bee it neuer so little, and sette there a pricke. Take then a compace and measure euen the middle, betwixt both prickes, and set there a pricke: Take then a Rule and dzawe a strike euen fro the pinne vnto the middle pricke, and take there the line Meridionall foz euermoze, as in the same place. And if thou dzaw a crosse ouerthwarte the compace, iustly ouer the line Meridionall, then haste thou East and West, and perconsequens the oppositike, that is South and Nozth.

Descripcion of the Meridionall line, and of the longitudes and latitudes of cities and tounes, as wel as of climates.

THis lyne Meridionall, is but a maner discripcion of a lyne imagined, that passeth vpõ the poles of the wozlde, and by the signet of our hedde: and it is cleaped the signet, foz in what place that any man is at any tyme of the yeere, when the Sunne by meuyng of the Firmament commeth to his Meridionall place, then is it the very Midday, that we cleape Noone, & therefoze it is cleaped the lyne of Midday. Then take heed that euermoze of two Citees, oz of two Townes, of which the one approcheth nerer the East, than doth the other Towne, trust well that thilk two Tounes haue diuers Meridians. Take kepe also, that the arche of the Equinoctial, that is conteyned & bounded betweene the two Meridians, is cleaped the Longitude of the toune. And if it so be that two Tounes haue Meridian like, oz one Meridian, then is the distaunce of hem bothe lyke farre: and in this maner they chaũge not her Meridian, but sothly they chaunge her Almicantaras, foz the haunsing of the Pole, and the distaunce of the sunne. The longitude of a climate may be cleaped the space of the yearth, fro the beginnyng of the first clymate, vnto the laste ende of the same clymate, euen directe against the Pole artike, thus say some auctheurs. And some clerks say, that if men cleape the latitude of a center parch Meridian, that is conteyned oz intercept, betwixe the signet and the Equinoctiall, then they say, that the distaunce fro the Equinoctial, vnto the end of the climate, euen ayenst the pole artike, is the longitude of the climate foz South.

To know with what degree of the Zodiake, that any Planet ascendeth on the Orizont, where his latitude be North, or South.

KNow by thyne Alminack, the degree of the Ecliptike of any signe, in which that the planet is rekened foz to bee, and that is cleaped the degree of his lõgitude. And knowe also the degree of his latitude, fro the ecliptike, Nozth oz South, and by these ensamples following in especiall, thou mayest wirche with euery signe of the zodiake. The longitude peraunture of Venus, oz of another planet was of Capzicozne, and the latitude of hem Nozthward degrees, fro ỹ ecliptike line, then toke I subtill compas, and cleaped the one poinct of my compace A. and that other F. then tooke I the point of A. and set it in the ecliptike line, and my zodiake in the degree of the Longitude of heddes, that is to say, in the end of Capzicozne, & then set I the poinct of F. vpward in the same signe, because that ỹ altitude was Nozth, vpon the latitude of Venus, that is to say, in the degree fro the heed of Capzicozne. & thus haue I the degrees betwixe my two prickes: then layd I doune softly my compace, and set the degree of the longitude vpon the orizont, then tooke I and waxed my labell, in maner of a payze of tables, to receiue distinctly the pricke of my compace, then tooke I this fozsaid labell and layed it fize ouer the degree of my longitude, then toke I vp my Compace, and the point of A, in the waxe of my labell, as

I coud gesse, ouer the ecliptike lyne, in thende of the longitude I set the poynct ouer endlong on the labell, vpon the space of the latitude inwarde, and on the zodiake, ỹ is to say, Northward fro the ecliptike: then laied I doune my Compace, and looked well in the way vpon the ecliptike of A. & F. then tourned I my reete, till that the pricke of F. sate vpō the Orizont, then sawe I well, that the body of Venus in her latitude of degrees septentrionals, ascendeth in the end of the degree, fro ỹ heed of Capricorne. And note that in this maner, thou mightest werch with any latitude septentrionall in all signes: but sothly the latitude Meridional, of a planet in Capricorne may not be take, because of the little space betwixe the ecliptike, and the bordure of the Astrolabie, and likerly in all other signes it may be take. Also the degree peraucnture of Jupiter, or of any other Planet, was in the first degree of Pisces in longitude, and his latitude was degrees Meridionall. Then tooke I the poinct of A. & set it in ỹ first degree of Pisces on the ecliptike, then set I ỹ poinct dounward of F. in the same signe, because that the latitude was South degrees, that is to say, fro the heed of Pisces, & thus haue I degrees betwixe both prickes. Then set I the degree of the longitude, vpon the Orizont then tooke I my labell, and layed hym fixe vpō the degree of longitude, then set I the poinct of A. on my labell cuē ouer the ecliptike line, in the ende of the degree of the longitude, and I sette the poinct of F. endlong on my label, the space of degrees of the latitude outward fro the zodiake, that is to say, Southwarde fro the Ecliptike towarde the bordure, and then tourned I my reete, till the poinct of F. sate vpon the Orizont, then sawe I well that the body of Jupiter, in his latitude of degrees Meridionall, ascendeth with the degree of Pisces in horoscopo. And in this maner thou mayest werch, with any Latitude, as I saied first, saue in Capricorn. And thou wilt plie this craft, with the arising of the Moone, looke thou reken well the course of houre by houre, for she dwelleth in a degree of her Longitude but a little while, as thou woste well: but neuertheless, if thou legen well her very meuing by the tables, or alter her course houre by houre, thou shalt do well inough.

Vmbra recta.

IF thou wilt wirche with Umbra recta, if thou might come to the base of the Toure, in this maner shalt thou wirch: take the altitude of the Toure with both holes, so ỹ the rule lie euen on a poinct. Ensample, as thus: I see him through the poincte of fower, then mete I the space, betwixe me and the Toure, and I find it twenty foote, then behold I how fower is to twelue, & I find it is the third part of twelue. Right so the space betwixe thee & the Toure, is the third part of the altitude of the Toure: then thrise twentie foote, is the highest of the toure, with thaddicion of thine owne body fro thine ye. If the Rule fall on fiue, then is fiue times twelue, the highest of the Toure.

Vmbra versa.

IF thou mayest not come to the base of the toure, and thou fixe him through the nōber of one, set there a pricke at thy foote, then go nere the Toure, and set him through at the poincte of two, and set there an other prick, and then behold how one hath him to twelue, & thou shalt find that he hath him twelue sithes, then behold how two haue him to xii. and thou shalt find it sixe sithes, & therefore the space betwixe two prickes, is six. times thine altitude. And note that at the first altitude of one, thou settest a pricke, and afterward when thou seest him through at two, there thou settest a prick, then thou findest between, 80 foote, then thou shalt find that tenne is the eight part of 80 thē is a foote the altitude of the Toure, but if it fall vpon another poynct, as thus: It falleth on sixe at the seconde takyng it, when it falleth on fower, then shalt thou find that sixe is the second part of twelue, and fower is the thirde parte of twelue, by the third parte, that is to say, the space betwixe two prickes, twise the height of the Toure, and if the difference wer three, then wold it be thre times ỹ height. Et sic de singulis. An other maner werchyng by Umbra recta. If thou mayest not come by the base of the Toure, wirche in this wise: Sette thy rule vpon one, till thou see the Altitude, and set at thy foote a pricke, and then set thy rule vpon twoo, and so do in the same maner: then looke what is the difference betwixe one and twoo, and thou shalt finde that it is one: then measure the space betwixe the twoo prickes, and that is the twelue part of the altitude of the Toure, and so of all other.

Vmbra recta.

IF thy Rule fall vppon the eight poinct, on the right shadowe, then make the figure of eight, then looke how much space of ỹ feet is, betwix

thee and the Toure, and multiplie that by twelue, and when thou haste multiplied it by the same nomber, then deuide it by the nomber of eight, and keepe the residue, and adde thereto thy height vnto thyne ye, to the residue, and that shall be the very height of the Toure. And thus mayest thou woorche on the same side, from one to twelue, &c.

Vmbra recta.

AN other maner of worching vpon the same side. Looke vpon what poinct thy rule falleth, whē thou seest the top of the Toure, through the two holes, and then mete the space from thy foote, to the base of the Toure, and right as the nomber of the poinct, hath himself to twelue, right so the measure, betwixt thee & the Toure. Ensample as thus: I set case thy rule fall vpon eight, then is eight two third partes of twelue, so is the space two third partes of the Toure.

Vmbra versa.

TO know the height, by the point of Umbra versa. If the rule fall vpon iii. when thou seest the top of the Toure, set a prick there thy foote standeth, and go nere till thou mayst see the same toppe, at the poinct of iiii. and sette there an other pricke: then mete how many foote is betwixe the two prickes, and the height vp to thine ye, and that shall be the height of the Toure. And note, that iii. is the fowerth part of xii. and iiii. is the third part of xii. Now passeth iiii. the nomber of iii. by distaunce of i. therfore the same space with thy height to thy ye, is the height of the Toure. And if it were so that there were two or three distaunces in the nombers, so should the measure betwixe the prickes, by twise or thrise the height of the Toure.

Vmbra recta.

TO know the height, if thou maiest not come to the bace of ỳ thing, set thy rule vpon what poinct thou wilte, so that thou mayst see the toppe of the thyng, through the twoo holes, and make a marke there as thy foote standeth, and go nere or ferther, till thou mayst see it through an other poinct, and make there an other marke, and looke what difference is betwixe the twoo pouncts in the scale, and right as that differēce hath him to xii. right so the spaces betwix the twoo markes, hath hym to the height of the thyng. Ensample. I set the case, that thou seest it through the poinct of iiii. and after at the poinct of iii. Now passeth the nomber of iiii. the nomber of iii. the distaunce of one, and right as this difference of one, hath himself to xii. right so the measure betwixe bothe the markes, hath him to the height of the same thyng, putting thereto the height of thy selfe to thine ye. And thus maiest thou worke from one to twelue.

Vmbra versa.

FErthermore, if thou wilt know in Umbra versa, by the crafte of Umbra recta, I suppose to take thine altitude at the point of iiii. and makest a marke, and then thou goest nere, till thou haste it at the poinct of iii. and makest there an other marke, then must thou deuide 144 by 4, the nomber that cōmeth therof shal be 36 and after deuide 144 by 3 and the nomber that commeth thereof is 48 then looke what difference is betwixe 36 and 48, & that shalt thou find 12, and right as 12 hath him to 12 so the space betwixe the two prickes, hath him to the altitude of the thyng.

¶ Here endeth the conclusions of the Astrolabie.

The complaint of the *blacke Knight.*

The heauie complaint of a Knight, for that he can not win his Ladies grace.

IN Maie when Flora the fresh lustie Queene,
The soyle hath cladde in grene, red and whight,
And Phebus gan to shede his stremes shene,
Amidde the Bulle, with al the beames bright,
And Lucifer, to chace away the night,
Ayen the morow our Orizont hath take,
To bid all louers out of her slepe awake.

And hartes heauie for to recomfort,
From derkhed, of heauy nights sorow,
Nature bad hem rise, and hem disport,
Ayen the goodly glad grene morow,

And

And hope also, with sainct Iohn to borow,
Bad in dispite of Daunger and Dispaire,
For to take the holsome lusty ayre.

And with a sigh I gan for to abreide
Out of my slomber, and sodainly vp starte,
As he (alas) that nigh for sorowe deide,
My sickenesse sate aye so nie my hart,
But for to finde soccour of my smart,
Or at the least some release of my peine,
That me so sore halte in euery veine.

I rose anone, and thought I would gone,
Into the wodde, to heare the birdes sing,
When that the mistie vapour was agone,
And cleare and faire was the morning,
The dewe also like siluer in shining
Upon the leaues, as any Baume swete,
Till firic Titan with his persant hete

Had dried vp the lusty licour new,
Upon the herbes in the greene mede,
And that the floures of many diuers hew,
Upon her stalkes gon for to spredc,
And for to splay out her leues in brede,
Againe the Sunne, gold burned in his spere,
That doune to hem cast his beames clere.

And by a riuer forth I gan coste,
Of water clere, as birell or cristall,
Till at the last I found a little weie,
Toward a Parke, enclosed with a wall,
In compace rounde, and by a gate small,
Who so that would, frely might gone
Into this parke, walled with greene stone.

And in I went to heare the birdes song,
Which on the branches, both in plaine & vale,
So loude sang, that all the wood rong,
Like as it should shiuer in peeces smale,
And as me thought, that the Nightingale
With so great might, her voice gan out wrest,
Right as her hart for loue would brest.

The soile was plaine, smoth, & wonder soft,
All ouerspred with tapettes that Nature
Had made her selfe: couered eke aloft
With bowes greene, the floures for to cure,
That in her beauty they may long endure
From all assaut of Phebus feruent fere,
Which in his sphere so hote shone and clere.

The ayre attempre, and the smoth wind
Of zepherus, among the blosomes white,
So holsome was, and so nourishing by kind,
That smale buddes, and round blosomes lite,
In maner gan of her brethe delite,
To yeue vs hope there fruite shall take,
Ayenst Autumpne redy for to shake.

I saw the Daphene closed vnder rinde,
Greene Laurer, and the holesome Pine,
The Myrre also, that wepeth euer of kinde,
The Cedres hie, vpright as a line,
The Filbert eke, that lowe doeth encline
Her bowes grene, to the yearth aboun,
Unto her knight called Demophon.

There sawe I eke the fresh Hauthorne
In white Motley, that so swote doeth smell,
Ashe, Firre, & Oke, with many a yong Acorn,
And many a tree mo than I can tell,
And me before I sawe a little well,
That had his course, as I can beholde,
Under an hill, with quicke stremes colde.

The grauel gold, the water pure as glasse,
The bankes round, the well enuironyng,
And soft as Ueluet the yong grasse,
That therevpon lustly came springyng,
The sute of trees about compassyng,
Her shadow cast, closing the well round,
And all the herbes growing on the ground.

The water was so holsome, & so vertuous,
Through might of herbes growyng beside,
Not like the welle where as Narcisus
Slain was, through vengeaunce of Cupide,
Where so couertly he did hide
The graine of death vpon eche brinke,
That death mote folow, who ẏ euer drinke.

Ne like the pitte of the Pegace,
Under Pernaso, where Poetes slept,
Nor like the welle of pure chastite,
Which that Diane with her Nimphes kept,
When she naked into the water lepte,
That slowe Acteon with her hands fell,
Onely for he came so nigh the well.

But this welle that I here rehearse,
So holsome was, that it would aswage,
Bollen hartes, and the venim pearce,
Of pensifehed, with all the cruell rage,
And ouer more refresh the visage,
Of hem that were in any werinesse,
Of great labour, or fallen in distresse.

And I that had through daunger & disdain
So drie a thrust, thought I would assay
To taste a draught of this welle or twain,
My bitter langour if it might alay,
And on the banke anone doune I lay,
And with mine hed vnto the welle I raught,
And of the water dranke I a good draught.

wherof me thought I was refreshed wele,
Of the brennyng that sate so nigh my hart,
That verely anone I gan to fele
An huge parte released of my smart,
And therewithall anone vp I start,
And thought I would walke and see more,
Forth in the parke, and in the holtes hore.

And through a laund as I yede a pace,
And gan about fast to behold,
I found anone a delectable place,
That was beset with trees young and old,
Whose names here for me shall not be told,
Amidde of which stood an herber greene,
That benched was, with colours new & clene.

This herber was full of floures gende,
Into the which, as I behold gan,
Betwixt an Hulseere and a Woodbende,
As I was ware, I saw where lay a man,
In blacke, and white colour pale and wan,
And wonder deadly also of his hewe,
Of hurtes grene, and fresh woundes new.

And ouermore distrayned with sickenesse
Beside all this he was full greuously,
For vpon him he had an hote accesse,
That day by day him shooke full petously,
So that for constrayning of his malady,
And hartely wo, thus lyng all alone,
It was a death for to heare him grone.

Wherof astonied, my fote I gan withdraw,
Greatly wondring what it might be,
That he so lay and had no felaw,
Ne that I coud no wight with him see,
Wherof I had routh, and eke pite,
And gan anone, so softly as I coude,
Among the bushes priuely me to shroude.

If that I might in any wise aspie,
What was the cause of his deedly wo,
Or why that he so petously gan crie
On his fortune, and on vre also,
With all my might I layed an eare to,
Euery word to marke what he said,
Out of his swough among as he abraid.

But first, if I should make mencion
Of his person, and plainely him discriue,
He was in sothe, without exception,
To speake of manhood, one the best on liue,
There may no man ayen trouth striue,
For of his tyme, and of his age also,
He proued was, there men shuld haue ado.

For one of the beest thereto of bread & lēgth
So well ymade by good proporcion,
If he had be in his deliuer strength,
But thought and sickenesse wore occasion,
That he thus lay in lamentacion,
Grouffe on the ground, in place desolate,
Sole by him selfe, awhaped and amate.

And for me seemeth that it is sitting,
His wordes all to put in remembraunce,
To me that heard all his complayning,
And all the ground of his wofull chaunce,
If there withall I may you do pleasaunce,
I woll to you so as I can anone,
Lyke as he sayd, rehearce euerichone.

But who shall helpe me now to complaine,
Or who shall now my stile gie or lede,
O Niobe, let now thy teeres raine
In to my penne, and helpe eke in nede,
Thou wofull Myre ỹ feelest mine hert blede,
Of pitous wo, and mine hand eke quake,
When that I write, for this mans sake.

For vnto wo accordeth complayning,
And dolefull chere vnto heauinesse,
To sorow also, sighing and weping,
And pitous mourning vnto derinesse,
And who that shall write of distresse,
In party needeth to know feelingly,
Cause and roote of all soch malady.

But I alas, that am of witte but dull,
And haue no knowing of soch matere,
For to discriue, and write at the full,
The wofull complaint, which ỹ ye shall here,
But euen like as doth a scriuenere,
That can no more, what that he shall write,
But as his maister beside doth endite.

Right so fare I, that of no sentement,
Say right naught in conclusion,
But as I herde when I was present,
This man complaine, with a pitous soun,
For euen like without addicioun,
Or diseuereasle, eyther more or lesse,
For to reherse anone I woll me dresse.

And if that any now be in this place,
That sele in loue brenning of fervence,
Or hindred were to his ladies grace,
With false tonges, that with pestilence
Slea trewe men, that neuer did offence,
In worde nor deed, ne in her entent,
If any soch be here now present,

Let him of routh lay to audience,
With dolefui chere, and sobre countenaunce,
To here this man, by full hye sentence,
His mortall wo, and his perturbaunce,

Complay-

Complayning,now lyng in a traunce,
With lookes vpcast,and rufull chere,
The effect of which was as ye shall here.

The thought oppressed with inward sighs
The painful life, ỹ body lãguishing, (sore,
The wofull gost,the hert rent and tore,
The pitous chere pale in complayning,
The deedly face, like ashes in shining,
The salte teares that from mine eyen fall,
Percel declare,ground of my paynes all.

Whose herte is grouñd to blede in heuinesse,
The thought receit of wo,and of complaint,
The brest is chest of dole and derkenesse,
The body eke so feeble and so faint,
With hote and colde mine axes is so maiute,
That now I chiuer,for defaut of heat,
And hote as glede,now sodainly I sweat.

Now hote as fire,now colde as ashes deed,
Now hote for colde,now cold for heat againe,
Now colde as yse, now as coles reed,
For heate I brenne, & thus betwixe twaine,
I posted am,and all forecast in paine,
So that my heate plainly as I fele,
Of grecuous colde is cause euery dele.

This is the colde of inward hie disdayne,
Colde of dispite,and colde of cruell hate,
This is the colde ỹ euer doth his beste payne,
Ayenst trouth to fight and debate,
This is the colde that the fire abate
Of trewe meaning,alas the harde while,
This is the colde that woll me begile.

For euer the better that in trouth I mente,
With al my might faithfully to serue,
With herte and all to be diligent,
The lesse thanke,alas I can deserue:
Thus for my trouth daunger doth me serue,
For one that should my death of mercy let,
Hath made dispite new his swerde to whet

Against me,and his arowes to file,
To take vengeaunce of wilfull cruelte,
And tonges false through her sleightly wile,
Han gon a werre, that will not stinted be,
And false enuie,wrath and enuite,
Haue conspired against all right and law,
Of her malice,that trouth shall be slaw.

And male bouch,gan first the tale tell,
To sclaunder trouth of indignacion,
And false reporte so loude range the bell,
That misbeleefe and false suspection,
Haue trouth brought to his dampnacion,
So that alas,wrongfully he dieth,
And falsenesse now his place occupieth.

And entred is in to trouthes londe,
And hath thereof the full possession,
O rightfull God that first the trouth fonde,
How may thou suffre soch oppression,
That falsheed should haue iurisdiction,
In trouthes right to slee him gyltles,
In his fraunchise he may not lyue in pees.

Falsly accused, and of his foone foriudged,
Without answere,while he was absent,
He damned was,and may not be excused,
For cruelte sate in iudgement,
Of hastinesse without aduisement,
And badde Disdaine do execute anone,
His iudgement in presence of his fone.

Attourney may none admitted been,
To excuse trouth,ne a worde to speke,
To faith or othe the iudge list not seen,
There is no gaine,but he wil be wreke:
O Lord of trouth to thee I call and clepe,
How may thou see thus in thy presence,
Without mercy murdred innocence.

Now God that art of trouth soueraine,
And seest how I lie for trouth bound,
So sore knit in loues fyrie chaine,
Euẽ at the death through gyrte with many a wound,
That likely are neuer for to sound,
And for my trouth am dampned to the death,
And not abyde,but draw along the breath.

Consider and see in thine eternal right,
How that mine herte professed whilom was,
For to be trewe with all my full might,
Onely to one the which now alas,
Of volunte without any trespas,
My accusours hath taken vnto grace,
And cherisheth hem,my death to purchace.

What meaneth this,what is this wõder bie,
Of purueyaunce if I shall it call,
Of god of loue, that false hem so assure,
And trewe alas,downe of the whele ben fall,
And yet in sothe,this is the worst of all,
That falshed wrõgfully of troth hath ỹ name,
And trouth ayenward of falshed beareth the (blame.

This blind chaũce,this stormy auenture,
In loue hath most his experience,
For who that doth with trouth most his cure,
Shal for this mede finde most offence,
That serueth loue with al his diligence:
For who can fayne vnder lowlyhede,
Ne fayleth not to finde grace and spede.

For I loued one, full long sith agone,
With all mine herte, body and ful might,
And to be deed my herte can not gone
From his heste but hold that he hath hight,
Though I be banished out of her sight,
And by her mouth dampned that I shal dey,
Unto my hest, yet I will euer obey.

For euer sith that the world began,
☞ Who so liste looke, and in story rede,
He shall aye find that the trewe man
Was put abacke, whereas the falshede
I furthered was: for loue taketh none hede
To slea the trew, and hath of hem no charge,
Where as the false goeth freely at her large.

I take record of Palamydes,
The trewe man, the noble worthy knight,
That euer loued, and of his payne no relees,
Notwithstanding his manhood & his might,
Loue vnto him did full great vnright,
For aye the bet he did in cheualrie,
The more he was hindred by enuie.

And aye the better he did in euery place,
Through his knighthood and busie payne,
The ferder was he from his ladies grace,
For to her mercy might he neuer attayne,
And to his death he coud it not refrayne,
For no daungere, but aye obey and serue,
As he best coude, plainly till he sterue.

What was the fine also of Hercules,
For all his conquest and his worthinesse,
That was of strength alone peerles,
For like as bookes of him list expresse,
He set pillers through his hye prowesse,
Away at Gades, for to signifie
That no man might him passe in chenalrie.

The which pillers ferre beyond Inde,
Be set of gold, for a remembraunce:
And for all that was he set behinde,
With hem that loue list feebly auaunce,
For him set last vpon a daunce,
Against whom helpe may no strife,
For all his trouth he lost his life.

Phebus also for all his pleasaunt light,
When that he went here in yearth lowe,
Unto the hert with Venus sight,
I wounded was, through Cupides bowe,
And yet his lady list him not to knowe,
Though for her loue his herte did blede,
She let him go, and toke of him no hede.

What shall I say of yonge Piramus?
Of trewe Tristram, for all his hye renowne,
Of Achilles or of Antonius,
Of Arcite, or of him Palomoune,
What was the end of her passioune,
But after sorow death, and then her graue,
Lo here the guerdon that these louers haue.

But false Iason with his doublenesse,
That was vntrewe at Colkos to Medee,
And Theseus, roote of vnkindnesse,
And with these two eke the false Enee.
Lo thus the false aye in one degree,
Had in loue her lust and all her will,
And saue falshood, there was none other skill.

Of Thebes eke the false Arcite,
And Demephon eke for his slouth,
They had her lust and all that might delite,
For all her falshood and great vntrouth:
Thus euer loue alas, and that is routh,
His false lieges forthereth what he may,
And sleeth the trewe vngoodly day by day.

For trewe Adon was slaine with the bore,
Amidde the forest in the grene shade,
For Venus loue he felt all the sore,
But Vulcanus with her no mercy made,
The foule chorle had many nights glade,
Where Mars her knight and her man,
To find mercy comfort none he can.

Also the yonge freshe Ipomedes,
So lustly free as of his corage,
That for to serue with al his hert he ches,
Athalant so faire of her visage,
But loue alas quite him so his wage,
With cruell daunger plainly at the last,
That with the death guerdonlesse he past.

Lo here the fine of loues seruice,
Lo how that loue can his seruaunts quite,
Lo how he can his faithfull men dispise,
To slea the trewe men, and false to respite,
Lo how he doth the swerde of sorow bite
In herts, soch as most his lust obey,
To saue the false and do the trewe dey.

For faith nor othe, worde, ne assurance,
Trewe meaning, awaite, or businesse,
Stil porte, ne faithfull attendaunce,
Manhood ne might in armes worthinesse,
Pursute of worship nor hie prowesse,
In straunge land riding ne trauaile,
Full litell or nought in loue doth auaile.

Perill of death, nor in see ne land,
Hunger ne thrust, sorow ne sicknesse,
Ne great emprises for to take in hand,
Sheding of blood, ne manfull hardinesse,

Ne oft wounding at lautes by diſtreſſe,
Nor in parting of like nor death alſo,
All is for nought, loue taketh no heed thereto.

But leſings with her flatterie,
Through her falſhede, & with her doublenesſe,
With tales new, and many fained lie,
By falſe ſemblaunt and counterfeit humbleſſe,
Under colour depaint with ſtedfaſtneſſe,
With fraud couered vnder a pitous face,
Accept be now rathest vnto grace.

And can himſelfe now beſt magnifie
With fained port and preſumption,
They haunce her cauſe with falſe ſurquidrie,
Under meaning of double entention,
To thinke one in her opinion,
And ſay another, to ſet himſelfe aloft,
And hinder trouth, as it is ſeene full oft.

The which thing I buy now all too deare,
Thanked be Venus, and the god Cupide,
As it is ſeene by mine oppreſſed cheare,
And by his arrowes that sticken in my ſide,
That ſaue death I nothing abide
Fro day to day, alas the hard while,
When euer his dart that him liſt to file,

My wofull heart for to riue a two,
For faut of mercy, and lacke of pite
Of her that cauſeth all my paine and wo,
And liſt not ones of grace for to ſee
Unto my trouth through her cruelte,
And moſt of all I me complaine,
That ſhe hath ioy to laugh at my paine.

And wilfully hath my death ſworne,
All guiltleſſe, and wote no cauſe why,
Saue for the trouth that I had alone
To her alone to ſerue faithfully,
O god of loue, vnto thee I cry,
And to thy blind double deite,
Of this great wrong I complaine me.

And vnto thy ſtormy wilfull variaunce,
Ment with chaunge and great vnſtablenesſe,
Now vp, now down, ſo renning is thy chance,
That thee to truſt may be no likerneſſe,
I wite it nothing but thy doublenesſe,
And who that is an archer, and is blend,
Marketh nothing, but ſhooteth by wend.

And for that he hath no diſcretion,
Without aduiſe he let his arrow go,
For lacke of ſight, and alſo of reaſon,
In his ſhooting it happeth oft ſo,
To hurt his friend rather than his fo,
So doeth this god with his ſharpe ſtone,
The trew ſleeth, and letteth the falſe gone.

And of his wounding this is the worſt of all,
When he hurt doth to ſo cruell wretch,
And maketh the ſicke for to crie and call
Unto his foe for to be his leche,
And hard it is for a man to ſeche
Upon the point of death in iopardie,
Unto his foe to find a remedie.

Thus fareth it now euen by me,
That to my foe that gaue my heart a wound,
Mote aſke grace, mercy, and pite,
And namely there where none may be found,
For now my ſore my leche will confound,
And god of kind ſo hath ſet myne vre,
My liues foe to haue my wound in cure.

Alas the while now that I was borne,
Or that I euer ſaw the bright ſonne,
For now I ſee that full long afore,
Or I was borne, my deſtiny was ſponne
By Parcas ſiſterne, to ſlea me, if they conne,
For they my death ſhopen or my ſhert,
Only for trouth, I may it not aſſert.

The mighty goddeſſe alſo of Nature,
That vnder God hath the gouernaunce
Of worldly things committed to her cure,
Diſpoſed haue through her wiſe puruciaunce,
To giue my lady ſo much ſuffiſaunce
Of all vertues, and therwithall puruide,
To murder trouth, hath take danger to gide.

For bounte, beaute, ſhape, and ſeemelihede,
Prudence, wit, paſſingly faireneſſe,
Benigne port, glad chere, with lowlihede,
Of womanhede right plenteous largeneſſe,
Nature did in her fully empreſſe,
When ſhe her wrought, & al ther laſt diſdaine,
To hinder trouth, ſhe made her chamberlaine.

When miſtruſt alſo, and falſe ſuſpection,
With miſbeleue ſhe made for to be
Cheefe of counſaile to this concluſion,
For to exile trouth, and eke pite,
Out of her court to make mercy flee,
So that diſpite now holdeth forth her reine,
Through haſty bileue of tales that men feine.

And thus I am for my trouth alas
Murdred & ſlain, with words ſharp and keene,
Guiltleſſe God wote of all treſpas,
And lie and blede vpon this cold greene,
Now mercy ſwete, mercy my liues quene,
And to your grace of mercy yet I prey,
In your ſeruice that your man may dey.

But if so be that I shall die algate,
And that I shall none other mercy haue,
Yet of my death let this been the date,
That by your wil I was brought to my graue,
Or hastely, if that you list me saue,
My sharpe wounds that ake so and bleede,
Of mercy charme, and also of womanhede.

For other charme plainly is there none,
But only mercy, to helpe in this case,
For though my wounds bleed euer in one,
My life, my death, standeth in your grace,
And though my guilt be nothing, alas,
I aske mercy in all my best entent,
Ready to die, if that ye assent.

For there against shall I neuer striue
In word ne werke, plainely I ne may,
For leuer I haue than to be aliue,
To die soothly, and it be to her pay,
Ye though it be this same day,
Or when that euer her list to deuise,
Suffiseth me to die in your seruise.

And God, ỹ knowest ỹ thought of euery wight
Right as it is, in euery thing thou maist see,
Yet ere I die, with all my full might,
Lowly I pray to graunt vnto mee,
That ye goodly, faire, fresh, and free,
Which only slea me for default of routh,
Or that I die, ye may know my trouth.

For that in sooth sufficeth me,
And she it know in euery circumstaunce,
And after I am well paid that she
If that her list of death to do vengeaunce
Unto me, that am vnder her lygeaunce,
It sit me not her doome to disobey,
But at her lust wilfully to dey.

Without grutching or rebellion
In will or word, holy I assent,
Or any manner contradiction,
Fully to be at her commaundement,
And if I die, in my testament
My heart I send, and my spirit also,
Whatsoeuer she list with hem to do.

And alderlast to her womanhede,
And to her mercie me I recommaund,
That lie now here betwixe hope and drede,
Abiding plainly what she list commaund,
For vtterly this nis no demaund
Welcome to me while me lasteth breath,
Right at her choise, where it be life or death.

In this matter more what might I saine,
Sith in her hand, and in her will is all,
Both life and death, my ioy, and all my paine,
And finally my best hold I shall,
Till my spirit by desteny fatall,
When that her list fro my body wend,
Haue here my trouth, & thus I make an end.

And with that word he gan sigh as sore,
Like as his hert riue would atwaine,
And held his peace, and spake no word more,
But for to see his wo and mortall paine,
The teares gan fro mine eyen raine
Full pitously, for very inward ruth,
That I him saw, so long wilbing for truth.

And all this while my selfe I kept close
Among the bowes, and my selfe gonne hide,
Till at the last the wofull man arose,
And to a lodge went there beside,
Where all the May his custome was tabide,
Sole to complaine of his paines kene,
Fro yere to yere, vnder the bowes grene.

And for because that it drew to the night,
And that the sunne his arke diurnall
Ypassed was, so that his persaunt light,
His bright beames and his streames all
Were in the waues of the water fall,
Under the bordure of our occian,
His chaire of gold, his course so swiftly ran:

And while the twilight & the rowes rede
Of Phebus light were deaurat alite,
A penne I tooke, and gan me fast spede
The wofull plaint of this man to write,
Word by word, as he did endite,
Like as I heard, and coud hem tho report,
I haue here set, your hearts to disport.

If ought be misse, lay the wite on me,
For I am worthy for to beare the blame,
If any thing misse reported be,
To make this ditie for to seeme lame, (same,
Through mine vnconning, but for to fain the
Like as this man his complaint did expresse,
I aske mercy and forgiuenesse.

And as I wrote, me thought I saw aferre,
Ferre in the west lustely appere
Esperus the goodly bright sterre,
So glad, so persaunt eke of chere,
I meane Venus with her beames clere,
That heauy hearts only to releue,
Is wont of custome for to shew at eue.

And I as fast fell adowne on my knee,
And euen thus to her gan I to prey:
O lady Venus so faire vpon to see,
Let not this man for his trouth dey.

For

For that ioy thou haddest when thou ley
With Mars thy knight, whē Vulcanus fond,
And with a chaine vnuisible you bond

Togider both tway in the same while,
That all the court aboue celestiall,
At your shame gan laugh and smile:
Ah, faire lady well yfond at all,
Comfort to carefull, O goddesse immortall,
Be helping now, and do thy diligence,
To let the streames of thine influence

Descend downe, in forthering of the trouth,
Namely of hem that lie in sorrow bound,
Shew now thy mizt, & on her wo haue routh,
Ere false daunger slea hem and confound:
And special let thy might be found,
For to succour what so that thou may
The true man that in the herber lay.

And all true forther for his sake,
O glad sterre, O lady Venus mine,
And cause his lady him to grace take,
Her heart of stele to mercy so encline,
Ere that thy bemes go vp to decline,
And ere that thou now go fro vs adoun,
For that loue thou haddest to Adoun.

And when she was gone to her rest,
I rose anone, and home to bed went,
For weary, me thought it for the best,
Praying thus in all my best entent,
That all trew, that be with daunger shent,
With mercy may in release of her paine,
Recured be, ere May come eft againe.

And for that I ne may no lenger wake,
Farewell ye louers all that be trew,
Praying to God, and thus my leue I take,
That ere the sunne to morow be risen new,
And ere he haue ayen rosen hew,
That ech of you may haue such a grace,
His owne lady in armes to embrace.

I meane thus, in all honestie,
Without more ye may togider speake
What so ye list at good libertie,
That each may to other her heart breke,
On Ielousies onely to be wreke,
That hath so long of his mallice and enuy
Werred Trouth with his tiranny.

¶ Lenuoye.

Princesse, pleaseth it to your benignite
This little ditie to haue in mind,
Of womanhede also for to see,
Your man may your mercy find,
And pitie eke, that long hath be behind,
Let him againe be prouoked to grace,
For by my trouth it is against kind,
False Daunger to occupie his place.

Go little quaire vnto my lines queene
And my very hearts soueraine,
And be right glad, for she shall thee seene,
Such is thy grace, but I lag in paine
Am left behind, & not to whom to plaine,
For mercy, ruth, grace, and eke pite
Exiled be, that I may not attaine,
Recure to find of mine aduersite.

Explicit.

A praise of Women.

Although thee lyste of women euill to speake,
And sain of hem worse thā they deserue,
I praye to God that her neckes to breke,
Or on som euill death mote tho ianglers sterue,
For euery man were holden hem to serue,
And do hem worship, honour, and seruise,
In euery manner that they best coud deuise.

For we ought first to think on what manere
They bring vs forth, & what pain they endure
First in our birth, and sith fro yere to yere
How busely they done their busie cure,
To keepe vs fro euery misauenture
In our youth when we haue no might
Our selfe to keepe, neither by day nor night.

Alas, how may we say on hem but wele,
Of whom we were fostred and yborе,
And ben all our succour, and euer true as stele,
And for our sake full oft they suffer sore,
Without women were all our ioy lore,
Wherfore we ought all women to obey
In all goodnesse, I can no more say.

This is wel knowne, and hath ben or this,
That women ben cause of all lightnesse,
Of knighthood, norture, eschuing all mallis,
Encrease of worship, and of all worthinesse,
Thereto curteis & meke, & ground of all good-
Glad and merry, and true in euery wise (nesse,
That any gentill hert can thinke or deuise.

And

And though any would trust to your vntruth,
And to your faire words would aught assent,
In good faith me thinketh it wer great ruth,
That other women shuld for her gilt be shent,
That neuer knew, ne wist noght of her entent,
Ne list not to heare the faire words ye write,
Which ye you paine fro day to day tendite.

But who may beware of your tales vntrue,
That ye so busily paint and endite,
For ye will swere that ye neuer knew,
Ne saw the woman, neither much ne lite,
Saue only her, to whom ye had delite,
As for to serue of all that euer ye sey,
And for her loue must ye needs dey.

Then will ye swere that ye knew neuer before
What loue was, ne his dredefull obseruaunce,
But now ye feele that he can wound sore,
Wherfore ye put you into her gouernaunce,
Whō loue hath ordeined you to serue & do ple=
With al your mizt your litle liues space (sance,
Which endeth soone, but if she do you grace.

And then to bed will he soone draw,
And soone sicke ye will you then faine,
And sweare fast your Lady hath you slaw,
And brought you suddainly in so high a paine,
That fro your death may no mā you restraine,
With a daungerous looke of her eyen to,
That to your death must ye needs go.

Thus will ye morne, thus will ye sigh sore,
As though your hart anon in two wold brest,
And swere fast that ye may liue no more,
Mine owne Lady, that might if ye lest
Bring mine hart somedele into rest,
As if you list mercie on me to haue,
Thus your vntrouth will euer mercy craue.

Thus woll ye plain, tho ye nothing smart,
These innocent creatures for to beguile,
And swere to hem, so wounded is your hart
For her loue, that ye may liue no while,
Scarsly so long as one might go a mile,
So hieth death, to bring you to an end,
But if your souerain lady list you to amend.

And if for routh she comfort you in any wise,
For pitie of your false othes sere,
So that innocēt weneth ẏ it be as you deuise,
And weneth your heart be as she may here,
Thus for to comfort, & somwhat do you chere,
Then woll these ianglers deme of her full ill,
And saine that ye haue her fully at your will.

Lo how readie her tongues been, and prest,
To speake harme of women causelesse,
Alas, why might ye not as well say the best,
As for to deme hem thus guiltlesse,
In your hart iwis there is no gentilnesse,
That of your own gilt list thus women fame,
Now by my trouth, me think ye be too blame.

For of women cometh this worldly wele,
Wherfore we ouzt to worship hem euermore,
And thogh it mishap one, we ought for to hele,
For it is all through our false lore,
That day and night we paine vs euermore
With many an oth, these women to beguile
With false tales, and many a wicked wile.

And if falshede should be reckened and told
In women, iwis full trouth were,
Not as in men, by a thousand fold,
Fro all vices iwis they stand cleare,
In any thing that euer I could of heare,
But if enticing of these men it make,
That hem to flatteren connen neuer slake.

I would fain wete where euer ye coud here,
Without mens tising, what women did amis,
For ther ye may get hem, ye lie fro yere to yere,
And many a gabbing ye make to hem iwis,
For I could neuer heare, ne knowen ere this,
Where euer ye coud find in any place,
That euer women besought you of grace.

There ye you pain, with all your ful might,
With all your heart, and all your businesse,
To pleasen hem both by day and night,
Praying hem of her grace and gentilnesse,
To haue pitie vpon your great distresse,
And that they wold on your paine haue routh,
And slea you not, sens ye meane but trouth.

Thus may ye see that they ben fautlesse,
And innocent to all your werkes slie,
And all your crafts that touch falsenesse,
They know hem not, ne may hem not espie,
So sweare ye, that ye must needs die,
But if they would of her womanhead
Upon you rew, ere that ye be dead.

And then your lady, and your harts queene
Ye call hem, and therewith ye sigh sore,
And say, my lady I trow that it be seene
In what plite that I haue liued full yore,
But now I hope that ye woll no more
In these paines suffer me for to dwell,
For of all goodnesse iwis ye be the well.

Lo which a painted processe can ye make,
These harmlesse creatures for to beguile,
And when they slepe, ye paine you to wake,
And to bethinke you on many a wicked wile,

But

But ye shall see the day ꝑ ye shal curse ꝑ while,
That ye so busily did your entent
Hem to beguile, that failshed neuer ment.

For this ye know wel, though I would lie,
In women is all trouth and stedfastnesse,
For in good faith I neuer of hem lie,
But much worship, bountie, and gentilnesse,
Right comming, faire, and full of meknesse,
Good and glad, and lowly I you ensure,
Is this goodly angelike creature.

And if it hap a man be in disease,
She doeth her businesse, and her full paine,
With al her might, him to comfort and please,
If fro his disease she might him restraine,
In word ne deed twis she woll not faine,
But with all her might she doth her businesse,
To bring him out of his heauinesse.

Lo what gentillesse these women haue,
If we could know it for our rudenesse,
How buske they be vs to keepe and saue,
Both in heale, and also in sickenesse,
And alway right forth for our distresse,
In euery manner, thus shew they routh,
That in hem is all goodnesse and trouth.

And sith we find in hem gentilnesse & trouth,
Worship, bountie, and kindnesse euermore,
Let neuer this gentillesse, through your slouth,
In her kind trouth be aught forlore
That in women is, and hath ben full yore,
For in reuerence of heauens queene,
We ought to worship all women that beene.

For of all creatures that euer wer get & borne,
This wote ye well a woman was the best,
By her was recouered ꝑ blisse ꝑ we had lorne,
And through ꝑ woman shall we come to rest,
And ben ysaued, if that our selfe list,
Wherefore me thinketh, if that we had grace,
We oughten honour women in euery place.

Therefore I rede, that to our lives end,
Fro this time forth, while that we haue space,
That we haue trespaced, pursue to amend,
Praying our Ladie, well of all grace,
To bring vs vnto that blisfull place,
There as the & all good women shal be in fere
In heauen aboue, among the angels clere.

Explicit.

The House of Fame.

In this booke is shewed how the deedes of all men and women, be they good or bad, are carried by report to posteritie.

GOd tourne vs euery dreame to good,
For it is wonder thing by the Rood
To my wit, what causeth swe-
uens
On the morrow, or on euens,
And why the effect followeth of some,
And of some it shall neuer come,
Why that it is an auision,
And why this is a reuelation,
Why this a dreame, why that a sweuen,
And not to euery man liche euen,
Why this a fantome, why that Oracles,
I not: but who so of these miracles
The causes know ber than I,
Define he, for I certainely
No can hem not, ne neuer thinke,
To busie my wit for to swinke,
To know of her significations
The gendres, ne distinctions
Of the times of hem, ne the causes,
Or why this is more than that is,
Or peue folkes complexions,
Make hem dreame of reflexions,
Or els thus, as other saine,
For the great feeblenesse of her braine,
By abstinence, or by sickenesse,
Poison, strife, or great distresse,
Or els by disordinaunce,
Or naturall accustomaunce,
That some men be too curious
In studie, or Melancolius,
Or thus, so inly ful of drede,
That no man may him bote rede,
Or els that deuotion
Of some, and contemplation,
Causen such dreames oft,
Or that the cruell life vnsoft
Of hem that loues leden,
Oft hopen much or dreden,
That purely her impressions
Causen hem to haue visions,
Or if spirits han the might
To make folke to dreame on night,
Or if the soule of proper kind,
Be so perfite as men find,

That

That it wote what is to come,
And that he warneth all and some
Of eueriche of her auentures,
By auisions, or by figures,
But that our flesh hath no might
To vnderstand it aright,
For it is warned too derkely,
But why the cause is, not wote I,
Well worth of this thing clerkes,
That treaten of that, and of other werkes,
For I of none opinion
Nill as now make mention,
But only that the holy Rood
Tourne vs euery dreame to good,
For neuer sith I was borne,
Ne no man els me before,
Mette I trow stedfastly
So wonderfull a dreame as I.
The tenth day now of December,
The which, as I can remember,
I woll you tellen euerydele,
But at my beginning trusteth wele,
I woll make inuocation,
With a deuout speciall deuotion
Unto the god of sleepe anone,
That dwelleth in a caue of stone,
Upon a streame that commeth fro Lete,
That is a flood of hell vnswete,
Beside a Fulke, that men clepe Cimerie,
There sleepeth aye this God vnmerie,
With his slepie thousand sonnis,
That alway to sleepe her wonne is,
And to this God that I of rede,
Pray I, that he woll me spede,
My sweuen for to tell aright,
If euery dreame stand in his might,
And he that mouer is of all
That is and was, and euer shall,
So giue hem ioy that it here,
Or all that they dreame to yere,
And for to stand all in grace
Of her loues, or in what place
That hem were leuest for to stond,
And shield hem from pouertie and shond,
And from euery vnhappe and disease,
And send hem that may hem please,
That taketh well and scorneth nought,
Ne it misdeme in her thought,
Through malicious entention,
And who so through presumption,
Or hate, or scorne, or through enuie,
Dispite, or pape, or fellonie,
Misdeme it, pray I Iesus good,
Dreame he barefoot, or dreame he shood,
That euery harme that any man
Hath had sith the world began,
Befall him thereof, or he sterue,
And graunt that he may it deserue.

Lo, with right such a conclusion,
As had of his auision
Croesus, that was king of Lide,
That high vpon a gibbet dide,
This praier shall he haue of me,
I am no bette in charite.

Now herken, as I haue you saied,
What that I mette or I abraied,
Of December the tenth day.
When it was night, to slepe I lay,
Right as I was wont to done,
And fell asleepe wonder sone,
As he that was weary forgo,
On pilgrimage miles two,
To the corpes of saint Leonard,
To maken lithe, that erst was hard.
But as me slept, me mette I was
Within a temple ymade of glas,
In which there were mo Images
Of gold, standing in sundry stages,
In mo rich Tabernacles,
And with perre mo pinacles,
And mo curious portraitures,
And queint manner of figures
Of gold worke, then I saw euer.
But certainly I nist neuer
Where that it was, but well wist I,
It was of Uenus redely
This temple, for in portreiture,
I saw anon right her figure
Naked fleeting in a see,
And also on her head parde,
Her rose garland white and red,
And her combe to kembe her hed,
Her doues, and Dan Cupido,
Her blind sonne, and Vulcano,
That in his face was full browne.
But as I romed vp and downe,
I found that on the wall there was
Thus written on a table of bras.
I woll now sing if that I can,
The armes, and also the man,
That first came through his destinie
Fugitife fro Troy the countrie,
Into Italie, with full much pine,
Unto the strondes of Lauine,
And tho began the story anone,
As I shall tellen you echone.
First saw I the destruction
Of Troy, through the Greeke Sinon,
With his false vntrue forswearings,
And with his chere and his lesings
Made a horse, brought into Troy,
By which Troians lost all her ioy.
And after this was graued, alas,
How Ilions castle assailed was
And won, and king Priamus slaine,

And

Jennet Bateman Jennet Malfin Jannet Mat

And Polites his sonne certaine,
Dispitously of Dan Pirrus.
And next that saw I how Uenus,
When that she saw the castle brend,
Downe from heauen she gan discend,
And bad her sonne Eneas to flee,
And how he fled, and how that he
Escaped was from all the prees,
And tooke his father, old Anchises,
And bare him on his backe away,
Crying alas and welaway,
The which Anchises in his hand
Bare tho the gods of the land,
Thilke that vnbrenned were.
Then saw I next all in fere,
How Crusa, Dan Eneas wife,
Whom that he loued all his life,
And her yong sonne Iulo,
And eke Ascanius also,
Fledden eke with drerie chere,
That it was pitie for to here,
And in a Forrest as they went,
At a tourning of a went,
How Crusa was ylost, alas,
That rede not I, how that it was,
How he her sought, and how her ghost
Bad him flie the Greekes host,
And saied he must into Italie,
As was his destinie, sauns faile,
That it was pitie for to heare,
When her spirit gan appeare
The wordes that she to him saied,
And for to keepe her sonne him praied.
There saw I grauen eke how he,
His father eke, and his meine,
With his ships gan to saile
Toward the countrey of Italie,
As streight as they mighten go.
There saw I eke the cruell Iuno,
That art Dan Iupiters wife,
That hast yhated all thy life
All the Troyan blood,
Ren and crie as thou were wood
On Eolus, the god of Winds,
To blowen out of all kinds
So loud, that he should drench
Lord, Lady, groome, and wench
Of all the Troians nation,
Without any of her saluation.
There saw I such tempest arise,
That euery hart might agrise,
To see it painted on the wall.
There saw I eke grauen withall
Uenus, how ye my Lady dere,
Weeping with full wofull chere,
Praying Iupiter on hie
To saue and keepe that nauie
Of that Troian Eneas,
Sith that he her sonne was.
There saw I Ioues Uenus kisse,
And graunted was of the tempest lisse.
There saw I how the tempest stent,
And how with all pine he went,
And priuely tooke a riuage
Into the countrey of Carthage,
And on the morrow how that he,
And a knight that height Achate,
Metten with Uenus that day,
Going in a queint array,
As she had be an huntéresse,
With wind blowing vpon her tresse,
And how Eneas began to plaine,
When he knew her, of his paine,
And how his Ships drent were,
Or els ilost, he nist where,
How she gan him comfort tho,
And bad him to Carrage go,
And there he should his folke find,
That in the sea were left behind,
And shortly of this thing to pace,
She made Eneas so in grace
Of Dido, Queene of that countre,
That shortly for to tellen, she
Became his loue, and let him do
All that wedding longeth to,
What should I speake it more quaint,
Or paine me my wordes to paint,
To speake of loue, it will not be,
I cannot of that faculte,
And eke to tellen of the manere
How they first acquainted were,
It were a long processe to tell,
And ouer long for you to dwell.
There saw I graue, how Eneas
Told to Dido euery caas,
That him was tidde vpon the see.
And eft grauen was how that she
Made of him shortly at a word,
Her life, her loue, her lust, her lord,
And did to him all reuerence,
And laied on him all the dispence,
That any woman might do,
Wening it had all be so,
As he her swore, and hereby demed
That he was good, for he such seemed,
Alas, what harme doeth apparence,
When it is falle in existence,
For he to her a traitour was,
Wherefore she slow her selfe alas.
Lo, how a woman doeth amis,
To loue him that vnknowen is,
For by Christ lo thus it fareth,
It is not all gold that glareth,
For also brouke I well mine head,
There may be vnder goodlihead
Couered many a shrewd vice,

Therefore be no wight so nice,
To take a loue onely for chere,
Or speech, or for friendly manere,
For this shall euery woman find,
That some man of his pure kind
Woll shewen outward the fairest,
Till he haue caught that what him lest,
And then woll he causes find,
And sacre how she is vnkind,
Or false, or priuie, or double was,
All this say I by Eneas
And Dido, and her nice lest,
That loued all to soone a guest,
Wherefore I woll say o prouerbe,
That he that fully knoweth the herbe,
May safely lay it to his eie,
Withouten drede this is no lie.
But let vs speake of Eneas,
How he betraied her, alas,
And left her full vnkindly.
So when she saw all vtterly,
That he would her of trouth faile,
And wenden from her into Itaile,
She gan to wring her handes two.
Alas (qd. she) that me is wo,
Alas, is euery man thus true,
That euery yere woll haue a new,
If it so long time endure,
Or els three parauenture,
And thus of one he woll haue fame
In magnifying of his owne name,
Another for friendship sayeth he,
And yet there shall the third be,
That is taken for delite,
Lo, or els for singular profite,
In such words gan complaine
Dido of her great paine,
As me mette dreaming readily,
None other authour alledge woll I.
Alas (qd. she) my sweet hart,
Haue pitie on my sorrowes smart,
And slea me not, go not away.
O wofull Dido, welaway
(Qd. she) vnto her selfe tho.
O Eneas what woll ye do,
O that your loue ne your bond,
That ye swore with your right hond,
Ne my cruell death (qd. she)
May hold you still here with me.
O, haue ye of my death no pite,
I wis mine owne deare hart ye
Know full well that neuer yet,
As farre as euer I had wit,
Agilt you in thought ne in dede.
O, haue ye men such goodlihede
In speech, and neuer a dele of trouth,
Alas that euer had routh
Any woman on a false man.
Now I see well, and tell can,
The wretched women can no art.
For certaine, for the more part,
Thus we been serued euerichone,
How sore that ye men can grone,
Anon as we haue you receiued,
Certainly we been deceiued,
For though your loue lest a season,
Wait vpon the conclusion,
And eke how ye determine,
And for the more part define,
O welaway that I was borne,
For through you my name is lorne,
And mine acts redde and song
Ouer all this land in euery tong.
O wicked fame, for there nis
Nothing so swift lo as she is,
O sooth is, euery thing is wist,
Though it be couerde with the mist,
Eke though I might duren euer,
That I haue doen recouer I neuer,
That it ne shall be saied, alas,
I shamed was through Eneas,
And that I shall thus iudged be.
Lo right as she hath doen, now she
Woll doen eft soones hardely,
Thus say the people priuely,
But that is doen, nis not to done,
But all her complaint ne her mone
Certaine auailed her not a stre,
And when she wist soothly he
Was forth into his ship agone,
She into chamber went anone,
And called on her suster Anne,
And gan her to complaine than,
And saied, that she cause was,
That she first loued him alas,
And first counsailed her thereto,
But what, when this was saied and d
She roft her seluen to the hart,
And deide through the wounds smart,
But all the manner how she deide,
And all the words how she seide,
Who so to know it hath purpose,
Rede Virgile in Eneidos,
Or the Pistels of Ouide,
What that she wrote or that she dide,
And nere it too long to endite,
By God I would it here write,
But welaway, the harme and routh
That hath betide for such vntrouth,
As men may oft in bookes rede,
And all day seene it yet in dede,
That for to thinken it rene is.
Lo Demophon, Duke of Athenis,
How he forswore him falsely,
And traied Phillis wickedly,
That kings doughter was of Thrace,

And falsely gan his tearme pace,
And when she wist that he was false,
She hong her selfe right by the halse,
For he had doen her such untrouth,
Lo, was not this a wo and routh.
Eke looke how false and recheles
Was to Briseida Achilles,
And Paris to Oenone,
And Jason to Hipsiphile,
And eft Jason to Medea,
And Hercules to Dianira,
For he left her for Iolee,
That made him take his death parde.
How false was eke Theseus,
That as the storie telleth vs,
How he betraied Adriane,
The deuill be his soules bane,
For had he laughed or ploured,
He must haue been all deuoured.
If Adriane ne had be,
And for she had of him pite,
She made him fro the death escape,
And he made her a full false iape,
For after this within a while,
He left her sleeping in an Isle,
Destart alone right in the see,
And stale away, and let her bee,
And tooke her suster Phedra tho
With him, and gan to ship go,
And yet he had swore to here,
On all that euer he could swere,
That so she saued him his life,
He would taken her to his wife,
For she desired nothing els,
In certaine, as the booke vs tels.
But for to excuse this Eneas
Fulliche of all his great trespas,
The booke saieth sauns faile,
The gods bad him go to Itaile,
And leauen Affrickes regioun,
And faire Dido and her toun,
Tho saw I graue how to Itaile
Dan Eneas gan for to saile,
And how the tempest all began,
And how he lost his stereman,
Which that the sterne, or he tooke keepe,
Smote ouer the bord as he sleepe.
And also saugh I how Sibile
And Eneas beside an Isle,
To hell went for to see
His father Anchises the free,
And how he there found Palinurus,
And also Dido, and Deiphebus,
And eueriche tourment eke in hell
Saw he which long is for to tell,
Which paines who so list to know,
He must rede many a row
In Vergile or in Claudian,
Or Dante, that it tellen can.
Tho saw I eke all the ariuaile
That Eneas had made in Itaile,
And with king Latin his treate,
And all the battailes that he
Was at himselfe, and his knights,
Or he had all twonne his rights,
And how he Turnus reft his life,
And wan Lauina to his wife,
And all the marueilous signals
Of the gods celestials,
How maugre Juno, Eneas
For all her sleight and her compas
Acheued all his auenture,
For Jupiter tooke on him cure,
At the prayer of Venus,
Which I pray alway saue vs,
And vs aye of our sorrowes light.
When I had seene all this sight
In this noble temple thus,
Hey Lord, thought I, that madest vs,
Yet saw I neuer such noblesse
Of Images, nor such richesse,
As I see grauen in this church,
But nought wote I who did hem worch,
Ne where I am, ne in what countree,
But now will I out gone and see
Right at the wicket if I can
Seene ought where stering any man,
That may me tellen where I am.
When I out of the doze came,
I fast about me beheld,
Then saw I but a large field,
As farre as euer I might see,
Without toune, house, or tree,
Or bush, or grasse, or eared land,
For all the field was but of sand,
As small as men may see at eye
In the desart of Lybye,
Ne no manner creature,
That is formed by nature,
Ne saw I, me to rede or wisse:
O Christ, thought I, that are in blisse,
From fantom and illusion
Me saue, and with deuotion
Mine eyen to the heauen I cast,
Tho was I ware lo at the last,
That fast by the sunne on hye,
As kenne might I with mine eye,
Me thought I saw an Egle sore,
But that it seemed much more,
Than I had any Egle yseine,
This is as sooth as death certaine,
It was of gold, and shone so bright,
That neuer saw men such a sight,
But if the heauen had ywonne
All new of God another sonne,
So shone the Egles fethers bright,

And somewhat downward gan it light.

Explicit liber primus.

NOw hearken euery manner man,
That English vnderstand can,
And listeth of my dreame to here,
For nowe at erst shall ye here
So selly and so dredefull a vision,
That I say neither Scipion,
Ne king Nabugodonosore,
Pharao, Turnus, ne Aeanore,
Ne metten such a dreame as this,
Now faire blissfull, O Cipris,
So be my fauour at this time,
That ye me tendite and rime
Helpeth, that in Pernaso dwell,
Beside Elicon the clere well.
O thought, that wrote all that I met,
And in the tresorie it set
Of my braine, now shall men see
If any vertue in thee bee,
To tell all my dreame aright,
Now kithe thy engine and thy might.
This Eagle of which I haue you told,
That with feathers shone all of gold,
Which that so high gan to sore,
I gan behold more and more,
To seene her beauty and the wonder,
But neuer was that dent of thunder,
Ne that thing that men call soudre,
That smite sometime a toure to poudre,
And in his sorte coming brend,
That so swithe gan downward discend,
As this foule when it beheld,
That I a roume was in the field,
And with his grim pawes strong,
Within his sharpe nailes long,
Me fleyng at a swappe he hent,
And with his sours againe vp went,
Me carying in his clawes starke,
As lightly as I had ben a larke,
How high, I cannot tellen you,
For I came vp, I nist neuer how,
For so astoned and aswoued
Was euery vertue in me heued,
What with his sours and my dread,
That all my feeling gan to dead,
For why, it was a great affray.
Thus I long in his clawes lay,
Till at last he to me spake
In mans voice, and said awake,
And be not agast so for shame,
And called me tho by my name,
And for I should better abraid,
Me to awake, thus he said,
Right in the same voice and steuin,
That vseth one that I can neuin,
And with that voice, sooth to saine,
My mind came to me againe,
For it was goodly said to me,
So nas it neuer wont to be,
And herewithall I gan to stere,
As he me in his feet bere,
Till that he felt that I had heat,
And felt eke tho mine hart beat,
And tho gan he me to disport,
And with gentle wordes me comfort,
And said twice, saint Mary,
Thou art a nopous thing to cary,
And nothing needeth it parde,
For also wise God helpe me,
As thou no harme shalt haue of this,
And this case that betidde thee is,
Is for thy lore and for thy prow,
Let see, darst thou looke yet now,
Be full ensured boldely,
I am thy friend, and therewith I
Gan for to wonder in my mind.
O God (qd. I) that madest all kind,
Shall I none other wise die,
Whether Ioue will me stellifie,
Or what thing may this signifie,
I am neither Enocke, ne Helie,
Ne Romulus, ne Ganimede,
That were bore vp as men rede,
To heauen with dan Iupiter,
And made the gods butelere,
Lo this was tho my fantasie,
But he that bare gan aspie,
That I so thought and said this,
Thou demest of thy selfe amis,
For Ioue is not thereabout,
I dare thee put full out of dout,
To make of thee yet a sterre,
But ere I beare thee much ferre,
I will thee tell what I am,
And whider thou shalt, and why I came
To do this, so that thou take
Good heart, and not for feare quake.
Gladly (qd. I) now well (qd. he:)
First, I that in my feet haue thee,
Of whom thou hast feare and wonder,
I am dwelling with the god of thonder,
Which men callen Iupiter,
That doth me flien full oft fer
To do all his commaundement,
And for this cause he hath me sent
To thee: herke now by thy trouth,
Certaine he hath of thee routh,
That thou hast so truely

Long

Long serued ententifely
His blind nephew Cupido,
And faire Venus also,
Without guerdon euer yet,
And natheless hast set thy wit,
Although in thy head full little is,
To make bookes, songs, and dities
In rime, or els in Cadence,
As thou best canst in reuerence
Of loue, and of his seruaunts eke,
That haue his seruice sought, and seke,
And paynest thee to praise his art,
Although thou haddest neuer part,
Wherefore also God me blesse,
Ioui's hast it great humblesse,
And vertue eke, that thou wilt make
A night full oft thine head to ake,
In thy study so thou writest,
And euermore of loue enditest,
In honour of him and praisings,
And in his folkes furtherings,
And in her matter all deuisest,
And not him ne his folke dispisest,
Although thou maist go in the daunce
Of hem, that him list not auaunce,
Wherefore as I said ywis,
Iupiter considereth well this,
And also beausire, of other thyngs,
That is, thou hast no tidings
Of loues folke, if they be glade,
Ne of nothing els that God made,
And not onely fro ferre countree,
That no tidings commen to thee,
Not of thy very neighbours,
That dwellen almost at thy doores,
Thou hearest neither that ne this,
For when thy labour all done is,
And hast made all thy reckenings
In stead of rest and of new thyngs,
Thou goest home to thine house anone,
And also domb as a stone,
Thou sittest at another booke,
Till fully dased is thy looke,
And liuest thus as an Hermite,
Although thine abstinence is lite,
And therefore Ioui's through his grace
Will that I beare thee to a place,
Which that hight the house of Fame,
And to do thee sport and game
In some recompensation
Of thy labour and deuotion
That thou hast had, lo causeless,
To god Cupido the recheless,
And thus this God through his merite
Will with some manner thing thee quite,
So that thou wilt be of good chere,
For trust well that thou shalt here,
When we ben commen there as I say,
No wonder thyngs dare I lay,
And of loues folke mo tidings,
Both soothsawes and lesings,
And mo loues new begon,
And long serued till loue is won,
And mo louers casuelly,
That ben betide, no man wote why,
But as a blind man starteth an Hare,
And more iolite and welfare,
While they find loue of stele,
As thinke men, and ouer all wele,
Mo discords, and mo iealousies,
Mo murmures, and mo nouelries,
And also mo dissimulations,
And eke fained reperations,
And mo berdes in two hours
Without rasour or sisours
Ymade, than graines be of sands,
And eke mo holding in mo hands,
And also mo renoue launces
Of old forleten aqueintaunces,
Mo loue daies, and mo accords,
Than on instruments ben cords,
And eke of loue mo exchaunges,
Than euer corne were in graunges,
Unneth maiest thou trowen this,
(Qd. he) no so helpe me God as wis
(Qd. I) No why (qd. he) for it
Were impossible to my wit,
Though Fame had al the pries,
In all a realme and all aspies,
How that yet he should heare all this,
Or they espien: O yes, yes,
(Qd. he) to me, that can I preue
By reason, worthy for to leue,
So that thou giue thine aduertence
To vnderstand my sentence.

First shalt thou here where she dwelleth,
Right so as thine owne booke telleth,
Her palais standeth as I shall say
Right euen amiddes of the way,
Betweene heauen, earth, and see,
That whatsoeuer in all these three
Is spoken in priue or apert,
The way thereto is so ouert,
And stant eke in so iust a place,
That euery sowne mote to it pace,
Or what so commeth from any tong,
Be rowned, red, or song,
Or spoken in suertie or drede,
Certaine it mote thider nede.

Now hearken well, for why I will
Tellen thee a proper skill,
And a worthy demonstration
In mine imagination.

Geffray, thou wotest well this,
That euery kindely thing that is,
Hath a kindely stede there he

May best in it conserued be,
Unto which place euery thing,
Through his kindely enclining,
Moueth for to come to,
When that it is away therefro,
As thus. Lo how thou maist al day see,
Take any thing that heauie bee,
As stone or lead, or thing of weight,
And beare it neuer so hie on height,
Let go thine hand, it falleth downe,
Right so say I by fire or sowne
Or smoke, or other things light,
Alway they seeke vpward on height,
Light things vp, and downward charge,
While euerich of hem be at large,
And for this cause thou maist well see,
That euery riuer vnto the see
Enclined is to go by kind,
And by these skils, as I find,
Haue fishes dwelling in flood and see,
And trees eke on the earth be,
Thus euery thing by his reason
Hath his owne proper mansion,
To which he seeketh to repaire,
There as it should nat appaire.
Lo, this sentence is knowne couth
Of euery Philosophers mouth,
As Aristotle, and dan Platone,
And other clerkes many one,
And to confirme my reasoun,
Thou wost well that speech is soun,
Or els no man might it here,
Now herke what I woll thee lere.
Sowne is not but eyre ybroken,
And euery speech that is spoken,
Loud or prime, foule or faire,
In his substaunce is but aire,
For as flame is but lighted smoke,
Right so is sowne eyre ybroke,
But this may be in many wise,
Of which I will thee deuise,
As sowne commeth of pipe or harpe,
For when a pipe is blowen sharpe,
The eyre is twist with violence,
And rent: Lo, this is my sentence
Eke, when men harpe strings smite,
Whether it be much or lite,
Lo, with the stroke the eyre it breketh,
And right so breaketh it when men speketh,
Thus wost thou well what thing is speach,
Now henceforth I will thee teach,
How euerich speech, voice, or soun,
Through his multiplicatioun,
Though it were piped of a mouse,
Mote needs come to Fames house,
I proue it thus, take heed now
By experience, for if that thou
Threw in a water now a stone,
Well wost thou it will make anone
A little roundell as a cercle,
Paraventure as broad as a couercle,
And right anone thou shalt see wele,
That whele cercle wil cause another whele,
And that the third, and so forth brother,
Euery cercle causing other,
Broader than himselfe was,
And thus from roundell to compas,
Ech about other going,
Causeth of others stering,
And multiplying euermo,
Till it be so farre go,
That it at both brinkes bee,
Although thou may it not see
Aboue, yet goeth it alway vnder,
Though thou thinke it a great wonder,
And who so saith of trouth I vary,
Bid him proue the contrary,
And right thus euery word iwis,
That loud or priuie yspoken is,
Moueth first an eyre about,
And of his moving out of dout
Another eyre anone is moued,
As I haue of the water proued,
That euery cercle causeth other,
Right so of eyre my leue brother,
Euerich eyre in other stereth
More and more, and speech vp beareth,
Or voice or noise, word or soun,
Ay through multiplicatioun,
Till it be at the house of Fame,
Take it in earnest or in game,
Now haue I told, if thou haue mind,
How speech or sowne, of pure kind
Enclined is vpward to meue,
This maist thou fele well by preue,
And that same stede iwis,
That euery thing enclined to is,
Hath his kindliche stede,
That sheweth it without drede,
That kindely the mansioun
Of euerich speech of euery soun,
Be it either foule or faire,
Hath his kind place in aire,
And sith that euery thing iwis
Out of his kind place iwis,
Moueth thider for to go,
If it away be therefro,
As I haue before proued thee,
It sheweth euery soune parde,
Moueth kindely to pace,
As vp into his kind place,
And this place of which I tell,
There as Fame list to dwell,
Is sette amiddes of these three,
Heauen, earth, and eke the see,
As most conseruatife the soun,

Then

Then is this the concluſioun,
That euery ſpeach of euery man,
As I thee tell firſt began,
Moueth vp on height to pace,
Kindly to Fames place.
Tell me this now faithfully,
Haue I not proued thus ſimply,
Without any ſubtelte
Of ſpeech, or great prolixite,
Of termes of Philoſophy,
Of figures of Poetry,
Or colours of Rhetorike,
Perde it ought thee to like,
For hard language, and hard matere
Is incombrous for to here,
At ones, woſt thou not well this?
And I anſwered and ſaid yes.
Ah ha (qd. he) lo ſo I can,
Lewdly vnto a lewd man
Speke, and ſhew him ſuch ſkilles,
That he may ſhake hem by the billes,
So palpable they ſhoulden be,
But tel me this now pray I thee,
How thinketh thee my concluſioun?
A good perſuaſioun,
(Qd. I) it is, and lyke to be,
Right ſo as thou haſt proued me,
By God (qd. he) and as I leue,
Thou ſhalt haue it or it be eue,
Of euery word of this ſentence,
Aproke, by experience,
And with thyne eares hearen well,
Toppe and tayle, and euerideil
That euery word that ſpoken is,
Commeth into Fames houſe ywis,
As I haue ſaid, what wilt thou more,
And with this word vpper to lore,
He began, and ſaid by ſaint Jame,
Now will we ſpeake all of game.
How fareſt thou now (qd. he) to me,
Well (qd. I) now ſee (qd. he)
By thy trouth vond adowne,
Where that thou knoweſt any towne,
Or houſe, or any other thing,
And when thou haſt of ought knowing,
Looke that thou warne me,
And I anon ſhall tell thee,
How farre that thou art now therefro.
And I adowne gan to loken tho,
And beheld fields and plaines,
Now hils, and now mountaines,
Now valeis, and now foreſts,
And now vneth great beeſts,
Now riuers, now cities,
Now townes, now great trees,
Now ſhippes ſayling in the ſee.
But thus ſoone in a while hee,
Was flowen fro the ground ſo hye,
That all the world as to mine eye,
No more ſemed than a pricke,
Or els was the eyre ſo thicke,
That I might it not diſcerne:
With that he ſpake to me ſo yerne,
And ſaid: Seeſt thou any token,
Or ought, that in this world of ſpoken?
I ſaid nay, no wonder is,
(Qd. he) for neuer halfe ſo hye as this,
Was Alexander of Macedon
King, ne of Rome dan Scipion,
That ſaw in dreame at point deuiſe,
Heauen and earth, hell and paradiſe,
Ne eke the wretch Dedalus,
Ne his childe nice Icharus,
That flewe ſo hie, that the hete
His wynge molte, and he fell wete
In midde the ſea, and there he dreint,
For whom was made a great complaint.
Now tourne vpward (qd. he) thy face,
And behold this large place,
This eyre, but looke that thou ne bee
Adrad of hem that thou ſhalt ſee,
For in this regioun certayne,
Dwelleth many a citezeine,
Of which ſpeaketh dan Plato,
Thefe ben the eyriſhe beeſts lo,
And tho ſawe I all the menie,
Both gone and alſo flie.
Lo (qd. he) caſt vp thyne eye,
See yonder lo, the Galaxie,
The which men clepe the milky way,
For it is white: And ſome parkay
Callen it Watling ſtrete,
That ones was brent with the hete,
When the Sunnes ſonne the rede,
That hight Pheton, would lede
Algate his fathers cart, and gie.
The cart horſe gan well aſpie,
That he coud no gouernaunce,
And gone for to leape and praunce,
And beare him vp, and now doun,
Till he ſaw the Scorpioun,
Which that in heauen a ſigne is yet,
And he for fere loſt his wit
Of that, and let the reynes gone
Of his horſe, and they anone,
Soone vp to mount, and downe diſcende,
Till bothe eyre and earth brende,
Till Jupiter lo, at the laſt
Him ſlew, and fro the carte caſt.
Lo, is it not a great miſchaunce,
To let a foole haue gouernaunce,
Of things that he can not demaine?
And with this word ſothe for to ſaine,
He gan alway vpper to ſore,
And gladed me then more and more,
So faithfully to me ſpake he.

Tho gan I to looke vnder mee,
And beheld the eyrish beests,
Cloudes, mistes, and tempests,
Snowes, hayles, raynes, and windes,
And thengendring in her kindes,
All the way through which I came:
O God (qd. I) that made Adame,
Woch is thy might and nobles.
And tho thought I vpon Boece,
That writeth a thought may flie so hie,
With fethers of Philosophie,
To passen euerich Element,
And when he hath so farre ywent,
Then may be seen behind his backe,
Cloude, and earth, and all that I of spake.
Tho gan I wexe in a were,
And said, I wote well I am here,
But whether in body or in goost,
I not ywis, but God thou woost,
For more clere entendement,
Nas me neuer yet ysent,
And then thought I on Marcian,
And eke of Anticlaudian,
That sothe was her description,
Of all the heauens region,
As farre as that I sawe the preue,
And therefore I can hem leue.
With that the Egle gan to crie,
Let be (qd. he) thy fantasie,
Wilt thou learne of sterres ought?
Nay certainly (qd. I) right nought.
And why (qd. he?) for I am old:
Or els would I thee haue told,
(Qd. he) the sterres names lo,
And all the heauens signes to,
And which they be: No force (qd. I)
Yes parde (qd. he) wost thou why,
For when thou redest poetry,
How the goddes can stellify
Birde, filbe, or him, or her,
As the Raun and other,
Or Arions harpe fine,
Castor, Polexe, or Delphine,
Or Athalantes doughters seuen,
How all these are set in heuen,
For though thou haue hem ofte in hand,
Yet nost thou nat where they stand.
No force (qd. I) it is no need,
As well I leue so God me speed,
Hem that writen of this matere,
As though I knew her places here,
And eke they semen here so bright,
It should shenden all my sight,
To looke on hem: that may well be,
(Qd. he) and so forth bare he me,
A while, and tho he gan to crie,
(That neuer herde I thing so hie)
Holde vp thine heed, for all is well,
Saint Julian lo, bonne hostell,
See here the house of Fame lo,
Nayst thou not here that I do?
What (qd. I?) the great sowne
(Qd. he) that rombleth vp and downe,
In Fames house full of tidings,
Both of fayre speach and chidings,
And of false and sothe compowned,
Herken well it is not rowned.
Herest thou not the great swough?
Yes perde (qd. I) wel ynough,
And what sowne is it like (qd. he?)
Peter, lyke the beating of the see,
(Qd. I) against the roches halowe,
When tempests done her shippes swalow,
And that a man stand out of doute,
Amyle thens, and here it route.
Or els lyke the humbling,
After the clappe of a thundring,
When Iouis hath the eyre ybete,
But it doth me for feare swete.
Nay, drede thee not thereof (qd. he)
It is nothing that will byten thee,
Thou shalt haue no harme truely.
And with that worde both he and I,
As nigh the place arriued were,
As men might cast with a spere,
I niste how, but in a strete
He set me faire on my feete,
And said, walke forth a pace
And tell thine aduenture and case,
That thou shalt finde in Fames place.
Now (qd. I) while we haue space
To speake, or that I go fro thee,
For the loue of God tell mee,
In sothe, that I will of thee lere,
If this noyse that I here,
Be as I haue herde thee tell,
Of folke that done in earth dwell,
And commeth here in the same wise,
As I thee herd or this deuise,
And that here liues body nis,
In all that house that yonder is,
That maketh all this loude fare.
No (qd. he) by saint Clare,
And also wisse God rede me,
But o thing I will warne thee,
Of the which thou wilt haue wonder.
Lo, to the house of Fame yonder,
Thou woste how commeth euery speach,
It needeth not the efte to teach,
But vnderstand now right well this,
When any speach ycomen is,
Vp to the palais anone right,
It wexeth like the same wight,
Which that the worde in earth spake,
Be he clothed in reed or blake,
And hath so very his likenesse,

And spake the worde that thou wilt gesse,
That it the same body be,
Man or woman, he or she.
And is not this a wonder thing,
Yes (qd. I tho) by heauen king,
And with this worde farewell (qd. he)
And here will I abide thee,
And God of heauen send thee grace,
Some good to learne in this place,
And I of him tooke leaue anone,
And gan forth to the palays gone.

Explicit liber secundus.

GOD of Science and of light,
Apollo through thy great might,
This litteil last booke now thou gie,
Now that I will for maistrie,
Here art potentiall be shewde,
But for the rime is light and lewde,
Yet make it somewhat agreable,
Though some verse fayle in a sillable,
And that I do no diligence,
To shewe craft, but sentence,
And if deuine vertue thou
Wilt helpe me to shewe now,
That in my heed ymarked is,
Lo, that is for to meanen this,
The house of Fame for to discriue,
Thou shalt see me go as bliue
Unto the next laurer I see,
And kisse it, for it is thy tree,
Now entre in my brest anone.
When I was from the egle gone,
I gan behold vpon this place,
And certaine or I further passe,
I will you all the shappe deuise,
Of house and citee, and all the wise,
How I gan to this place approch,
That stood vpon so hie a roch,
Hyer standeth none in Spayne,
But vp I clambe with moch payne,
And though to climbe greued mee,
Yet I ententife was to see,
And for to prouen wondre low,
If I coude any wise yknow
What maner stone this roche was,
For it was lyked a limed glas,
But that it shone full more clere,
But of what congeled matere
It was, I niste redely,
But at the last espied I,
And found that it was euerydele,
A roche of yse and not of stele,
Thought I by saint Thomas of Kent,
This were a feeble foundement,
To builden on a place hie,
He ought him little to glorifie,
That heron bilte, God so me saue.
Tho sawe I all the hall igraue
With famous folkes names fele,
That had been in moch wele,
And her fames wide blow,
But well vneth might I know
Any letters for to rede
Her names by, for out of drede,
They weren almost of thawed so,
That of the letters one or two
Were molte away of euery name,
So vnfamous was wexe her fame,
But men say, what may euer last.
Tho gan I in mine hart cast,
That they were molte away for heate,
And not away with stormes beate,
For on that other side I sey,
Of this hill, that Northward ley,
How it was writen full of names,
Of folke that had afore great fames,
Of old tyme, and yet they were
As fresh as men had written hem there
The self day, or that houre
That I on hem gan to poure,
But well I wiste what it made,
It was conserued with the shade,
All the writyng that I lie,
Of a Castell that of stoode on hie,
And stoode eke in so cold a place,
That heate might it not deface.
Tho gan I on this hill to gone,
And found on the coppe a wone,
That all the men that been on liue,
Ne han the connyng to discriue
The beaute of that like place,
Ne could caste no compace,
Soch an other for to make,
That might of beautie be his make,
Ne so wonderly iwrought,
That it astoneth yet my thought,
And maketh all my witte to swinke,
On this Castell for to thinke,
So that the great beautie,
The caste, crafte, and curiositie,
Ne can I not to you deuise,
My witte ne may me not suffise,
But natheless all the substaunce
I haue yet in my remembraunce,
For why me thought by saint Gile,
All was of stone of Berile,
Both the Castell and the Toure,
And eke the hall, and euery boure,
Without peeces or ioynings,
But many subtell compassings,

As

As habeuries and pinnacles,
Imageries and tabernacles,
I saw, and full eke of windowes,
As flakes fallen in great Snowes,
And eke in each of the pinnacles
Weren sundrie habitacles,
In which stooden all withouten,
Full the castle all abouten,
Of all manner of Minstrales,
And Jestours, that tellen tales,
Both of weeping and of game,
And of all that longeth vnto Fame,
There heard I play on an Harpe,
That souned both well and sharpe,
Hym Orpheus full craftely,
And on this side fast by
Sat the Harper Orion,
And Gacides Chiron,
And other Harpers many one,
And the Briton Glaskirion,
And smale Harpers with her glees,
Sate vnder hem in diuers sees,
And gone on hem vpward to gape,
And counterfaited hem as an Ape,
Or as craft counterfeit kind.
Tho saw I standen hem behind,
Afarre from hem, all by hemselue,
Many a thousand times twelue,
That made loud Minstralcies
In Cornmuse and Shalmies,
And many another pipe,
That craftely began to pipe,
Both in Douced and in Rede,
That ben at feasts with the brede.
And many a Floite and litlyng horne,
And pipes made of greene Corne,
As haue these little heard gromes,
That keepen beasts in the Bromes.
There saw I then dan Citherus,
And of Athenes dan Proserus,
And Mercia that lost her skinne,
Both in face, body, and chinne,
For that she would enuien so,
To pipen bette than Apollo.
There saw I eke famous old and yong,
Pipers of all the Dutch tong,
To learne loue daunces, springs,
Reyes, and the straunge things.
Tho saw I in another place,
Standing in a large space
Of hem that maken bloody soun,
In trumpe beme, and Clarioun,
For in fight and bloodsheddings
Is vsed glad clarionings.
There heard I trumpe, Messenus,
Of whom that speaketh Vergilius.
There heard I Joab trumpe also,
Theodomas, and other mo,
And all that vsed clarion,
In Casteloigne, and Aragon,
That in her times famous were,
To learnen saw I trumpen there.
There saw I sit in other sees,
Playing vpon other sundry glees,
Which that I cannot neuen,
Mo than Sterres ben in heuen,
Of which I nill as now not rime,
For ease of you, and losse of time:
For time ylost, this know ye,
By no way may recouered be.
There saw I playing Iogelours,
Magicians, and Tragetours,
And Phetonisses, Charmeresses,
Old Witches, Sorceresses,
That vsen Exorcisations,
And eke suffumigations,
And clerkes eke, which conne well
All this Magicke naturell,
That craftely doe her entents,
To maken in certaine ascendents,
Images lo, through which Magike,
To maken a man ben hole or sike.
There saw I the queene Medea,
And Circes eke, and Caliphta.
There saw I Hermes Ballenus,
Limote, and eke Simon Magus.
There saw I, and knew by name,
That by such art doen men haue fame,
There saw I Coll Tragetour,
Upon a table of Sicamour
Play an vncouth thing to tell,
I saw him carry a wind Well
Under a Walnote shale.
What should I make lenger tale,
Of all the people that I sey,
I could not tell till Domisdey.
When I had all this folke behold,
And found me loose and not hold,
And I amused a long while,
Upon this wall of Beryle,
That shone lighter than a glas,
And made well more than it was,
As kind thing of fame is,
And then anone after this,
I gan forth romen till I fond,
The castell yate on my right hond,
Which so well corven was,
That neuer such an other nas,
And yet it was by auenture
Iwrought, by great and subtill cure,
It needeth not you more to tellen,
To make you too long dwellen,
Of these yates florishings,
Ne of compaces ne of karuings,
Ne how the hacking in Masonries,
As corbets, and Imageries,

But

But Lord so faire it was to shewe,
For it was all with gold behewe,
But in I went, and that anone
There met I crying many one,
A larges a larges, hold vp well
God saue the Ladie of this pell,
Our owne gentill Ladie Fame,
And hem that willen to haue a name
Of vs, thus heard I crien all,
And fast commen out of the hall,
And shoke nobles and starlings,
And crowned were as kings,
With crownes wrought full of Lorings,
And many ribans, and many fringes,
Were on her clothes truely.
Tho at the last espied I,
That Pursenauntes and Heraudes,
That crien riche folkes lauds,
It weren, all and euery man
Of hem, as I you tell can
Had on him throwe a vesture,
Which men clepe a coate armure,
Embroudred wonderly riche,
As though thy were not liche,
But nought will I so mote I thriue,
Be about to discriue,
All these armes that there weren,
That they thus on her coates weren,
For to me were impossible,
Wen might make of hem a bible,
Twenty foote thicke as I trowe,
For certain who so could know,
Might there all the armes seen,
Of famous folke that had been,
In Affrike, Europe, and Asie,
Sith first began cheualrie.
Lo, how should I now tell all this,
Ne of the hall eke what need is,
To tellen you that euery wall
Of it, and rofe and flore with all,
Was plated halfe a foote thicke
Of golde, and that nas not wicke,
But for to proue in all wise,
As fine as ducket in Venise,
Of which to lite all in my pouche is,
And they were set as thicke of ouches,
Fine, of the finest stones fayre,
That men reden in the Lapidaire,
Or as Grasses growen in a Mede,
But it were all to long to rede
The names, and therefore I pace,
But in this lustie and riche place,
That Fames hall called was,
Full moch prees of folke there nas,
Ne croudyng, for to moch prees,
But all on hie aboue a dees,
Satte in a see Imperiall,
That made was of Rubie royall,
Which that a Carbuncle is icalled,
I sawe perpetually istalled,
A femine creature,
That neuer formed by nature,
Was such an other thing I saie:
For altherfirst, loth to saie,
Me thought that she was so lite,
That the length of a cubite,
Was lenger than she seemed be,
But thus soone in a while she,
Her self tho wonderly streight,
That with her feet she therthe reight,
And with her hedde she touched heauen,
There as shineth the Sterres seuen,
And thereto yet, as to my wit
I saw a great wonder yet,
Upon her yen to behold,
But certainly I hem neuer told,
For as fele yen had she,
As fethers vpon foules be,
Or weren on the beasts foure,
That Goddes trone can honour,
As wryteth John in the Apocalips,
Her heer that was owndie and crips,
As burned gold it shone to see.
And sothe to tellen also thee,
Had also fele vp standyng eares,
And tonges, as on beast been heares,
And on her feete woren sawe I,
Partriche winges redily.
But Lord the perrie and the richesse,
I saw sitting on the Goddesse,
And the heauenly melodie,
Of songes full of armonie,
I heard about her trone isong,
That all the palais wall rong,
So song the mightie Muse she,
That cleped is Caliope,
And her seuen sisterne eke,
That in her faces seemen meke,
And euermore eternally,
They song of Fame tho heard I,
Heried be thou and thy name,
Goddes of renoun and of Fame.
Tho was I ware at the last,
As I mine yen gan vp cast,
That this ilke noble Queene,
On her shoulders gan sustene,
Both the armes and the name,
Of tho that had large Fame,
Alisander, and Hercules,
That with a sherte his life did lese,
And thus found I sitting this Goddesse,
In noble honour and richesse,
Of which I stinte a while now,
Other thing to tellen you.
Tho saw I stande on thotherside,
Streight doune to the doores wide,

From

From the dees many a pillere
Of metall, that shone not full clere,
But though they were of no richesse,
Yet were they made for great noblesse,
And in hem great sentence,
And folke of hie and digne reuerence,
Of which to tell will I fonde.
Upon a piller sawe I stonde,
Alderfirst there I sie,
Upon a piller stoude on hie,
That was of Lede and of Iron fine,
Him of the secte Saturnine,
The Ebraike Josephus the old,
That of Jewes gestes told,
And he bare on his shulders hie,
The fame up of the Jurie,
And by him stoden other seuen,
Wise and worthie for to neuen,
To helpe him beare up the charge,
It was so heauy and so large,
And for they written of battayles,
As well as of other maruayles,
Therefore was lo, this pillere,
Of which I you tell here,
Of Leade and Iron both twis,
For Iron Martes metall is,
Which that God is of battayle,
And the Leade withouten fayle,
Is lo, the metall of Saturne,
That hath full large whele to turne,
To stand forth on eyther rowe
Of hem, which I could knowe,
Though I by order hem not tell,
To make you to long to dwell.
These, of which I gan rede,
These saw I stand out of drede,
Upon an Iron piller strong,
That painted was all endlong,
With Tigres blood in euery place,
The Tholason that height Stace,
That bare of Thebes up the name,
Upon his shoulders, and the fame
Also of cruell Achilles,
And by hym stode withouten lees,
Full wonder hie upon a piller
Of Iron, he the great Omer,
And with him Dares and Titus
Before, and eke he Lollius,
And Guido eke the Colempnis,
And English Galfride eke iwis,
And ech of these as I haue ioy,
Was busie to beare up Troy,
So heady thereof was the fame,
That for to beare it was no game,
But yet I gan full well espie,
Betwene hem was a little enuie,
One saied that Omer made lies,
Feyning in his Poetries,
And was to the Grekes fauourable,
Therefore held he it but fable.
Tho saw I stand on a pillere,
That was of Tinned Iron clere,
The Latine Poete Virgile,
That hath bore up a long while
The fame of Pius Eneas.
And next him on a piller was,
Of Copper, Venus clerke, Ouide,
That hath sowen wondrous wide,
The great god of loues fame,
And there he bare up well his name,
Upon this piller also hie,
As I might see it with myne ie:
For why this hall whereof I rede,
Was wore on height, length, and brede,
Well more by a thousand deale,
Than it was erst, that saw I weale.
Tho saw I on a piller by,
Of Iron wrought full sternely,
The great Poet dan Lucan,
That on his shoulders bare up than,
As hie as that I might see,
The fame of Julius, and Pompee,
And by him stoden all these clerkes,
That write of Romes mighty werkes,
That if I would her names tell,
All to long must I dwell.
And next him on a piller stood,
Of Sulphure, liche as he were wood,
Dan Claudian, sothe for to tell,
That bare up all the fame of hell,
Of Pluto, and of Proserpine,
That Queene is of the derke pine,
What should I more tell of this,
The hall was all full twis,
Of hem that written old iestes,
As been on trees Rokes nestes,
But it a full confuse mattere
Were, all these iestes for to here,
That they of write, and how they hight,
But while that I beheld this sight,
I herde a noyse approchen bliue,
That fareth as Bees doen in an hiue,
Ayenst her time of out flying,
Right soch a maner murmuring,
For all the world it seemed mee.
Tho gan I looke about and see,
That there come entryng into the hall,
A right great company withall,
And that of sondry regions,
Of all kind of condicions,
That dwell in yearth vnder the Moone,
Poore and riche, and al so soone
As they were come into the hall,
They gan on knees doune to fall,
Before this ilke noble Queene,
And saied, graunt vs Ladie sheene,

Eche of vs of thy grace a bone,
And some of hem the graunted sone,
And some the warned well and faire,
And some the graunted the contraire
Of her asking vtterly:
But thus I say you truely,
What her grace was, I nist,
For of these folke full well I wist,
They had good fame eche deserued,
Although they were diuersly serued,
Right as her sister dame Fortune,
Is wont to serue in commune.
Now herken how she gan to pay
Hem that gan her of grace pray,
And yet lo, all this companie
Saiden soth, and not a lie.
Madame saied they, we bee
Folke that here beseechen thee,
That thou graunt vs now good fame,
And let our workes haue good name,
In ful recompensacioun
Of good worke, giue vs good renoun.
I warne it you (qd. she) anone,
Ye get of me good fame none,
By God, and therefore go your way.
Alas (qd. they) and welaway,
Tell vs what your cause may be.
For me list it not (qd. she)
No wight shall speake of you twis,
Good ne harme, ne that ne this.
And with that worde she gan to call,
Her messenger that was in hall,
And bad that he should faste gone,
Upon paine to be blind anone,
For Eolus the god of Winde,
In Trace there ye shall him finde,
And bid him bring his clarioun,
That is full diuers of his soun,
And it is cleped cleare Laude,
With which he wont is to heraude
Hem that me list ipraised bee:
And also bid him how that hee,
Bryng eke his other clarioun,
That height Sclaunder in euery toun,
With which he wont is to diffame
Hem that me list, and doe hem shame.
This messenger gan fast to gone,
And found where in a caue of stone,
In a countree that height Trace,
This Eolus with harde grace,
Held the Windes in distresse,
And gan hem vnder him to presse,
That they gone as the Beres rore,
He bound and presled hem so sore.
This messenger gan fast crie,
Rise vp (qd. he) and fast thee hie,
Till thou at my Lady bee,
And take thy clarions eke with thee,
And speed thee fast: and he anone,
Tooke to one that hight Tritone,
His clarions to bearen tho,
And let a certaine winde go,
That blewe so hidously and hie,
That it ne left not a skie
In all the welken long and brode.
This Eolus no where abode,
Till he was come to Fames feete,
And eke the man that Triton heete,
And there he stode as still as stone,
And here withall there came anone,
An other huge companie,
Of good folke and gan to crie,
Lady, graunt vs now good Fame,
And let our workes haue that name,
Now in honour of gentilnesse,
And also God your soule blesse,
For we han well deserued it,
Therefore is right that we be quit.
As thriue I (qd. she) ye shall fayle,
Good workes shall you not auayle,
To haue of me good Fame as now,
But wote ye what, I graunt you,
That ye shall haue a shrewd name,
And wicked loos and worse fame,
Though ye good loos haue well deserued,
Now goeth your way for you been serued:
And thou Dan Eolus (qd. she)
Take forth thy trumpe anone let see,
That is icleped Sclaunder light,
And blow her loos, that euery wight
Speake of hem harme and shrewednesse,
Instede of good and worthinesse,
For thou shalt trumpe all the contraire,
Of that they haue one well and faire.
Alas thought I, what auentures
Haue these sory creatures,
That they emong all the pres,
Should this be shamed guiltes?
But what, it must needes be.
What did this Eolus, but he
Tooke out his blacke trompe of bras,
That fouler than the Deuill was,
And gan this trompe for to blow,
As all the world should ouerthrow,
Throughout euery regioun,
Went this foule trumpes soun,
As swifte as a pellet out of a gonne,
When fire is in the pouder ronne,
And soch a smoke gan out wende,
Out of the foule trumpes ende,
Blacke, blu, grenisshe, swartish, rede,
As doeth where that men melte lede,
Lo, all on hie from the tewell,
And thereto one thing saw I well,
That the ferther that it ranne,
The greater wexen it beganne,

As doeth the riuer from a well,
And it ſtanke as the pitte of hell,
Alas, thus was her ſhame itong,
And gultleſſe on euery tong.
Tho came the third companie,
And gone vp to the dees to hie,
And doune on knees they fell anone,
And ſaiden, we been euerichone,
Folke that han full truely
Deſerued fame rightfully,
And prayed you it might be know,
Right as it is and forth blow.
I graunt (qd. ſhe) for now me liſt
That your good worke ſhall be wiſt,
And yet ye ſhall haue better loos,
Right in diſpite of all your foos,
Than worthy is, and that anone:
Let now (qd. ſhe) thy trumpe gone,
Thou Eolus that is ſo blacke,
And out thyne other trompe take,
That hight Laude, and blow it ſo
That through the world her fame go,
All eaſely and not too faſt,
That it be knowen at the laſt.
Full gladly Lady myne he ſaied,
And out his trumpe of gold he braied
Anone, and ſet it to his mouth,
And blewe it Eaſt, Weſt, and South,
And North, as loude as any thonder,
That euery wight hath of it wonder,
So brode it ran or that it ſtent,
And certes all the breath that went
Out of his trumpes mouth ſmelde,
As men a potte full of baume helde,
Emong a baſket full of roſes,
This fauour did he to her roſes.
And right with this I can eſpie,
There came the fowerth companie,
But certaine they were wonder fewe,
And gonne to ſtanden on a rewe,
And ſaiden, certes Lady bright,
We haue doen well with all our might,
But we ne keepe to haue fame,
Hide our workes and our name,
For Goddes loue, for certes wee,
Haue ſurely doen it for bountee,
And for no maner other thing.
I graunt you all your aſking,
(Qd. ſhe) let your workes be dedde.
With that about I tourned my hedde,
And ſawe anone the fifteth rout,
That to this Lady gan lout,
And doune on knees anone to fall,
And to her tho beſoughten all,
To hiden her good workes eke,
And ſaied, they peue not a leke
For no fame, ne ſuch renoun,
For they for contemplacioun,
And Goddes loue had it wrought,
Ne of faume would they nought.
What (qd ſhe) and be ye wood,
And wene ye for to do good,
And for to haue of that no fame,
Haue ye diſpite to haue my name,
Nay ye ſhall lien euerichone:
Blowe thy trumpe and that anone,
(Qd. ſhe) thou Eolus I hote,
And ring theſe folkes workes by note,
That all the world may of it heare:
And he gan blowe her loos ſo cleare,
In his golden clarioun,
Through the worlde went the ſoun,
Alſo kindly and eke ſo ſoft,
That their fame was blowe aloft.
Tho came the ſixt companie,
And gan faſt to Fame crie,
Right verely in this manere,
They ſaiden, mercie Lady dere,
To tell certain as it is,
We haue doen neyther that ne this,
But idell all our life hath be,
But natheleſſe yet pray we,
That we may haue as good a fame,
And great renowme and knowen name,
As they that haue do noble ieſtes,
And acheued all her queſtes,
As well of loue as other thing,
All was vs neuer broche ne ring,
Ne els what fro women ſent,
Ne ones in her hart iment,
To maken vs onely frendly chere,
But mought temen vs on bere,
Yet let vs to the people ſeeme
Soch as the world may of vs deeme,
That women louen vs for wood,
It ſhall do vs as moch good,
And to our harte as moch auaile,
The counterpeiſe, eaſe, and trauaile,
As we had won with labour,
For that is dere bought honour,
At regard of our great eaſe:
And yet ye muſt vs more pleaſe,
Let vs be hold eke thereto,
Worthy, wiſe, and good alſo,
And rich, and happy vnto loue,
For Goddes loue that ſitteth aboue,
Though we may not the body haue
Of women, yet ſo God me ſaue,
Let men glewe on vs the name,
Suffiſeth that we haue the fame.
I graunt (qd. ſhe) by my trouth,
Now Eolus withouten flouth,
Take out thy trumpe of gold (qd. ſhe)
And blowe as they haue aſked me,
That euery man wene hem at eaſe,
Though they go in full badde leaſe,

This

This Eolus gan it so blowe,
That through the world it was iknow.
Tho came the seuenth route anone,
And fill on knees euerichone,
And sayed, Lady graunt vs soone,
The same thing, the same boone,
That this nexte folke haue done.
Fie on you (qd. she) euerichone,
Ye mastie swine, ye idle wretches,
Full of rotten slow tetches,
What falle theeues where ye wold,
Been famed good, and nothing nold
Deserue why, ne neuer thought,
Yen rather you to hangen ought,
For ye be like the slepie Cat,
That would haue fish: but wost thou what?
He woll nothing weate his clawes,
Euill thrifte come to your iawes,
And on myne, if I it graunt,
Or do fauour you to auaunt.
Thou Eolus, thou kyng of Thrace,
Go blowe this folke a sorie grace,
(Qd. she) anone, and wost thou how,
As I shall tell thee right now,
Say these ben they that would honour
Haue, and do no kins labour,
Ne do no good, and yet haue laude,
And that men wende that belle I saude,
Ne coude hem not of loue werne,
And yet she that grint at querne,
Is all too good to ease her herte.
This Eolus anone vp sterte,
And with his blacke clarioun
He gan to blasen out a soun,
As loude as belleth winde in hell,
And eke therewith sothe to tell,
This sowne was so full of iapes,
As euer mowes were in apes,
And that went all the world about,
That euery wight gan on hem shout,
And for to laugh as they were wood,
Soch game found they in her hood.
Tho came another company,
That had ydone the trechery,
The harme and great wickednesse,
That any herte couden gesse,
And prayed her to haue good fame,
And that she nolde do hem no shame,
But giue hem loos and good renoun,
And do it blowe in clarioun.
Nay wis (qd. she) it were a vice,
Al be there in me no iustice,
He list not to do it now,
Ne this I nill graunt it you.
Tho came there leaping in a rout,
And gan clappen all about,
Euery man vpon the crowne
That all the hall gan to sowne,
And said, lady lefe and dere,
We ben soch folkes as ye may here,
To tell all the tale aright,
We ben shrewes euery wight,
And haue delite in wickednesse,
As good folke haue in goodnesse,
And ioy to ben knowen shrewes,
And full vice and wicked thewes,
Wherefore we pray you on a rowe,
That our fame be soch yknow,
In all things right as it is.
I graunt it you (qd. she) ywis,
But what art thou that saiest this tale,
That wearest on thy hose a pale,
And on thy tippet soch a bell?
Madame (qd. he) sothe to tell,
I am that like shrewe twis
That brent the temple of Isidis,
In Athenes, lo that citee.
And wherefore diddest thou so (qd. she?)
By my trouth (qd he) madame,
I wolde faine haue had a name,
As other folke had in the towne,
Although they were of great renowne
For her vertue and her thewes
Thought I, as great fame haue shrewes:
(Though it be nought) for shrewdnesse,
As good folke haue for goodnesse,
And sithen I may not haue that one,
That other nyll I not forgone,
As for to get a fame here,
The temple set I all on fire.
Now done our loos be blowe swithe,
As wisely be thou euer blithe.
Gladly (qd. she) thou Eolus,
Herest thou not what they prayen vs,
Madame yes, ful well (qd. he)
And I will trumpen it parde:
And tooke his blacke trumpe fast,
And gan to puffen and to blast,
Till it was at the worlds end.
With that I gan about wend,
For one that stode right at my backe,
Me thought full goodly to me spake,
And said, frende what is thy name?
Arte thou come hider to haue fame?
Nay forsothe frende (qd. I)
I come not hither, grauntmercy,
For no soch cause by my heed,
Suffiseth me as I were deed,
That no wight haue my name in honde
I wot my selfe best how I stonde,
For what I drie, or what I thinke,
I woll my selfe all it drinke,
Certaine for the more part,
As ferforth as I can mine art.
What doest thou here then (qd. he?)

(Qd.I) that woll I tell thee,
The cause why I stand here,
Some new tidings for to lere,
Some new thing, I not what,
Tidings eyther this or that,
Of loue, or soch things glade,
For certainely he that me made
To come hyder, said to mee
I sholde bothe heare and see,
In this place wonder things,
But these be no soch tidings,
As I meant of: No (qd.he)
And I answerde, no parde,
For well I wote euer yet,
Sith that first I had wit,
That some folke han desired fame;
Diuerslly, and loos and name,
But certainly I nist how,
Ne where that fame dwelled or now,
Ne eke of her description,
Ne also her condition,
Ne the order of her dome,
Knew I not till I hider come.
Why than be lo these tidings,
That thou now hether brings,
That thou hast herde (qd.he) to mee,
But now no force for well I see,
What thou desirest for to lere,
Come forth and stande no lenger here,
And I woll thee without drede,
Into soch another place lede,
There thou shalt here many one.
Tho gan I forth with him gone,
Out of the castell sothe to sey.
Tho sawe I stand in a valey,
Under the castell fast by,
An house, that domus Dedali,
That Laborintus ycleped is,
Nas made so wonderly ywis,
Ne halfe so queintly ywrought,
And euermo, as swift as thought,
This queint house about went,
That neuermo it still stent,
And there came out so great a noyse,
That had it stonde vpon Oyse,
Men might haue heard it easily,
To Rome, I trowe sikerly,
And the noyse which that I herde,
For all the world right so it ferde,
As doth the rouling of the stone,
That fro thengin is letyn gone.
And all this house of which I rede,
Was made of twigges, salow, rede,
And greene eke, and some were white,
Such as men to the cages twhite,
Or maken of these paniers.
Or els hutches or dossers,
That for the swough and for the twigges,
This house was also full of gigges,
And also full eke of chirkinges,
And of many other worknings,
And eke this house hath of entrees,
As many as leues ben on trees,
In sommer when they bene greene,
And on the rofe yet men may seene,
A thousand holes, and wel mo,
To letten the sowne out go,
And by day in euery tide,
Bene all the dores open wide,
And by night eche one vnshet,
Ne porter is there none to let,
No manner tidings in to pace,
Ne neuer rest is in that place,
That it nis filled full of tidings,
Eyther loude or of whisperings,
And euer all the houses angles,
Is ful of rownings and of tangles,
Of werres, of peace, of marriages,
Of restes, and of labour, of viages,
Of abode, of death, and of lyfe,
Of loue, of hate, accord, of strife,
Of losse, of lore, and of winnings,
Of heale, of sickenesse, or of lesings,
Of faire wether, and eke of tempests,
Of qualme, of folke, and of beests,
Of diuers transmutations,
Of estates and eke of regions,
Of trust, of drede, of ialousie,
Of witte, of winning of folie,
Of plenty, and of great famine,
Of cheepe, derth, and of ruine,
Of good or misgouernement,
Of fire, and of diuers accident.
And lo, this house of which I write,
Syker be ye it nas not lite,
For it was sixtie mile of length,
Al was the tymber of no strength,
Yet it is founded to endure,
While that it list to Aventure,
That is the mother of tidings,
As the see of welles and springs,
And it was shapen lyke a cage.
Certes (qd.I) in all mine age,
Ne saw I such an house as this,
And as I wondred me ywis,
Vpon this house tho ware was I,
Low mine Egle fast by,
Was perched hie vpon a stone,
And I gan streight to him gone,
And said thus, I pray thee
That thou a while abide mee
For goddes loue, and let me seene,
What wonders in that place bene,
For yet paraunter I may lere,
Some good therein, or somewhat here,
That lete me were, or that I went,

Peter,

Peter, that is now mine entent.
(Qd. he to me) therefore I dwell
But certaine one thing I thee tell,
That but I bryng thee therin,
Ne shall thou neuer conne the gin,
To come in to it out of doubt,
So faste it whirleth lo about,
But sith that Ioues of his grace,
As I haue said will the solace,
Finally with these things
Uncouth sightes and tidings,
To passe with thine eunesse,
Soch routh hath he of thy distresse,
That thou suffredest debonairly,
And woste they seluen vtterly,
Desperate of all blisse,
Sith that fortune hath made a misse,
The swete of all thine hertes rest,
Languish and eke in poynt to brest,
But he through his mighty melite,
Wil do thee ease, al be it lite,
And gaue in expresse commaundement,
To which I am obedient,
To forther thee with al my might,
And wilh and teach thee aright,
Where thou maist most tidings here,
Thou shalt here many one lere.
With this word he right anone,
Hent me vp bytwene his tone,
And at a window in me brought,
That in this house was as me thought,
And therewithall me thought it stent,
And nothing it about went,
And me set in the floore adoun
But soch a great congregacioun
Of folke as I sawe come about,
Some within and some without,
Nas neuer seene, ne shall be ekte
That certes in this world nis lefte,
So many formed by nature,
Ne deed so many a creature,
That wel vneath in that place
Had I a foote brede of space,
And euery wight that I sawe there,
Rowned euerich in others ere,
A new tiding priuely,
Or els he tolde it all openly
Right thus, and said: Hast nat thou
That is betidde, lo right now.
Not (qd. he) tell me what,
And then he told him this and that,
And swore thereto that it was soth,
Thus hath he said, and thus he doth,
And this shal be, and thus herde I say,
That shal be found that dare I lay:
That all the folke that is on liue,
Ne haue the conning to discriue,
The thinges that I herde there,
What a loude, and what in ere,
But all the wonder most was this,
When one had herd a thing ywis,
He came streight to another wight
And gan him tellen anon right,
The same that him was told
Or it a forlong way was old,
And gan somewhat for to eche
To this tiding in his speche,
More than euer it spoken was,
And nat so sone departed nas
The fro him that he ne mette
With the third, and er he lette
Any stound he told hym alse,
Were the tidings sothe or false,
Yet wold he tell it natheles,
And euermore with mo encrees,
Then it was erst: thus north and south,
Went euery tiding fro mouth to mouth,
And that encreasing euermo,
As fire is wont to quicken and go
From a sparcle sprongen amis,
Till all a citie brent vp is.
And when that was full vp sprong,
And waxen more on euery tonge
Than euer it was, and went anone
Up to a window out to gone,
Or but it might out there passe,
It gan out crepe at some creuasse,
And flewe forth fast for the nones.
And sometime I saw there at ones,
A leasing and a fadde sothe sawe,
That gonnen of auenture drawe,
Out at a window for to pace,
And when they metten in that place,
They were achecked both two,
And neyther of them might out go,
For ech other they gonne so croude
Till ech of hem gan crien loude,
Let me gone first, nay but let mee,
And here I woll ensuren thee,
With vowes that thou wolt do so,
That I shall neuer fro thee go,
But be thine owne swore brother,
We woll meddle vs eche in other,
That no man be he neuer so wrothe,
Shall haue one two, but bothe
At ones, as beside his leue,
Come we a morowe or on eue,
Be we cryde or still prowned:
Thus saw I false and soth compowned,
Togider flie for o tiding.
Thus out at holes gonne wring,
Euery tidyng streight to Fame,
And she gan yeue eche his name,
After her disposicion,
And yeue hem eke duracion,
Some to wexe and wane soone,

As doth the faire white moone,
And let hem gonne, there might I seen
Winged wonders fast flien,
Twenty thousand in a route,
As Eolus hem blewe aboute,
And lord this house in all times
Was full of shipmen and pilgrimes,
With scrippes brette full of leasings,
Entermelled with tidings,
And eke alone by hemselue,
O many thousand times twelue
Saw I eke of these pardoners,
Currours, and eke messaungers,
With boxes crommed full of lies
As euer vessell was with lies,
And as I alther fastest went
About, and did all mine entent,
Me for to playen and for to lere,
And eke a tiding for to here,
That I had herde of some countree
That shall not now be told for mee,
For it no need is redely
Folke can sing it bet than I,
For al mote out late or rathe,
All the sheues in the fathe.
I herde a great noise withall
In a corner of the hall,
There men of loue tidings told
And I gan thitherward behold,
For I saw renning euery wight,
As fast as that they hadden might,
And euerich cride what thing is that,
And some said I not neuer what,
And when they were all on a hepe,
Tho behind gonne vp lepe,
And clamben vp on other faste
And vp the noyse on highen caste,
And treden fast on others heles
And stampe as men done after eles.
At the last I saw a man,
Which that I nought ne can,
But he seemed for to be
A man of great auctorite.
And there withall I abraide
Out of my slepe halfe a fraide,
Remembring well what I had sene
And how hie and ferre I had bene
In my goost, and had great wonder
Of that the god of thonder
Had let me knowen, and began to write
Like as ye haue herd me endite,
Wherefore to study and rede alway,
I purpose to do day by day.
Thus in dreaming and in game,
Endeth this litell booke of Fame.

¶ Here endeth the booke of Fame.

The Prologue of the testament of Loue.

Many men there been, that with eeres openly sprad, so moch swalowen the deliciousnesse of iestes and of ryme, by queynt knitting coloures, that of the goodnesse or of the badnesse of the sentence, take they litle hede or els none.

Sothely dull witte & a thoughtful soule so sore haue mined & graffed in my spirites, that soch craft of enditing woll nat been of my acquaintaunce. And for rude words & boistous percen the hart of the herer to the inrest point, and planten there the sentence of thinges, so that with littel helpe it is able to spring. This booke that nothing hath of the great flood of witte, ne of semeliche colours, is doluen with rude wordes and boistous, and so drawe togider to maken the calthers therof ben the more ready to hent sentence.

Some men there been, that painten with colours rich, and some with vers, as with red inke, and some with coles and chalke: And yet is there good matter to the leude people of thilke chalkie purtreyture, as hem thinketh for the time, and afterward the sight of the better colours yeuen to hem more ioye for the first leudnesse. So soothly this leude clowdy occupacion is not to praise, but by the leud, for commenly leude leudenesse commendeth. Eke it shall yeue sight, that other precious things shall be the more in reuerence. In Latin and French hath many soueraine wits had great delite to endite, and haue many noble things fulfilde, but certes there been some that speaken their poisie mater in French, of which spech the French men haue as good a fantasie as we haue in hearing of Frēch mēs English. And many termes ther ben in English, which vnneath we English men connen declare the knowledging: How should then a french mā borne, such termes conne iumpere in his matter, but as the Iay chatereth English: right so truly the vnderstanding of Englishmē wol not stretch to the priuie termes in Frenche, what so euer wee bosten of straunge langage. Let then Clerkes enditen in Latin, for they haue the propertie of science, and the knowing in that facultie: and lette Frenchmen in their French also enditen their queint termes, for it is kindely to their mouthes, and let vs shewe our fantasies in such wordes as wee learneden

learneden of our dames tongue. And although this booke be litle thanke worthy, for the leudnesse in trauaile, yet such writing exciten men to thilke things that been necessary: for euery man therby may, as by a perpetuall mirrour, seene the vices or vertues of other, in which thing lightly may be conceiued to eschewe perils, & necessaries to catch after, as auentures haue fallen to other people or persons. Certes, the souereignst thing of desire and most creature reasonable, haue or els should haue full appetite to their perfection: vnreasonable beasts mowen not, sith reason hath in hem no working: Then reasonable that will not, is comparisoned to vnreasonable, and made like hem. Forsooth the most souereigne and finall perfection of man, is in knowing of a sooth, withouten any entent deceiuable, and in loue of one very God, that is inchaungeable, that is, to know and loue his creator.

Nowe principally, the meane to bring in knowledging and louing his creatour, is the consideration of things made by the creatour, wherethrough bee thilke thynges that beene made, vnderstanding here to our wits, arne the vnseen priuities of God, made to vs sightfull and knowing in our contemplation and vnderstonding. These thinges then forsooth much bringen vs to ỹ full knowledging sooth, and to the parfite loue of the maker of heuenly things. Lo Dauid saith: thou hast delited me in making: as who saith, to haue delite in the tune how God hath lent me in consideration of thy making. Whereof Aristotle in the booke de Animalibus, sayth to naturell Philosophers: It is a great liking in loue of knowing their creatour: and also in knowinge of causes in kindely things considered. Forsooth the formes of kindely thynges, and the shape, a great kindely loue mee should haue to the werkemen that hem made. The crafte of a werkeman is shewed in the werke. Herefore truely the Philosophers with a liuely studye many noble things right precious and woorthie to memorie written, and by a great swetande trauaile to vs left en of causes the properties in natures of things, to which therefore Philosophers it was more ioy, more lyking, more heartie lust in kindely vertues and matters of reason, the perfection by busie studie to know, than to haue had all the treasour, all the richesse, all the vaine-glory that the passed Emperours, Princes, or Kinges hadden. Therfore the names of hem in the booke of perpetuall memorie, in vertue and peace arne written: and in the contrary, that is to sayne, in Styxe, the foule pitte of hell, arne thilke pressed that such goodnesse hated. And because this booke shall bee of loue, and the prime causes of stering in that dooing with passions and diseases for wanting of desire, I will that this booke be cleped the Testament of Loue.

But now thou reader, who is thilke that will not in scorne laugh, to heare a dwarfe or els halfe a man, say he wil rend out the sword of Hercules handes: And also hee should set Hercules gades a mile yet ferther, and ouer that hee had power of strength to pull vp the speare that Alisander the noble myght neuer wagge.

And that passing all thing to beene mayster of Fraunce by might, there as the noble gracious Edward the third for all his great prowesse in victories ne might all yet conquere.

Certes, I wote well there shall bee made more scorne and iape of me, that I so vnwoorthely clothed all togither in the cloudie cloude of vnconning, will putten me in prees to speke of loue, or els of the causes in that matter, sithen all the greatest clearkes han had ynough to done, and as who saith, gathered vp cleane to forne hem, and with their sharpe lithes of conning all mowen, and made thereof great rekes and noble, full of all plenties to feed me and many another. Enuy forsooth commendeth nought his reason, that he hath in haine, be it neuer so truitie. And although these noble reapers, as good workmen, and worthy their hire, han all drawn and bound vp in the sheues, and made many shockes, yet haue I ensample to gader the small crums, and fullin my wallet of tho that fallen from the bourde among the small hounds, notwithstanding the trauaile of the almoigner, that hath drawe vp in the cloth all the remissailes, as trenchours, and the releefe to beare to the almesse. Yet also haue I leaue of the noble husband Bocce, although I bee a straunger of conning to come after his doctrine, and these great workemen, and gleane my handfuls of the shedding after their hands, and if me faile ought of my full, to encrease my portion with that I shall draw by priuities out of shockes: a slye seruaunt in his owne helpe is often muche commended, knowyng of trouth in causes of thyngs, was more hardier in the first seechers, and so sayth Aristotle, and lighter in vs that han followed after. For their passing study han freshed our wits, and our vnderstanding han excited, in consideration of trouth, by sharpenesse of their reasons. Utterly these thynges bee no dreames ne papes, to throwe to hogges, it is lifelyche meate for childzen of trouth, and as they me betiden when I pilgramed out of my kithe in Wintere, when the weather out of

measure was boistous, and the wylde winde Boreas, as his kinde asketh, with dryng colds, maked the wawes of the Occian sea so to arise vnkindely ouer the commune bankes, that it was in point to spill all the earth.

¶ Thus endeth the Prologue, and hereafter followeth the first booke of the Testament of Loue.

The testament of Loue.

This booke is an imitation of *Boecius de Consolatione Philosophiæ*: in the first part whereof, Loue (by way of legacie) doth bequeath to all them which follow her lore, the knowledge of truth from errour, whereby they may rightly judge of the causes of crosse fortune, and such aduersities as befall them, whether in their suits of loue, or otherwise, and so in the end obtaine their wished desires. In the second part she teacheth the knowledge of one very God our Creatour, as also the state of grace, and the state of glory: all the which good things are figured by a Margarite pearle. Chaucer did compile this booke as a comfort to himselfe after great greeses conceiued for some rash attempts of the commons, with whome hee had joyned, and thereby was in feare to loose the fauour of his best friends: and also therein to set end to all his writing, beeing commaunded by *Venus* (as appeareth by *Gower* in the ende of his eight booke, entituled *Confessio Amantis*) so to doe, as one that was *Venus* clerke; euen as *Gower* had made his *Confessio Amantis*, his last worke, and shrift of his former offences.

ALas Fortune alas, I that sometyme in delicious houres was wont to enioy blisfull stoundes, am nowe driue by vnhappye heauinesse to bewaile my sundry euils in tene. Truly I leue, in mine heart is writte of perdurable letters, all the ententions of lamentation that now been ynempned: for any manner disease outwarde in sobbyng manner, sheweth sorowfull yexing from within. Thus from my comfort I ginne to spill, sith she that should me sollace, is ferre fro my presence. Certes, her absence is to me an hell, my sterupng death thus in wo it mynetth, that endelesse care is throughout mine heart clenched, blisse of my toy, that oft me murthed is tourned into gall, to thinke on thing that may not at my will in armes me hent. Mirth is chaunged into tene, when swinke is ther continually, that rest was woont to sojourne and haue dwelling place. Thus witlesse thoughtfull, sightlesse looking, I endure my pennance in this darke prison, caitisned fro friendship and acquaintaunce, and forsaken of all that any worde dare speake. Straunge hath by way of intrusioun made his home there mee should be, if reason were heard as hee should. Neuer the later, yet heartely ladye, precyous Margarite, haue mind on thy seruaunt, and thinke on his disease, how lightlesse he liueth, sithe the beames brennende in loue of thyne eyen arne so bewet, that worldes and cloud atweene vs twey, will not suffer my thoughts of hem to be eulumined. Thinke that one vertue of a Margarite precious, is amongs many other the sorowfull to comfort, yet will of that me sorowfull to comfort, is my lustе to haue nought els at this time, Deede ne death, ne no manner trauayle hath no power myne heart so much to fade, as should to heare of a twinckling in your disease. Ah, God forbede that, but yet lete me dey, let me sterue withouten any measure of pennaunce, rather than myne hartely thinking comfort in ought were diseased. What may my seruice auelle in absence of her, that my seruice should accept? is this nat endelesse sorow to thinke? Yes, yes, God wote, mine heart breaketh nigh asunder: howe should the ground without kindely noriture, bringen forth any fruits? Howe should a shippe withouten a sterne in the great sea be gouerned? How should I withoutē my blisse, my heart, my desire, my ioy, my goodnesse, endure in this contrarious prison, that thinke euery houre in the day an hundred Winter? Well may now Eue sayne to me Adam, In sorow fallen from wealth, driuen art thou out of Paradise, with sweate thy sustenaunce to beswinke. Deepe in this pining pitte, with wo I ligge pstocked, with chaynes linked of care, and of tene. It is so high from thence I lie, and the common yearth, there ne is cable in no land maked, that might stretch to mee, to drawe me into blisse, ne steyers to steye on is none, so that without recouer endelesse, here to endure I wote well I parueide. O, where art thou nowe friendship, that sometime with laughande chere, madest both face and countenaunce to me wardes? Truely nowe art thou went out of towne, but euer ince thinketh,

keth,he weareth his old clothes,and that the soule, in the which the life of friendship was in,is drawne out from his other spirits. Now then farewell friendship,and farwell felawes, me thinketh yee all han taken your leaue: no force of you all at ones.

But lady of loue,yee wote what I meane, yet thinke on thy seruaunt, that for thy loue spilleth, all thyngs haue I forsake,to follow-en thyne hestes: reward me wyth a thought, though yee doe naught els. Remembraunce of loue lithe so sore vnder my breast,that other thought commeth not in my mynd, but gladnesse to thinke on your goodnesse, and your merry cheare,frendes and sorrow,to thinke on your wretch and your daunger, from whych Christ me saue. My great ioy it is to haue in meditations the bounties,the vertues,the nobley in you printed: sorrow and hell commen at ones, to suppose that I be vnkind. Thus with care,sorrow, and tene am I shapt, myne end with death to make. Now good goodly thinke on this.

O wretched foole that I am fallen into so lowe, the heate of my brennng tene hathe me all defaced: how should yee Lady set prise on so foule filth? My conning is thinne, my witte is exiled, like to a foole naturell am I compartioned. Truely lady, but your mercie the more were, I wote well all my labour were in idle: your mercie then passeth right. God graunt that proposition to be verified in me, so that by trust of good hope I now come to the hauen of ease, and sith it is impossible, the colours of your qualities to chaunge: and forsooth I wote well, wemme ne spotte may not abide, there so noble vertue habounded, so that the defacing to you is verily imaginable,as countenaunce of goodnesse,with encreasing vertue, is so in you knit to abide by necessary manner,yet if the riuers might fal,which is ayenst kinde, I wote well mine heart, ne should therefore naught flit, by the least point of Geometrie,so sadly is it fonded, that away from your seruice in loue, may hee not depart. O loue, when shall I been pleased? O charitie, when shall I been eased? O good goodly, when shall the dice tourne? O full of vertue, doe the chaunce of comfort vpward to fall. O loue,when wolt thou thinke on thy seruaunt? I can no more, but here outcast of all welfare, abide the day of my death, or els to sey sight that might all my welling sorrowes voide, and of the flood make an ebbe. These diseases mowen well by duresse of sorrowe make my life to vnbodie, and so for to die: but certes, ye Ladie in a full perfection of loue, beene so knitte with my soule, that death maye not thilke knotte vnbinde ne depart, so that yee and my soule together, as endelesse, in blisse should dwell, and there shall my soule at the full been eased, that hee may haue your presence, to shewe the entent of his desires: Ah deare God, that shall be a great ioy. Nowe yearthly Goddesse, take regarde of thy seruaunt,though I be feeble,for thou art woont to praise them better, that woulde conserue in loue, all be he full meaner than Kings or Princes, that woll not haue that vertue in mind. Now precious Margarite,that with thy noble vertue, hast drawne mee into loue firste, me wenyng thereof to haue blisse, as Galle and Aloes are so muche sprong, that sauour of sweetnesse may I not atast. Alas that your benigne eyen, in which that mercie seemeth to haue all his noriture,will by no way tourne the clearenesse of mercye to mee wards. Alas, that your brennande vertues, shinyng emonges all folke, and enluminyng all other people, by haboundaunce of encreasing, sheweth to me but smoake,and no light. These thynges to thinke in mine heart, maketh euerye daye weepyng in myne eyen to renne. These liggen on my backe so sore,that impotable burden mee seemeth on me backe to be charged, it maketh mee backeward to meue, when mysteps by common course euen foorth pretend: These thyngs also on ryght side and left, haue mee so enuolued with care, that wanne hope of helpe is throughout mee ronne truely, and leue that graceless is my Fortune, whyche that euer sheweth it mee wards by a cloudye disease, all ready to make stormes of tene, and the blisfull side halt still awayward,and wol it not suffer to mewards to turne: no force, yet woll I not beene conquered.

O,alas that your nobley, so muche among all other creatures, commended by flowyng streme,by all manner vertues, but there been woonderfull, I not whyche that let the flood to come into my soule, wherefore purely mated with sorrow through sought, my selfe I crie on your goodnesse, to haue pittie on this caytife, that in the inest degree of sorrowe and disease is left, and without your goodly will,from any helpe and recouerye. These sorrowes may I not sustayne, but if my sorrowe shoulde bee tolde, and to you wards shewed, although muche space is betweene vs twayne, yet me thynketh, that by suche soleinyng wordes, my disease gineth ebbe. Truely me thynketh, that the sowne of my lamentations weepyng, is right nowe flow into youre presence, and there creyeth after mercye and grace, to whyche thynge mee seemeth,

seemeth, thee list none answer to yeue, but with a deinous cheare ye commaunded it to auoyd, but God forbid that any woord should of you spring, to haue so little ruth. Parde, pitie and mercy in euery Margarite is closed by kinde, emongs many other vertues, by qualities of comfort, but comfort is to mee right naught worthy withouten mercie & pittie of you alone, which things hastely God me graunt for his mercie.

REhearsing these thinges and many other, without time or moment of rest, me seemed for anguish of disease, that all together I was rauished, I cannot tell how, but holly all my passions and feelings weren lost, as it seemed for the time, and suddainely a manner of drede light in mee all at ones, nought such feare as folke haue of an enemie, that were mightye, and would hem greue, or dooen hem disease: for I trowe this is well knowe to many persons, that otherwhile if a man be in his Souereignes presence, a manner of feardnesse creepeth in his heart, not for harme, but of goodly subiection: namely, as menne readen that Aungels been aferde of our Sauiour in heauen. And parde, ther ne is ne may no passion of disease be, but it is to meane, that Aungels been adradde, not by fiends of drede, sithen they been perfitely blissed, as affection of wonderfulnesse, and by seruice of obedience: such ferde also han these louers in presence of their loues, and subiects afore their Souerains: right so with ferdnesse mine hert was caught. And I suddainely astonied, there entered into the place, there I was lodged, a lady, the seemeliche and most goodly to my sight that euer tofore appeared to anye creature, and truly in the blustering of her look she paue gladnesse & comfort suddainly to all my wits, and right so shee dooth to euery wight that commeth in her presence. And for she was so goodly (as me thought) mine hart began somdeale to be enbolded, and wext a little hardye to speake, but yet with a quaking voice, as I durst, I salued her, and enquired what shee was, and why she so worthie to sight, dained to enter into so foule a dungeon, and namely a prison, without leaue of my keepers. For certes, although the vertue of deeds of mercye stretchen to visiten the poore prisoners, and hem after that faculties been had to comfort, mee seemed that I was so ferre fallen into miserie and wretched hid caitifenesse, that mee should no precious thing neigh: and also that for my sorrow euery wight should beene heauie, and wish my recouerie. But when this lady had somdeale apperceiued, as well by my wordes, as by my chere, what thought busied me within, with a good womanly countenance she said these words: O my norie, wenest thou that my manner be to forget my friends or my seruaunts? Nay (qd. shee) it is my full entent to visite and comfort all my friendships and allies, as well in time of perturbation, as of most prosperitie of blisse, in me shall vnkindenesse neuer bee founden. And also sithen I haue so few especiall true now in these dayes, wherefore I may well at more leisar, come to hem that mee deseruen, and if my comming may in any thing auaile, were wel I wol come often.

Now good lady (qd. I) that art so faire on to looke, ryning honey be thy wordes, blisse of paradise arne thy lookings, ioy and comfort are thy mouings, what is thy name? How is it that in you is so mokell working vertues enpight, as me seemeth, and in none other creature, that euer saw I with mine eyen? My disciple (qd. she) me wondereth of thy wordes, and on thee, that for a little disease hast forgetten my name. Wost thou not well that I am Loue, that first thee brought to thy seruice? O good Lady (qd. I) is this worship to thee, or to thyne excellence, for to come into so foule a place? Parde sometime tho I was in prosperitie, and with forraine goods enuolued, I had mokell to doen to drawe thee to mine hostell, and yet many wernings thou madest, ere thou list fully to graunt, thine home to make at my dwelling place: and now thou commest goodly by thine own vise, to comfort me with wordes, and so therethrough I ginne remember on passed gladnesse. Truly lady I ne wote whether I shall say welcome or none, sithen thy comming woll as much doe mee tene and sorrow, as gladnesse and mirth: see why. For that me comforteth to thinke on passed gladnesse, that me anoyeth eft to be in doing: thus thy comming both gladdeth and teneth, and that is cause of much sorrow: lo Lady, howe then I am comforted by your comming: and with that I gan in teares to distill, and tenderly weepe. Now certes (qd. Loue) I see well (and that me ouerthinketh) that wit in thee faileth, and art in point to dote. Truly (qd. I) that haue ye maked, and that euer woll I rue. Wotest thou not wel (qd. she) that euery sheepheard ought by reason to seeke his sperkel and sheepe that arne ron into wildernesse, emong bushes and perils, and hem to their pasture ayen bring, and take of hem priuie busie cure and keeping? And tho the vnconning Sheep scattered, would been lost, renning to wildernesse,

nesse, and to deserts draw, or els woulden put hemselfe to the swallowing Wolfe, yet shall the Shepheard, by businesse and trauaile, so put him forth, that he shall not let him bee lost by no way. A good sheepheard putteth rather his life to ben lost for his sheepe.

But for thou shalt not wene me, beeing of werse condition, truly for eueriche of my folke, and for all tho that to me ward be knit in any condition, I woll rather die, than suffer hem through errour to been spilt. For me list, and it me liketh, of all mine a Shepheardesse to bee cleaped. Wost thou not well, I failed neuer wight, but he me refused, and would negligētly go with vnkindnesse? And yet parde, haue I many such holpe and releued, and they haue oft me beguiled, but euer at the end it discended in their owne neckes. Hast thou not radde how kind I was to Paris, Priamus sonne of Troy? How Jason mee falsed for all his fals behest? Howe Sesars sonke, I left it for no tene, till he was troned in my blisse for his seruice. What (qd. she) most of all, maked I not a loue day betweene God and mankinde, and chese a maid to be nompere to put the quarell at ende? Lo, howe I haue trauailed to haue thanke on all sides, and yet list me not to rest, and I might find on whom I should werche. But truly, mine owne disciple, because I haue thee found at all assayes in thy will to be readie mine hestes to haue followed, and hast ben true to that Margarite Pearle that ones I thee shewed, and she alway ayenward hath made but daungerous cheare, I am come in proper persone to put thee out of errours, and make thee glad by wayes of reason, so that sorrowe ne disease shall no more hereafter thee amaistrie. Wherethrough I hope, thou shalt lightly come to the grace that thou long hast desired of thilke Iewell. Hast thou not heard many ensamples, how I haue comforted and releeued the schollers of my lore? Who hath worthied Kinges in the field? Who hath honoured ladies in boure, by a perpetuall mirror of their truth in my seruice? Who hath caused worthie folke to void vice and shame? Who hath hold cities and realmes in prosperitie? If thee list cleape ayen thine olde remembraunce, thou coudest euery poynte of this declare in especiall, and say that thy maistres haue bee cause, causing these thynges, and manye mo other.

Now iwis madame (qd. I) all these thyngs I knowe well my selfe, and that thyne excellence passeth the vnderstanding of vs beasts, and that no mannes wit yearthly may comprehend thy vertues. Well then (qd. she) for I see thee in disease and sorrow, I wote well thou art one of mine nories, I may not suffer thee so to make sorrowe, thine owne selfe to shend: but I my selfe come to be thy fere, thine heauy charge to make to seeme the lesse, for wo is him that is alone: And to the sorrie to beene moned by a sorrowful wight, it is great gladnesse. Right so with my sicke friendes I am sicke, and with sorry, I cannot els but sorrow make, till when I haue hem releeued, in such wise, that gladnesse in a maner of counterpaising shall restore as mokell in ioy, as the passed heauinesse beforne did in tene. And also (qd. she) when any of my seruaunts been alone in solitarie place, I haue yet euer busied mee to bee with hem, in comfort of their hearts, & taught hem to make songs of plaint and of blisse, and to enditen letters of Rhethorike in queint vnderstandings, and to bethinke hem in what wise they might best their Ladies in good seruice please, and also to learne manner in countenaunce, in words, and in bearing, and to ben meeke and lowely to euery wight, his name and fame to encrease, and to yeue great yeftes and large, that his renome may springen: but thee thereof haue I excused, for thy losse and thy great costages, wherethrough thou art needie, arne nothing to me vnknowen, but I hope to God sometime it shall been amended, as thus, as I saied. In norture haue I taught all mine, & in courtesie made hem expert, their Ladies hearts to winne, and if any would endeynous, or prowd, or be enuious, or of wretches acquaintaunce, hasteliche haue such voyded out of my schoole: for al vices truly I hate: vertues and worthinesse in all my power I auaunce.

Ah worthie creature (qd. I) and by iuste cause, the name of goddesse dignely ye mowe beare: in thee lithe the grace, through whych any creature in this worlde hath any goodnesse, truly all manner of blisse and preciousnesse in vertue out of thee springen, and wellen, as brookes and riuers proceeden from their springs: and like as all waters by kinde drawen to the sea, so all kindly thinges thresten, by full appetite of desire, to drawe after thy steppes, and to thy presence approch, as to their kindely perfection: howe dare then beasts in this world aught forfete ayenst thy Diuine purueighaunce? Also lady ye knowen all the priuie thoughtes, in heartes no counsayle may been hidde from your knowynge. Wherefore I wote well Lady, that ye knowe your selfe, that I in my conscience am, and haue beene willyng to your seruice, all coud I neuer doe as I should, yet forsooth fayned I neuer to loue otherwise than was in myne heart: and if I coud haue made cheare to one,

and

and ythought another, as many other dooen all day afore mine eyen, I trowe it would not me haue vailed. Certes (qd. she) haddest thou so doen, I would not now haue thee here visited. Ye wete well Ladyeke (qd. I) that I haue not plaied raket, Nettle in, Docke out, & with the Weathercocke waued, and truly there yee me set, by accord of my conscience I would not flie, till ye and reason by apert strength, maden mine hart to tourne.

In good faith (qd. she) I haue knowe thee euer of tho conditions, and sithen thou wouldest (in as much as in thee was) a made mee priuie of thy counsaile, and iudge of thy conscience, though a forsoke it in tho dayes, tyll I saw better my time, would neuer God that I should now faile, but euer I woll be readye, witnessing thy sooth, in what place that euer I shall, ayenst all tho that woll the contrarye susteine: and for as much as to me is naught vnknowen, ne hid of thy priuie heart, but all hast thou tho thynges made to mee open at the full, that hath caused my comming into this prison, to void the webbes of thyne eyen, to make thee clearely to see the errours thou hast been in: and because that men been of diuers conditions, some adradde to say a sooth, and some for a sooth anone readie to fight, and also that I may not my selfe beene in place, to withsay thilke men that of thee speaken otherwise than the sooth, I woll and charge thee, in vertue of obedience that thou to mee owest, to writen my wordes, and set hem in writings, that they mowe as my witnessing beene noted emong the people. For bookes written, neither dreden ne shamen, ne striue conne, but onely shewen the entent of the writer, and peue remembraunce to the hearer: and if any woll in thy presence say any thing to tho writers, looke boldely, trust on Mars to answere at the full. For certes, I shall him enforme of all the trouth in thy loue, with thy conscience, so that of his helpe thou shalt not varie at thy neede. I trowe the strongest and the best that may bee found, woll not transuers thy words, whereof then wouldest thou dreade.

GReatly was I tho gladded of these words, and as who saith, weren somedeale light in hart, both for the authoritie of witnesse, and also of sikernesse of helpe of the forsayed behestе, and said: Truly lady now am I well gladded, through comfort of your wordes: be it nowe liking vnto your nobly, to shewe which folke diffame your seruants, sith your seruice ought aboue all other thynges to beene commended. Yet (qd. she) I see well thy soule is not all out of the amased cloud: thee were better to heare thing, that thee might light out of thine heauie charge, and after knowing of thine owne helpe, then to sitte sweet wordes, and suche reasons to heare: for in a thoughtfull soule (and namely such one as thou art) woll not yet such things sinken. Come of therefore, and let me seene thy heauie charge, that I may the lightlier for thy comfort purueigh.

Now certes lady (qd. I) the most comfort I might haue, were vtterly to wete me bee sure in heart of that Margarite I serue, and so I thinke to doen with all mights, while my life dureth. Then (qd. she) mayest thou thereafter, in such wise, that misplesaunce ne entere. In good fayth (qd. I) there shall no misplesaunce be caused, through trespace on my side. And I doe thee to weten (qd. she) I set neuer yet persone to serue in no place (but if hee caused the contrarie in defaults and trespaces) that hee ne sped of his seruice. Mine owne yearthly ladie (quod I tho) and yet remember to your worthinesse, how long sithen, by many reuoluing of yeares, in time, when October his leaue ginneth take, and Nouember sheweth him to sight, when Bernes been full of goods, as is the Mutte on euery halke, and then good lond tillers ginneth shape for the yearth, wyth great trauayle to bring foorth more Corne, to mannes sustenaunce, ayenst the next yeares following. In such time of plentye, hee that hath an home, and is wise, list not to wander maruailes to seeche, but he bee constrayned or excited: oft the lothe thyng is doen by excitation of other mannes opinion, whiche wouldeu fayne haue myne abiding, take in heart of lust to trauayle, and see the windyng of the yearth, in that time of Winter, by woodes that large streetes weren in, by small pathes, that Swine and Hogges hadden made, as lanes with ladels, their maste to seech, I walked thinking alone, a woonder great whyle, and the great beastes that the wood haunten, and adorneth all manner forrests, and heardes gone too wild: then ere I was ware, I neighed to a sea banke, and for ferde of the beastes, shipcraft I cride: for lady I trow ye wete well your selfe, nothing is werse than the beastes, that shoulden beene tame, if they catche her wildenesse, and ginne agayne wax ramage: Thus forsooth was I aferde, and to Shippe me hied. Then were there nowe to lache mine handes, and drawe me to Shippe, of which many I knewe well the names. Sight was the first, Lust was another, Thought was the thirde, and Will eke was there a Mayster:

these

these broughten mee wythin boorde, of this Shippe of traueile. So when the sayle was sprad, and this Shippe gan to mooue, the Winde and Water gan for to rise, and ouerthwartly to tourne the Welkin, the wawes seemeden as they kist together, but often vnder colour of kissing, is mokell olde hate priuely closed and kepte. The storme so straungely, and in a deuouring manner, gan so fast vs assaile, that I supposed the date of my death should haue made there his ginning, nowe vp, now downe, now vnder the wawe, and now abouen, was my Shippe a greate whyle. And so by mokell duresse of weathers, and of stormes, and with great auowing pilgrimages, I was driuen to an Isle, where vtterly I wend first to haue be rescowed, but truly at the first beginning, it seemed me so perillous, the hauen to catch, that but through grace I had beene comforted, of life I was full despaired. Truly Lady, if ye remember aryght of all manner things, your selfe came hastely to seene vs sea driuen, and to weten what we weren: but first yee were deignous of cheare, after which ye gone better alight, and euer as me thought ye liued in great dreade of disease, it seemed so by your cheare. And when I was certified of your name, the lenger I looked on you, the more I you goodly dradde, and euer mine heart on you opened the more, and so in a little time my Shippe was out of mynde. But Lady as ye me lad, I was ware both of beastes and of fishes, a great number thronging togider: emong whiche a Muskle in a blew shell had enclosed a Margarite Pearle, the moste precious and beste that euer toforne came in my sight, and ye tolden your selfe, that ilke iewell in his kind was so good and so vertuous, that her better shoulde I neuer finde, all sought I thereafter to the worldes ende, and with that I held my peace a great whyle: and euer sithen I haue mee bethought on the man, that sought the precious Margarites, and when he had founden one to his liking, he solde all his good to buy that iewell: I wis, thought I, and yet so I thinke, nowe haue I founden the iewell that mine hearte desireth, whereto should I seeche further, truly nowe woll I stint, and on this Margarite I set mee for euer. Now then also, sithen I wist well it was your will, that I should to such a seruice me take, and so to desire that thyng, of whych I neuer haue blisse, there liueth none, but hee hath disease: your might then, that brought mee to such seruice, that to me is cause of sorrow and of ioy, I wonder of your worde that ye saine, to bringen men into ioy, and parde ye wote well, that default ne trespace maye not reasonable been put to me wards, as ferre as my conscience knoweth: but of my disease me list now a while to speake, and to enforme you in what manner of blisse ye haue mee throng. For truly I wene, that all gladnesse, all ioye, and all mirth is beshet vnder locke, and the keye throwe in such place, that it may not bee found: my brenning, who hath altered all my hew. When I should sleepe, I wallowe and I thinke, and mee disport. Thus combred, I seeme that all folke had me mased. Also Ladie mine, desire hath long dured, some speaking to haue, or els at the least, haue beene enmoysed with sight: and for wanting of these thyngs, my mouth would, and he durst, pleine ryght sore, sithen euils for my goodnesse arne manyfold to me holden. I wonder Lady truly, saue euermore your reuerence, how yee mowe for shame suche thynges suffer on your seruaunt, to be so multiplied: wherefore kneelyng with a lowe heart, I pray you to rue on this caytife, that of nothyng nowe may serue. Good Ladie, if you list now your helpe to me shew, that am of your pryuiest seruauntes, at all assayes in this time, and vnder your wynges of protection. No helpe to me wards is shapen, how shall then straungers in any wyse after succour looke, when I that am so pryuie, yet of helpe I doe fayle? Further maye I not, but thus in this prisone abide: what bondes and chaynes me holden, Ladie yee see well your selfe? A reniant forludged hath not halfe the care. But thus sighyng and sobbyng I waile here alone, and nere it for comforte of your presence, ryght here would I sterue. And yet a little am I gladded, that so goodlye suche grace, and none happe haue I hente, graciouslye to finde the precyous Margarite, that all other left, menne should buye, if they should therefore sell all her substaunce. Wo is me, that so many let games, and purpose breakers, beene maked wayters, suche prysoners as I am, euermore to ouerlooke and to hinder, and for suche lettours, it is harde anye suche iewell to winne. Is this lady an honour to thy deitie? Me thynketh by ryght, suche people shoulde haue no maystrye, ne beene ouerlookers ouer none of thy seruauntes. Truely were it lefull vnto you, to all the goddes would I playne, that ye rule your Diuine purueighaunce emonges your seruauntes, nothynge as yee shoulde. Also Ladye, my moeble is insuffisaunte to counteruayle the price of this iewell, or els to make the eschaunge: eke no wight is worthye suche pearles to weare, but kyngs or Princes, or els their peeres: This iewell for vertue, woulde adorne and make fayre all a

realme, that nobley of vertue is so much, that her goodnesse ouer all is commended. Who is it that would not waile, but he myght such riches haue at his will, the vertue thereof out of this prison may me deliuer, and nought els. And if I bee not therethorowe holpen, I see my selfe withouten recouerye: although I might hence void, yet would I not, I would abide the day that destenie hath me ordeined, which I suppose is without amendement, so sore is mine heart bounden, that I may thinken none other. Thus straight (Lady) hath sir Daunger laced me in stockes, I leue it be not your will: and for I see you taken so little heed, as me thinketh, and woil not maken by your might the vertue in mercie of the Margarite, on me for to stretch, so as ye mowe well, in case that you list: my blisse and my mirth arn felde, sickenesse and sorrow been alway readye, the cope of tene is wound about all my body, that standing is mee best, vnneth may I ligge for pure miseasie sorrow, and yet all this is little ynough, to be the earnest siluer, in forwarde of this bargaine, for treble fold, so mokell must I suffer, er time come of mine ease. For he is worthie no wealth, that may no woe suffer. And certes, I am heauie to thinke on these things, but who shall yeue me water inough to drink, least mine eyen drie for renning streames of teares? Who shall waylen with mee myne owne happie heauinesse? Who shall counsayle me now in my liking tene, and in my goodly harse? I not. For euer the more I brenne, the more I coueit: the more that I sorrow, ẏ more thirst I in gladnesse. Who shall then yeue me a contrarious drink, to staunch the thurst of my blissfull bitternesse? thus I bren and I drench, I shiuer and sweat, to this reuersed yuell was neuer yet ordained salue, forsoth all leches ben vnconning, saue the Margarite alone, anye such remedy to puruey.

And with these words I brast out to weep, that euery teare of mine eyen for greatnesse semed they boren out the ball of my sight, and that all the water had been outronne. Then thought me, that loue gan a litle too heauy for miscomfort of my cheare, and gan soberly and in easie manner speake, well auising what she said. Commonly the wise speaken easily and soft for many skils: One is, their wordes are the better beleeued, and also in easie speakyng, auisement men may catch, what to put forth, and what to holden in. And also the authoritie of easye wordes is the more, and eke they yeuen the more vnderstandyng to other intention of the matter. Ryght so this Ladie easely, and in a softe manere gan saye these wordes.

Meruayle (qd. she) great it is, that by no manner of semblaunt, as ferre as I can espie, thou list not to haue any recour, but euer thou playnest and sorrowest, and wayes of remedye for foolish wilfulnesse thee list not to seech: but enquire of thy next friendes, that is thine inwit, and me that haue ben thy maistresse, and the recour and fine of thy disease, for of disease is gladnesse and ioy, with a full vessell so helded, that it quencheth the feeling of the firste tenes. But thou that were wont not only these things remember in thine heart, but also fools thereof to enfourmen, in adnullyng of their errours, and in destroying of their derke opinions, and in comfort of their seare thoughts: nowe canst thou not beene comfort of thyne owne soule, in thinking of these thynges. O where hast thou bee so long commensall, that hast so mikell eaten of the potages of foryetfulnesse, and dronken so of ignoraunce, that the olde souking, which thou haddest of mee, arne a maistred and lorne fro all manner of knowing? O this is a worthy person to helpe other, that cannot counsaile himself. And with these words for pure and strong shame I wox all reed.

And she then seeing mee so astonied by diuers stounds, suddainly (which thyng kynde hateth) gan deliciously mee comfort with sugred words, putting mee in full hope, that I should the Margarite getten, if I followed her hestes, and gan with a faire cloth to wipen the teares that hingen on my cheekes: and then said I in this wise. Nowe well of wisedome and of all welth, withouten thee may nothing ben learned, thou bearest the keyes of all pryuie things. In vain trauaile men to catch any stedshyp, but if ye lady first the locke vnshet, ye lady learne vs the wayes and the bypathes to heauen: ye Lady maken all the heauenly bodies goodly and benignely to done her course, that gouernen vs beasts here on earth. Ye armen your seruaunts ayenst all debates, with imperciable harneis, ye setten in her harts insuperable blood of hardenesse, yee leaden hem to the parfite good. Yet all thing desireth, ye werne no man of helpe, that wele done your lore, graunt me now a little of your grace, all my sorrowes to cease. Mine owne seruaunt (qd. shee) truly thou sittest nie mine heart, and thy bad chere gan sorely me greue: but among thy plaining words, me thought thou alledgest things to be letting of thine helping, and thy grace to hinder, wherethrough mee thinketh that wanhope is crope through thyne hert: God forbid that nice vnthriftie thought shoulde come in thy mynde, thy wittes to trouble, sithen euerye thynge in commyng

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is contingent, wherefore make no more thy proposition by an impossible. But now I pray thee rehearse me ayen tho thynges, that thy mistrust causen, and thilke things I thinke by reason to distroyen, and put full hope in thyne hert. What vnderstandest thou there (qd. she) by that thou saidest, many let games are thine ouerlookers? And also by that thy moeble is vnsuffisaunt? I not what thou thereof meanest.

Truely (qd. I) by the first, I say that ianglers euermore arne speaking rather of euill than of good, for euery age of man rather enclineth to wickednesse, than any goodnesse to aduaunce. Also false words springen so wide, by the stering of false lying tongues, that fame als swiftly flyeth to her eares, and sayeth many wicked tales, and as soone shall falsenesse ben leued, as trouth, for all his great sothnesse. Now by that other (qd. I) me thinketh thilke iewell so precious, that to no such wretch as I am, would vertue thereof extend, and also I am too feeble in worldly ioies, any such iewell to countreuaile. For such people that worldly ioyes han at her will, been set at the highest degree, and most in reuerence ben accepted, for false wening maketh felicitie therein to bee supposed: but such caitiues as I am euermore ben hindred. Certes (qd. she) take good heede, and I shall by reason to thee shewen, that all these things mow not let thy purpose, by the least point that any wight coud picke.

REmembrest nat (qd. she) ensample is one of the strongest maner, as for to preue a mannes purpose. Then if I nowe by ensample enduce thee to anye proposition, is it nat prooued by strength? Yes forsooth (qd. I.) Well (qd. she) raddest thou neuer how Paris of Troy and Helaine loued togider, and yet had they not entrecommuned of speech? Also Acrisius shete Dane his doughter in a toure, for suertie that no wight should of her haue no maistrie in my seruice, and yet Iupiter by signes, without any speech, had all his purpose ayenst her fathers will. And many such mo haue been knitte in trouth, and yet spake they neuer togider, for that is a thyng enclosed vnder secretnesse of priuitie, why twey persons entremellen harts after a sight. The power in knowing of such things so preuen shall nat all vtterly be peuen to you beasts, for many thinges in such precious matters, been reserued to iudgement of diuine purueyaunce, for among liuyng people, by mannes consideration mowen they not be determined. Wherefore I say, all the enuye, all the iangling, that welnie people vpon my seruaunts maken este, is rather cause of esploite, than of any hindering. Why then (qd. I) sufferye such wrong, and moun when ye lift, lightly all such yuels abate? mee seemeth to you it is a great vnworship. O (qd. she) hold now thy peace, I haue founden too many that han been to me vnkind, that truly I woll sufferr euerye wight in that wise to haue disease, and who that continueth to the ende well and truly, hem woll I helpen, and as for one of myne into blisse to wend, as martiall doing in Greece. Who was yerowned, by GOD nat the strongest, but hee that ratheste come and lengest abode and continued in the iourney, and spared nat to trauayle as long as the play lest. But thilke persons that profered him nowe to my seruice therein, is a while, and anone voydeth, and ready to another, and of now one he thinketh, and nowe another, and into water entreth, and anone respireth, suche one liste mee nat into parfite blisse of my seruice bring. A tree oft sette in diuers places, woll not by kinde endure to bring forth fruits. Looke nowe I pray thee, howe myne olde seruauntes of time passed, continued in her seruice, and follow thou after their steppes, and then myght thou not fayle, in case thou worche in this wise. Certes (qd. I) it is nothyng liche, this worlde to time passed, eke this countrey hath one manner, and another countrey hath another. And so maye nat a man alwaye put to his eye, the salue that hee healed with his heele: For this is sooth, betwyxe two thynges lyche, oft diuersitie is required. Now (qd. she) that is soothe, diuersitie of nation, diuersitie of lawe, as was maked by manye reasons, for that diuersitie commeth in by the contrarious malice of wicked people, that han enuious heartes ayenst other. But truely my lawe to my seruauntes euer hath been in generall, whyche may not fayle: for right as mannes lawe, that is ordeined by manye determinations, may not bee knowe for good or badde, till assay of the people han prooued it, and to what ende it draweth, and then it sheweth the necessitie thereof, or elles the impossibilitie: right so the lawe of my seruaunts so well hath beene prooued in generall, that hitherto hath it not fayled. Wiste thou not well, that all the lawe of kinde is my lawe, and by God ordayned and stablyshed to dure by kynde reasoun: wherefore all lawe, by mannes wit purueied, ought to be vnderput to lawe of kinde, whych yet hath bee commune to euerye kindely creature, that my statutes and my lawes that beene kyndely, arne generall to all peoples. Olde doyngs,

and by many turnings of years vsed, and with the peoples manner prooued, mowen not so lightly been defaced, but new doings contrariaunts such olde, often causen diseases, and breaken many purposes. Yet say I nat therefore, that ayen new mischeefe, men should not ordaine a newe remedie, but alway looke it contrary not the old, no ferther than the malice stretcheth. Then followeth it, the olde doings in loue han ben vniuersall, as for most exploit for thee vsed: Wherefore I wold not yet that of my lawes nothing be annulled.

But then to thy purpose, such iangelers and lookers, and wayters of games, if they thinke in ought they mowe dere, yet loue well alway, and set hem at nought, and let thy port been low in euery wights presence, and readie in thine heart to maintaine that thou hast begonne, and a little thee fayne with meekenesse in wordes, and thus with sleight shalt thou surmount and dequace the yuell in their herts.

☞ And wisedome yet is to seeme slie otherwhyle there a man woll sight. Thus with suche thynges the tongues of euill shall been stilled: els fully to graunt thy full meaning, forsooth euer was and euer it shall be, that mine enemies been aferde to trust to any fighting: and therefore haue thou no cowards heart in my seruice, no more than sometime thou haddest in the contrary, for if thou drede such iangiers

☞ thy voyage to make: vnderstand well, That he that dreadeth any raine to sow his cornes, hee shall haue thin bernes: also he that is afearde of his clothes, let him daunce naked: Who nothing vndertaketh, and namely in my seruice, nothing atcheueth: After great stormes the weather is often merry & smooth.

☞ After much clattering, there is mokell rowning: thus after iangling wordes commeth hushe, peace, and be still. O good lady (qd. I then) see now how seuen yeare passed, & more, haue I grafted and groubed a vine, and wyth all the wayes that I coud, I sought to a fede me of the grape, but fruit haue I none founde. Also I haue this seuen yeare serued Laban to a wedded Rachell his doughter, but bleare eyed Lia is brought to my bed, which alway engendereth my tene, and is full of childzen in tribulation and in care: and although the clippynges and kissynges of Rachell shoulde seeme to me sweet, yet is she so barraine, that gladnesse ne ioy by no way woll spring, so that I may weepe with Rachell, I may not been counsayled with solace, sithen issue of myne heartely desire is fayled. Nowe then I pray that to me sone freedome and grace in thys eight yeare, this eyghteth mowe to mee both by kynreste and masseday after these seuen werke daies of trauaile, to follow the christen lawe: and what euer ye doe els, that thilke Margarite be holden so lady in your prypye chamber, that thee in this case to none other person be committed. Looke then (qd. she) in this case to none other persone be committed: Looke then (qd. she) thou persuer in my seruice, in which I haue thee graunted, that thilk scorne in thy enemies mowe thus on thy person bee not soothed: so this man began to edifie, but for his foundement is bad, to the ende may he it nat bring. For meekenesse in countenaunce, with a manly heart in deeds and in long continuaunce, is the constance of my luery, to all my retinue deliuered. What weenest thou that me list aduaunce such persons as louen the first sittings at feasts, the highest stoles in churches, and in hall, loutings of peoples in markets and faires, vnstedfast to bide in one place any while together, wening his own wit more excellent than other, scorning all manner deuice but his owne? Nay, nay, God wote, these shull nothing parten of my blysse. Truely my manner heretofore hath beene, worship with my blisse, Lions in the field, and ☞ Lambes in chamber, Eagles at assaute, and maidens in hall, foxes in counsaile, still in their deeds, and their protection is graunted readie to been a bridge, and their banner is arrered like wolues in the field. Thus by these waies shull men been auaunced: ensample of Dauid, that from keeping of sheepe was drawen vp into the order of kingly gouernaunce, and Iupiter from a bulle to beene Europes fere, and Iulius Cesar from the lowest degree in Rome to be maister of all earthly princes, and Eneas from hell to bee king of the countrey, there Rome is now standing. And so to thee I say thy grace by bering thereafter, may set thee in such plight, that no iangling may greeue the least tucke of thy hems, that all their iangles is nought to counte at a cresse in thy disaduauntage.

Uer (qd. she) hath the people in this worlde desired to haue had great name in worthinesse, and hated foule to beare any faine, and that is one of the obiections thou alledgest to be ayen thine hertely desire. Ye forsooth qd. I) and that so commonly the people woll lie & bring about such enfame. Nowe (quod she) if men with leasinges put on thee enfame, weenest thy selfe thereby been empeired? that weening is wrong, see why, for as much as they lyen, thy merite encreaseth, and make thee ben more worthy to hem that knowen of thee

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the sooth, by what thing thou art apeired, that in so mokell thou art encreased of thy beloued friends: and soothly, a wound of thy friend to thee lasse harm, yea sir, and better than a false kissing in deceiuable glosing of thyne enemie, aboue that then to bee well with thy friende, maketh such enfame, Ergo thou art encreased and nat apeired. Lady (qd. I) sometyme yet if a man be in disease, the estimation of the enuious people ne looketh nothing to deserts of men, ne to the merites of their doings, but onely to the auenture of fortune, and thereafter they yeuen their sentence. And some looken the voluntary will in his heart, and thereafter telleth his iudgement, not taking heede to reason ne to the qualitie of the dooing, as thus: if a man be rich and fulfild with worldly welefulnesse, some commenden it, and saine it is so lent by iustice cause, and he that had aduersitie, they saine he is weaked, and hath deserued thilke annoy. The contrary of these things some men holden also, and saine that to the rich, prosperitie is purueied vnto his cõfusion: and vpon this matter, many authorities of many and great witted clearkes they allegen. And some men sayne, though all good estimation forsaken folke that han aduersitye, yet is it merite and encrease of his blysse: so that thae purposes arne so wonderfull in vnderstonding, that truly for mine aduersitye, nowe I not how the sentence of the indifferent people will iudgen my fame. Therfore (quod she) if any wight should yeue a true sentence of such matters, the cause of the disease mayst thou see well, vnderstande thereupon after what end it draweth, that is to sayne, good or bad, so ought it to haue his fame, or by goodnesse enfame by badnesse: For euery reasonable persone, and namely of a wise man, his wit ought not without reason to forne heard, suddainly in a matter to iudge. After the sawes of the wise, thou shalt not iudge ne deme to forne thou know. Lady (qd. I) ye remember well, that in most laud and praising of certain saints in holy church, is to rehearsen their conuersation from badde into good, and that is so rehersed, as by a perpetuall mirrour of remembraunce in worshipping of tho saintes, and good enlample to other misdoers in amendement. How turned the Roman Zedeories fro the Romanes, to be with Hannibball ayenst his kind nation: And afterwardes him seeming the Romaines to be at the next degree of confusion, turned to his olde allies, by whose wit after was Hannibball discomfited. Wherfore to enfourme you lady, the manner, why I meane, see now in my youth I was drawe to be assentaunt, and in my mights helpyng to certaine coniurations, and other great matters of ruling of citezins, and thilke thynges beene my drawers in, and exciteurs to the matters werne so painted and coloured, that at the prime face mee seemed then noble and glorious to all the people: I then wening mikell merite, haue deserued in furthering and maintenaunce of tho thyngs, busied and laboured with all my dilligence, in werkyng of thilke matters to the end. And truly lady, to tell you the sooth, me rought little of any hate of the mighty Senatours in thilke citie, ne of communes mallice, for two skiles: One was, I had comfort to ben in such plite, that both profite were to me and to my friends: Another was, for common profit in communaltie, is not but peace and tranquillitie, with iust gouernaunce proceden from thilke profite, sithen by counsaile of mine inwit, me thought the first paynted thynges, mallice and cuill meanyng, withouten any good anaplyng to any people, and of tyrannie purposed: and so for pure sorrow and of my meddling, and bad infame that I was in ronne, tho teares lashed out of mine eyen, were thus away washe, than the vnderhyd mallice and the rancour of purposing enuie, forneaste and ymagined, in destruction of mokel people shewed so openly, that had I been blind, with myne handes all the circumstaunce I myght well haue feeled.

Now then tho persones that such thynges haue cast to redresse, for wrathe of my firste meddling, shopen me to dwell in this pynande prison, till Lachases my threade no lenger would twyne. And euer I was sought, if me list to haue grace of my life, and freenesse of that prison, I shoulde openly confesse, howe peace might been enduced to enden all the first rancours. It was fully supposed, my knowing to be full in tho matters. Then Lady I thought that euery man, that by anye way of right, rightfully done, may helpe anye commune helpe to been saued, whiche thynge to keepe aboue all thinges I am bolde to maintaine, and namely in destroying of a wrong, all should I therethrough enpeach myne owne fere, if he were guiltie, and to do misdeed assentaunt. And maister ne friend may nought anaple to the soule of hym that in falsenesse deyeth, and also that I nere desired wrath of the people, ne indignation of the worthy, for nothyng that euer I wrought or did, in any doings my selfe els, but in the mayntenaunce of these forclaped errours, and in hidyng of the priuities thereof. And that all the peoples hearts holdyng on the errours side, weren blind, and of elde so ferre foorth beguiled,

that debate and strife they maintayned, and in distruction on that other side, by whyche cause, the peace, that most in communalties should be desired, was in point to bee broken and annulled. Also the citie of London, that is to me so deare and sweet, in which I was forth growne, and more kindely loue haue I to that place, than to any other in yearth, as euery kindely creature hath full appetite to that place of his kindely engendrure, and to wilne reste and peace in that steede to abide: thilke peace should thus there haue been broken, which of all wise is commended and desired. For know thing it is, all men that desiren to commen to the parfit peace euerlasting, must ỳ peace by God commended, both maintayne and keepe. This peace by angels voyce was cõfirmed, our God entring in this world: This, as for his testament, he left to all his friends, when he returned to the place from whence he came: This his Apostle admonesteth to holden, without which man parfitely may haue none insight. Also this God by his comming made not peace alone between heauenly and yearthly bodies, but also among vs on yearth, so he peace confirmed, that in one heed of loue one body we shoulde perfourme. Also I remember well, howe the name of Athenes was rather after the GOD of peace, than of battaile, shewing that peace moste is necessarie to communalties and cities. I then stered by all these waies to forne nempned, declared certain points in this wise. First that thilke persons that hadden mee drawen to their purposes, and me not witting the prime entent of their meaning, drawen also the feeble witted people, that haue none insight of gubernatike prudence, to clamure and to crye on matters that they stirred, and vnder points for commune auauntage, they embolded the passike, to take in the actiues doing, and also stirred innocents of cõning to cry after things, which (qd. they) may not stand but we ben executours of tho matters, and authoritie of execution by common election to vs bee deliuered, and that must enter by strength of your maintenaunce, for we out of such degree put, oppression of these old hinderers shall agayne surmounten and putten you in such subiection, that in endelesse woe ye shull complain. The gouernements (qd. they) of your citie, left in the hands of forcencious citizins, shall bring in pestilence and distruction to you good men, and therefore let vs haue the commune administration to abate such euels. Also (qd. they) ☞ It is worthy the good to commend, and thy guilty deserts to chastice. There been citezins many for ferde of execution that shall be done, for extortions by hem committed, been euermore ayenst these purposes, and all other good meanings. Neuer the latter, Lady, truly the meaning vnder these words, was fully to haue appeached the mighty Senators which hadden heauy heart for the misgouernaunce that they seene. And so lady, when it fell that free election, by great clamour of much people for great disease of misgouernaunce so feruently stooden in her election, that they hem submitted to euery manner face, rather than haue suffered the manner and the rule of the hated gouernours, notwithstanding that in the contrary helden much commune meiny, that haue no consideration, but onely to voluntarye lustes withouten reason. But then thilke gouernour so forsaken, fayning to some his vndoing, for misrule in his time, hope to haue letted thilke election, and haue made a newe himselfe to haue been chosen, and vnder that moskell roze haue arered. These tyings Lady knowen among the princes, and made open to the people, draweth in amendement, that euery degree shall been ordained to stand there as he should, and that of errours coming hereafter, men may lightly tofore hand puruaye remedy in this wise, peace and rest to be furthered and hold. Of the which thyngs Lady, thilke persons brought en in answere tofore their most soueraigne iudge, not coacted by paining dures openly knowledged en, and asked thereof grace, so that apertly it proueth my wordes been sooth, without forgut of leasings.

But now it greueth me to remember these diuers sentences, in tangling of these sheepe people: certes, mee thinketh they oughten to maken for that a sooth may be knowe. For my trouth and my conscience beene witnesse to me both, that this knowyng soothe haue I sayed, for no harme ne malice of tho persones, but onely for trouth of my sacrament in my liegeaunce, by whyche I was charged on my Kings behalfe. But see ye not nowe Lady, how the fellonous thoughts of this people, and couins of wicked men, conspiren ayen my soothfast trouth. See ye not euerie wight that to these erronious opinions were assentaunt, and helpes to the noise, and knowen all these thinges better than I my selfen, apparailen to finden ne we friendes, and cleapen me false, and studien how they mowen in her mouthes worse pl te nempne? O GOD, what may this be, that thilke folke which that in time of my maintenance, and when my might auayleth to stretch to the forsaid matters, tho me commẽded, and paue me name of trouth, in so many folde maneres, that it was

nigh

nigh in euery wightes eare, there as any of thilke people weren: and on the other side, thilke company sometime passed, yeuing me name of badde loos. Now both tho peoples turned the good into bad, and bad into good, which thing is wonder, that they knowing me saiyng but soth, arne now tempted to reply her old praylings, and knowen me well in al doings to ben trewe, and saine openly that I false haue sayd many things. And they alleaged nothing mee to been false or untrewe, saue thilke mater knowledged by the parties hem selfe: and God wot other matter is none. Ye also Lady know these things for trewe, I auaunt not in praysing of my selfe, thereby should I lese the precious secre of my conscience. But ye see well that false opinion of the people for my trouth, in telling out of false cõspired maters, after the iudgement of these Clerkes I should not hide the sooth of no maner person, maister ne other, wherefore I would not drede, were it put in the consideracion of trewe and of wyse. And for commers hereafter shullen fully out of den were, all the sothe know of these things in acte, but as they werne, I haue put it in Scripture, in perpetuell remembraũce of true meaning. For truly Lady me seemeth that I ought to beare the name of trouth, that for the loue of rightwisenesse haue thus me submitten: But now then the false fame which that Clerkes saine flieth as fast as doth the fame of trouth, shal so wide spredе, till it be brought to the iewell that I of meane, and so shall I been hindred withouten any measure of trouth.

Then gan Loue sadly me beholde, and saide in a chaunged voyce, lower than she had spoken in a time. Faine would I (qd. she) that thou were holpen, but haste thou sayd any thing, which thou might not prouen? Pardee (qd. I) the persons euery thing as I haue sayd, han knowleged hem selfe. Yea (qd. she) but what yf they hadden naied, how wouldest thou haue mainteined it. Soothely (qd. I) it is well wiste both amongst the greatest, and other of the Realme, that I profered my body so largely in to prouing of tho thinges, that Mars should haue iudged thend: but for sothnesse of my wordes they durst not to thilke iudge trust. Now certes (qd. she) aboue all fames in this world, the name of marciall doinges moste pleasen to Ladies of my loze, but sithen thou were ready, and thine aduersaries in thy presence refused thilke doyng, thy fame ought to be so borne, as if in deed it had take to the ende. And therefore euery wight that any droppe of reason hath, and heareth of the infame, for these thinges hath this answere to say: trewly thou saydest, for thyne aduersaries thy wordes affirmed. And if thou haddest lied, yet are they discomfited, the prise leaned on thy side, so that fame shall holde downe infame, he shall dryng vpon none halfe. What greueth thee thine enemie to saine their owne shame, as thus: wee arne discomfited and yet our quarell is trewe. Shall not the loos of thy frendes, apenward dequace thilke enfame, and saie they graunted a soothe without a stroke or fighting. Many men in battell been discomfited and ouercome in a rightfull quarrell, that is goddes priuie iudgement in heauen: but yet although the party be yolden, hee may with wordes say his quarell is trewe, and to yeelde him in the contrary for dread of death, he is compelled, and hee that graunted and no stroke hath feied, he may not creepe away in this wise by none excusation. Indifferent folke will say, yee who is trewe, who is false himselfe knowledgeth tho things. Thus in euery side fame sheweth to thee good and no bad. But yet (qd. I) some will say I ne should for no deth haue discouered my maistresse, and so by vnkindnesse they woll knet infame to pursue me about: thus enemies of will in manifolde maner woll seek priuy serpentines queintises, to quench and distroy benime of many businesses, the light of trouth, to make hartes to murmour apenst my persone, to haue mee in haine, withouten any cause. Now (qd. she) heare me a fewe wordes, and thou shalt fully been aunswered, I trowe. Me thinketh (qd. she) right now by thy wordes that Sacrament of sweating, that is to saie, chargyng by Othe, was one of the causes to make thee discouer the malicious ymaginacions tofore nempned: euery othe by knitting of copulacion, must haue these lawes, that is, trewe iudgement and rightwisenesse, in which thyng, if any of these lacke, the othe is iturned into the name of periury: then to make a true serment, must needes these thinges followe, for ofte tymes a man to say soothe but iudgement and iustice folow, he is forsworne: ensample of Herodes for holding of his serment, was dampned.

Also to saie trouth rightfulliche, but in iudgement, other whyle is forboden, by that all sothes be not to saine. Therefore in iudgement in trouth and rightwisenesses, is euery creature bounden vpon payne of periurie full knowing to make, though it were of his owne person, for dread of sinne, after that worde better is it to die than liue false: and all would

peruerted people, false repoꝛte make in vn-
kindnes, in that entent thy fame to reise, when
light of truth in these matters is foꝛth spꝛon-
gen, and openly published emong commons,
then shall not soch darke enfame dare appeare
foꝛ pure shame of his falsnesse, as some menne
there been that their owne enfame, can none
otherwise voide oꝛ els excuse, but by hindꝛing
of other mens fame, which that by none other
cause cleapen other mens false, but foꝛ with
their owne falseneſſe, mowen they not been a-
uaunsed: oꝛ els by false sclaundꝛing woꝛdes,
other men shendin their owne true sclaunder,
to make seeme the lasse, foꝛ if soche men woul-
den their yen of their conscience reuoluen,
shoulden seen the same sentence they legen on
other, spꝛung out of their sides, with so many
bꝛaunches, it were impossible to number: the
which therefoꝛe may it be saied in that thing,
this man thou demest, therein thy selfe thou
condempnest. But (qd. she) vnderstand not by
these woꝛds, that thou wene me say thee, to be
woꝛthie sclander, foꝛ any matter tofoꝛne wꝛit-
ten, truely I would witnesse the contrary, but
I say that the beames of sclaundꝛing woꝛdes
may not been doen away, till the day of dome.
Foꝛ howe should it not yet emongs so great
plentie of people, been many shꝛewes, sithen
when no mo but eight persons, in Noes ship
were closed, yet one was a shꝛew, and scoꝛned
his father. These thinges (qd. she) I trowe,
shewen that false fame is not to dꝛede, ne of
wise persons to accept, and namely not of thy
Margarite, whose wisdome hereafter I think
to declare, wherefoꝛe I wote well soche thing
shall not her astert, then of vnkindnesse, thine
othe hath thee excused at the full. But now if
thou wouldest not greue, me list a few things
to shewe. Say on (qd. I) what ye wol, I trow
ye meane but trouth, and my pꝛofite in time
comming. Truely (qd. she) that is soth, so thou
con well keepe these woꝛdes, and in the inrest
secrete chamber of thine hart, so fast hem close,
that they neuer flitte, then shalt thou find hem
anayling. Looke now what people hast thou
serued, which of hem all in tyme of thine exile
euer thee refreshed, by the value of the least
coigned plate that walketh in money. Who
was soꝛy, oꝛ made any rueth foꝛ thy disease? If
they hadden getten their purpose of thy misa-
uenture, set they not an haw. Lo when thou
were enpꝛisoned, how fast they hied in helpe of
thy deliueraunce. I wene of thy death, they
peue but lite: They looked after no thing, but
after their owne lustes. And if thou list say the
sothe, all that meinie that in this bꝛigge thee
bꝛoughten, lokeden rather after thine helpes,
than thee to haue relcued.

Owen not yet some of hem money foꝛ his
commons? Paidest not thou foꝛ some of her
dispences, till they were tourned out of Se-
lande? Who paue thee euer ought, foꝛ any ri-
ding thou madest? Yet pardie, some of hem
tooken money foꝛ thy Chamber, and put tho
pens in his pourse, bꝛeweting of the renter.
Lo, foꝛ which a company thou medlest, that
neyther thee, ne them self mighten helpe of vn-
kindnesse, now they beare the name, that thou
supposest of hem foꝛ to haue. What might
thou moꝛe haue doen, than thou diddest, but if
thou wouldest in a false quarell, haue been a
stinking martire? I wene thou fleddest as lõg
as thou might, their pꝛiuitie to counceale,
which thing thou helest lenger thẽ thou shoul-
dest. And thilke that ought thee money, no
pennie would pay, they wend thy returne had
been an impossible. How might thou better
haue hem pꝛoued, but thus in thy needy disea-
ses? Now hast thou ensample, foꝛ whom thou
shalt meddle: truely this loꝛe is woꝛth many
goodes.

Fte gan loue to seeme me these
woꝛdes, thinke on my speach, foꝛ
truely here after, it woil doe thee
likyng, and how so euer thou see
foꝛtune shape her whele to turne,
this meditacion by no way reuolue. Foꝛ cer-
tes, Foꝛtune sheweth her fayꝛest, when shee
thinketh to beguile. And as me thought here
tofoꝛne, thou laidest thy loos in loue, foꝛ thy
right wiseneſſe ought to be rayſed, should bee
allowed in tyme comming: thou might in
loue so thee haue, that loos and fame shull so
been rayſed, that to thy freends comfoꝛt, & so-
row to thine enemies, endlesse shull endure.
But if thou were that one Sheepe emon-
ges the hundꝛed, were lost in deserte, and out
of the way had erred, and nowe to the flocke
arte restoꝛed, the Shepeheard hath in thee
no ioye, and thou ayen to the Foꝛreste tourne.
But that right as the soꝛowe and anguishe
was great, in tyme of thyne out way goyng,
right so ioye and gladnesse shall bee doubled,
to seene thee conuerted, and not as Lothes
wyfe ayen looking, but hoole counsaile with
the Sheepe folowing, and with them grasse
and heaꝛbes gader. Neuer the later (qd. she)
I say not these thinges foꝛ no waꝛtrust that
I haue, in supposing of thee otherwise than I
should: foꝛ truely I wote well, that now thou
arte sette in soche a purpose, out of which thee
liste not to part: But I say it, foꝛ many men
there ben that to knowing of other mens do-
ings setten all their cure, and lightly desiren
the badde to clatter, rather then the good, and

haue

haue no will their owne manner to amende. They also hate of old rancour lightly hauen, and there that soch thing abideth, sodainly in their mouthes proceedeth the haboundaunce of the harte, and wordes as stones, stones out throwe. Wherfore my counsaile is euermore, openly and apertly, in what place thou sitte, counterplete therrours and meanings, in as farre as thou hem wistest falle, and leaue for no wight, to make hem be know in euery bodies eare: and be alway pacient, and vse Jacobs words, what so euer menne of thee clappen, I shall sustaine my Ladies wrath, which I haue deserued, so long as my Margarite hath rightwised my cause. And certes (qd. she) I witnesse my selfe, if thou thus conuerted, forrowest in good meaning in thyne harte, wolt from all vanitie parfitely departe, in consolacion of al good pleasaunce of that Margarite, which that thou desirest after will of thyne harte, in a maner of a mothers pitie, shall fully accept thee into grace. For right as thou rentest clothes in open sight, so openly to sowe hem at his worship, withouten reproofe commended: Also, right as thou were ensample of moche folde errour, right so thou muste be ensample of manyfold correction, so good fauour to forgoing all errour destroiyng, causeth diligent loue with many plaited prayings to followe, and then shall all the first errours, make the following worships to seeme hugely encreased, blacke and white sette togider, euery for other more seemeth, and so dothe euerie thinges contrarie in kinde. But infame that goeth alway tofore, and praying worship by any cause following after, maketh to rise thilk honour, in bouble of wealth, and that quencheth the spotte of the first enfame. Why weneste I saie these thinges, in hindering of thy name? Naie naie GOD wotte, but for pure encreasing worshippe, thy rightwiseneste to commende, and thy trouth to seeme the more. Woste not well thy selfe, that thou in forme of making, passeth not Adam that eate of the apple. Thou passeth not the stedfastneste of Noe, that eatyng of the grape became dronke. Thou passest not the chastitie of Lothe, that laye by his doughter. Eke the nobley of Abraham, who GOD reproued by his pryde. Also Dauids meekenesse, whiche for a woman made Urie bee slawe. What also Hector of Troie, in whome no defaute might bee found: yet is he reproued that he ne had with manhood, not suffred the warre begon, ne Paris to haue went into Greece, by whom ganne all the sorrow: for truely hym lacketh no benime of priuie consenting, which that opēly leaueth a wrong to withsaie. Lo eke an old prouerbe, emong many other. He that is still seemeth as he graunted.

Now by these ensamples, thou might fully vnderstand, that these thyngs been writ to your learning, and in rightwisenes of tho persones, as thus: To euery wight his default committed, made goodnesse afterwards doen be the more in reuerence, and in open shewing, for ensample is it not song in holy church? Lo how necessarie was Adams sinne, Dauid the king gatte Salomon the king, of her that was Uries wife. Truely for reproofe, is none of these thinges writte: Right so tho I rehearse thy before deed, I repreue thee neuer the more, ne for no villany of thee, are they rehearsed, but for worship, so thou continue wel hereafter: and for profite of thy selfe, I rede thou on hem thinke.

Then saied I right thus: Ladie of vnitie and accorde, enuy & wrath lurken, there thou commest in place, ye woten well your selue and so doen many other, that while I administred the office of common doing, as in ruling of the stablishments emongs the people, I defouled neuer my conscience for no maner deede, but euer by wit and by counsaile of the wisest, the matters weren drawen to their right endes. And thus truly for you Lady, I haue desired soch cure, and certes in your seruice was I not idle, as far as soch doing of my cure stretcheth. That is a thing (qd. she) that may draw many harts of noble, and voice of common into glory, & fame is not but wretched and tickle.

Alas, that mankinde coueteth in so leud a wise, to be rewarded of any good deed, sith glorie of Fame in this worlde, is not but hindering of glory in time comming. And certes (qd. she) yet at the hardest such fame into heauen is not the yearth but a centre, to the cercle of heuen. A pricke is wonder little, in respect of all the cercle, and yet in all this pricke may no name be borne, in manner of persing, for many obstacles, as waters and wildernesse, and straunge languages, and not only names of menne ben stilled, and holden out of knowledging, by these obstacles, but also citties and realmes of prosperitie ben letted to be knowe, and their reason hindred, so that they mowe not been perfitely in mens proper vnderstanding. How should then the name of a singuler Londenoys, passe the glorious name of London, which by many it is commended, and by many it is lacked, and in many mo places in earth not knowen, then knowen: for in many countrees, little is London in knowing, or in speache, and yet emong one manner of people, may not soche fame in goodnesse come, for as many as praisen, commonly as many lacken.

Fie

Fie then on soch maner fame, sleepe and suffre him that knoweth pryuitie of harmes, to deale soch fame in thilke place, there nothing ayenst a sothe shall neyther speake, ne dare appere, by atturney, ne by other maner. How many great named, and many great in worthinesse loued, han be tofore this tyme, that now out of memory are slidden, and cleanly forgotten, for defaute of writings, and yet scriptures for great elde, so been defaced, that no perpetualtie may in hem been iudged. But if thou wolt make cõparison to euer, what ioy maiest thou haue in yearthly name, it is a faire likenesse, a pees or one grayne of Wheat, to a thousand ships full of corne charged. What nomber is betweene the one and the other, and yet mowe both they bee nombred, and end in reckenyng haue. But truely all that may be nombred, is nothing to recken, as to thilke that may not be nombred, for ofte things ended is made cõparison, as one little, an other great, but in things to haue an ende, and an other no ende, soch comparison may not be founden. Wherefore in heauen to been loued, with God hath none end, but endles endureth, and thou canst nothing doen aright, but thou desire the rumour thereof be healed, and in euery wightes care, and that dureth but a pricke, in respect of the other. And so thou seekest reward of folks, small wordes, and of vaine praylinges. Truly therein thou lesest the guerdone of vertue, and lesest the greatest valour of cõscience, and vnhap thy renoume euerlasting. Therefore boldly renome of fame of the yearth, should be hated, and fame after death should be desired, of werkes of vertue asketh guerdoning, and the soule causeth all vertue. Then the soule deliuered out of prison of yearth, is most worthie soch guerdone emong, to haue in the euerlasting fame, and not the bodie, that causeth all mans euils.

If tway thinges art thou answered, as me thinketh (qd. Loue) and if any thing be in doubte of thy soule, shewe it forth, thyne ignorance to cleare, and leaue it for no shame. Certes (qd. I) there ne is no bodie in this worlde, that aught could say by reason, ayenst any of your skils, as I leue: and by my witte now fele I well, that euill speakers, or bearers of enfame, may little greue or let my purpose, but rather by soche thing my quarell to be forthered. Yea (qd. she) and it is proued also, that the ilke iewell in my keping, shal not there through be stered, of the lest mõet that might be imagined. That is soth (qd. I.) Wel (qd. shee) then leueth there, to declare that thy insufficiaunce, is no maner letting, as thus: for that she is so worthy, thou shouldst not clumbe so high, for thy moebles and thine estate arne voided thou thinkest fallen in soch misery, that gladnesse of thy pursute, woll not on thee descend. Certes (qd. I) that is sothe: right soche thought is in mine harte, for commonly it is spoken, and for an old Prouerbe it is ledged: He that heweth to hie, with chippes he may lese his sight. Wherfore I haue been about in all that euer I might, to studie waies of remedie, by one side or by an other. Now (qd. she) God forbede, ere thou seeke any other doings but soch as I haue learned thee in our resting whiles, and such herbes as been planted in our Gardins. Thou shalte well vnderstand, that aboue man, is but one God alone. How (qd. I) han men to corne this tyme, trusted in writs & chauntements, and in helpes of Spirites, that dwellen in the ayre, & thereby they han getten their desires, where as first for all his manly power he daunced behind.

O (qd. she) fie on soche matters, for truely that is sacrilege, and that shall haue no sorte with any of my seruaunts, in myne yen shall soch thing not be looked after. How often is it commaunded by these passed wise, that to one God shall men serue, and not two Gods. And who that liste to haue mine helpes, shall aske none helpe of foule Spirites. Alas, is not man maked semblable to God? Woste thou not well, that all vertue of liueliche werking by Gods purueighance, is vnderput to reasonable creature, in perth is not euery thing a thishalfe God? Made buxome to mans contemplation, vnderstanding in heauen, & in yearth, and in hell. Hath not man beyng with stones, soule of wexing with trees and herbes.

Hath he not soule of feling with beastes, fishes, and foules, and he hath soule of reason, and vnderstãding with Angels, so that in him is knitte all maner of liuings, by a reasonable proporcion. Also man is made of all the lower Elements. All vniuersitie is reckened in him alone: he hath vnder God principalitie aboue al things. Now is his soule here, now a thousand mile hence, now farre, now nighe, now highe, now lowe, as farre in a moment, as in mountenaunce of ten Winter, and al this is in mans gouernance & disposicio. Then sheweth it, that men been liche vnto Gods, & children of most height. But now sithen al things vnderput, to ỹ will of reasonable creatures, God forbid any man to winne that Lordship, & aske helpe of any thing, lower than himselfe, & then namely of foule things innominable.

Now

Now then, why shouldest thou wene to loue to high, sithen nothing is thee aboue, but God alone. Truely I wote wel, that the like iewel is in a maner, euen in line of degree, there thou art thy selue, and nought aboue, saue thus: Angell vpon Angel, Man vpon Man, and Deuill vpon Deuill, han a maner of Soueraintie, & that shal cease at the day of Dome: & so I say, though thou be put to serue thilke iewell, during thy life, yet is that no seruage of vnderputting, but a maner of trauailyng pleasance, to conquere and get that thou hast not.

I set now the hardest in my seruice, nowe thou deidest for sorrow, of wanting in thy desires: Truely all heauenly bodies, with one voice shul come, and make melody in thy comming, & say welcome our fere, and worthie to enter into Iupiters ioy, for thou with might haste ouercome death, thou wouldest neuer flit out of thy seruice, and we all shull now pray to the Gods, row by row, to make the like Margarite, that no routh had in this person, but vnkindly without comforte let thee deie, shall beset her selfe in soch wise, that in yearth for part of vengeaunce, shall she no ioye haue in loues seruice: and when shee is dedde, then shall her soule been brought vp into thy presence, and whider thou wilte chese, the like soule shall been committed. Or els after thy death, anone all the foresaid heauenly bodies by one accorde, shall ber nommen from thilke perle, all the vertues that firste her were taken, for she hath hem forfeyted, by that on thee my seruaunt, in thy liue shee would not suffer to worche all vertues, withdrawen by might of the high bodies: Why then shouldest thou wene so any more. And if thee liste to looke vpon the lawe of kinde, and with order, which to me was ordayned, soothly none age, none ouertournyng tyme, but hitherto had no time ne power, to chaunge the weddyng, ne that knotte to vnbinde of two hartes, through one assent in my presence, together accorden to enduren till death hem depart. What troweste thou euery ideot wot the meaning & the priuie entēt of these things? They wene for soth that soche accorde may not be, but the Rose of maydenhede beplucked, doe way do way, they know nothing of this: For consente of two harts alone, maketh the fastning of the knot, neyther lawe of kind, ne mans Law determineth, neither the age, ne the quality of persons, but onely accord betweene thilke twaie. And truely, after tyme that such accorde, by theyr consent in harte, is enseled and put in my treasure, emongs my priuie things, then ginneth the name of spousaile: and although they breken forward bothe, yet soch matter enseled, is kept in remembrance for euer. And see now that spouses haue the name anon after accord, though the Rose be not take. The Aungell badde Joseph, take Marie his spouse, and to Egipt wende: Lo she was cleped spouse, and yet tofore ne after, neyther of hē both meant, no fleshly luste know, wherefore the wordes of trouth accorden, that my seruaunts shoulden forsake bothe father and mother, and be adherand to his spouse, and they twoo in vnitie of one flesh, shoulden accorde. And this wise two that werne first, in a little manner disaccordaunt, higher that one, and lower that other, been made euenliche in gree to stonde.

But now to enforme thee, that ye been lich Goddes, these Clerkes saine, and in determinacion shewen, that three thinges hauen the names of Goddes been cleped, that is to sain: Man, Deuill, and Images, but yet is there but one God, of whom all goodnesse, all grace, and all vertue commeth, and he is louyng and true, and euerlasting, and prime cause of al being things: but men been goddes, louing and true, but not euerlasting, and that is by adoption, of the euerlasting GOD. Deuils been goddes, stirring by a maner of liuing, but neyther been they true, ne euerlasting, and their name of godlihede, they han by vsurpacion, as the Prophet sayeth: Al Goddes of Gentiles, that is to say, Paintins are Diuels. But Images been Goddes by nuncupation & they been neither liuyng ne true, ne euerlasting: After these wordes they clepen gods, Images, wrought with mens hands.

But now reasonable creature, that by adoptiō alone, art to the great God euerlasting, & therby thou art God cleped: let thy fathers maners so entre thy wits, that thou might folow, in as much as lōgeth to thee, thy fathers worship, so that in nothing, thy kind from his will decline, ne from his nobley powerlie. In this wise if thou werche, thou art aboue all other things, saue God alone, & so say no more thine harte, to serue in too hie a place.

FVlly haue I nowe declared, thine estate to be good, so thou follow thereafter, and that the obiection first by thee alleged, in worthinesse of thy Margarite, shall not thee let, as it shall further thee, and encrease thee: it is now to declare, the last obiection in nothing may greue. Yes certes (qd. I) both greue, and let muste it needs, the contrary may not been proued, and see nowe why. While I was glorious in worldly welfulnesse, and had soche goodes in wealth, as maken men riche, tho was I drawn into

into compaignies that loos, prise, and name yeuen: Tho louteden blasours, tho curteiden glosours, tho welcomede flatterers, tho worshipped thilke, that now demen not to looke. Euery wight in soche yearthly weale habundaunt, is hold noble, precious, benigne, & wise, to doe what he shall, in any degree that menne him set, all be it that the soth be in the contrary of all tho thinges: But he that can, ne neuer so well him behaue, and hath vertue habundaunt, in manyfold maners, and be not wealthed with soche yearthly goodes is hold for a foole, and saied his wit is but sotted. Lo how false for euer is holde true. Lo how true is cleaped false, for wanting of goodes. Also Lady, dignitees of office maken men mikell commended, as thus: he is so good, were he out, his pere should men not find. Truely I trowe of some soche that are so prayled, were they out ones, an other should make him so be know, he should of no wise no more been looked after: but onely fooles wel I wot, desiren soch new things. Wherefore I wonder that thilke gouernour, out of whom alone the causes proceden, that gouernen all things, which that hath ordeyned this worlde, in werkes of the kindly bodies so be governed, not with vnstedfast or happious thing, but with rules of reason, which shewen the course of certaine things: why suffreth he such sliding chaūges, that misturnen soche noble things as been we men, that arne a faire perfell of the yearth, and holden the vpperest degree vnder G O D, of benigne things, as yee saiden right now your self, should neuer man haue been set in so worthie a place, but if his degree were ordayned noble. Alas, thou that knittest the purueighaunce of all thinges, why lookest thou not to amenden these defaultes: I see shrewes that han wicked maners, sitte in chaires of domes, Lambes to punishen, there Woolues should been punished. Lo, vertue shined naturelly, for pouertie lurketh, and is hid vnder cloude: but the Moone false forsworne, as I knowe my selfe, for auer and pelfes hath vsurped, to shine by day light, with peynture of other mennes praysings: and truely thilke forged light foully should fade, were the trouth a waie of colours feyned. Thus is night turned into day, and day into night, Winter into Sommer, & Sommer into Winter, not in deed but in misleapyng of foolish people.

Now (qd. she) what weenest thou of these things? How feelest thou in thin hart, by what gouernaunce that this commeth about?

Certes (qd. I) that wote I neuer, but if it be, that Fortune hath graunt from aboue to lede the end of men as her liketh, Ah now I see (qd. she) the entent of thy meanyng: Lo, bycause thy worldly goodes, been fullich dispēt, thou berafte out of dignitie of office, in which thou madest thy gathering of thilke goodes, and yet biddest in that office, by counsayle of wise, any thyng were ended: and true were vnto hem, whose profite thou shouldest looke, and seest now many, that in the like Heruest made of thee mokell, and now for glosing of other, deyneth thee nought to forther, but inhaunsen fals shrewes, by witnessing of truth: These thinges greeueth thine harte, to seene thy selfe thus abated, and then faultie of mankinde ne setteth but litle, by the lesers of soch richesse, haue he neuer so moche vertue, and so thou weenest of thy Jewell, to renne in dispite, and not been accepted into grace: All this shall thee nothyng hinder. Now (qd. she) first thou woste well, thou lostest nothyng that euer mightest thou challenge for thyne owne: When nature brought thee forth, come thou not naked out of thy mothers wombe? Thou haddest no richesse, and when thou shalte enter into the ende of euery fleshly bodie, what shalt thou haue with thee then? So euery richesse thou haste in tyme of thy liuyng nis but leant, thou might therein chalenge no propertie. And see now, euery thing that is a mans owne, he may doe therewith what him liketh, to yeue or to keepe: but richesse thou playnest from thee loste, if thy might had stretched so ferforth, fayne thou wouldes haue kept, multiplied with mo other: and so ayenst thy will been they departed from thee, wherefore they were neuer thine. And if thou laudest and ioyest any wight, for he is stuffed with soche maner richesse, thou art in that beleeue beguiled, for thou weenest thilke ioy to be selinesse, or els ease, and he that hath loste soche haps, to been vnselie. Ye forsoth (qd. I.) Well (qd. she) then woll I proue that vnsely, in that wise is to prayse, and so the tother is the contrary to be lacked. How so (qd. I?) For vnselie (qd. she) beguileth not, but sheweth the entēt of her working. Et econtra. Selinesse beguileth, for in prosperitie, shee maketh a lape in blindnesse, that is, she windeth him to make sorow when she withdraweth. Wolte thou not (qd. she) praise him better, that sheweth to thee his hart, tho it be with bitande words, and dispitous, than him that gloseth, and thinketh in their absence, to do thee many harmes. Certes (qd. I) the one is to cōmende, and the other to lacke and dispise. A ha (qd. she) right so ease while he lasteth, gloseth and flattereth, & lightly voideth when she most pleasantly sheweth, and euer in her absence, she is about to do thee tene and sorrow in hart: But vnsely all be it with

with bitande chere, sheweth what she is, and so doeth not that other, wherfore vnsele doth not beguile. Selinesse disceiueth: vnsely put away doubt. That one maketh men blind, that other openeth their yen, in shewyng of wretchednesse. The one is ful of drede, to lese that is not his owne: That other is sober, and maketh men discharged of mokell heauinesse in burthen: The one draweth a man frō very good, the other haleth him to vertue, by the hookes of thoughts. And wenest thou not, that thy disease hath doen thee mokell more to winne, than euer yet thou lostest, and more thā euer the contrary made thee winne? Is not a great good to thy thinking, for to knowe the heartes of thy soothfast freends? Parde they been proued to the full, and the true haue discouered from the false. Truely at the goyng of thilke brotell ioye, there yede no more away, than the ilke that was not thyne proper: He was neuer from that lightly departed, thine owne good therfore leaueth it still with thee. Now good (qd. she) for how moche wouldest thou sometime haue bought, this very knowyng of thy frendes, from the flattering flies that they glosed, when thou thought thy selfe sely? But thou that plainest of losse in richesse, hast founden the most dere worthy thing: that thou cleapest vnsely, hath made thee moche thing to winnen. And also for conclusioun of all, He is frende that nowe leaueth not his heart from thine helpes. And if that Margarite denieth now not to suffre her vertues shine to thee wardes, with spreading beames, as farre or farther than if thou were sely in worldly ioy: Trewly I say not els but she is some deale to blame.

Ah, peace (qd. I) and speake no more of this, mine hearte breaketh now thou touchest any soche wordes. A well (qd. she) then let vs singen, thou herest no more of these things at this tyme.

¶ Thus endeth the first booke of the Testament of Loue, and hereafter followeth the second.

VEry wealth may not be founden in all this world, and that is well seene: Lo how in my moste comforte, as I wende and moste supposed to haue had full aunswere of my contrarie thoughtes, suddainly it was vanished. And all the workes of man faren in the same wise, when folke wenen best her entent for to haue, and willes to performe, anon chaunging of the lift side to the right halue, torneth it so cleane into another kind, that neuer shall it come to the first plite in doing.

O this wrongfull steering so soone, otherwised out of knowing, but for my purpose was at my beginning, and so dureth yet, if GOD of his grace tyme woll me graunt, I thinke to performe this worke, as I haue begonne in loue, after as my thinne witte, with inspiracion of him that hideth all grace woll suffre. Grecuously GOD wotte haue I suffred a great throwe, that the Romayn Emperour, which in vnitie of loue should accorde and euery with other, in cause of other to auaunce, and namely sithe this Empire to be corrected of so many sectes in heresie, of fayth, of seruice, of rule in loues religion. Trewly all were it but to shende erronious opinions, I may it no lenger suffre: For many men there been that sain loue to been in grauell and sande, that with Sea ebbyng and flowyng woweth, as riches that sodainly wanisheth. And some saine that loue shoulde be in windie blastes, that stoundmele tourneth as a phane, and glorie of renome, which after lustes of the variaunt people is areysed or stilled. Many also wenen that in the Sunne and the Moone, and other Sterres, loue should been founden, for among all other Planets moste soueraynly they shinen, as dignities in reuerence of estates rather than good han, and occupien. Full many also there been that in okes and in huge postes supposen loue to been grounded, as in strength and in might, which mowen not helpen their owne wretchednesse, when they ginne to fall. But soch diuersitie of sectes ayenst the rightfull byleue of loue, these errours been foorth spredde, that loues seruaunts in the trew rule and stedfast fayth, in no place darne appeare: Thus irrecuperable ioy is went, and annoy endlesse is entred. For no man aright repreueth soch errours, but comfirmē their wordes, and saine that badde is noble good, and goodnes is badde, to which folke the Prophet biddeth, wo without end.

Also many tongues of great false teachings in guiling maner, principally in my times, not only with wordes, but also with armes, loues seruaunts and profesle in his religion of trew rule, pursewen to confounden and to distroien. And for as much as holy Fathers, that our Christen faith aproued and strengthed to the Jewes, as to men reasonable, and of diuinitie learned, proued thilke faith with reasons, and with auctorites of the olde Testament, and of the Newe, her pertinacie to distroy: But to Paynims, that for beestes and houndes were hold, to putte hem out of their errour, was mi-

racles of God ſhewed. Theſe thinges were figured by commyng of thangell to the ſheepherdes, and by the ſterre to Paynims kinges, as who ſaith: Angell reſonable, to reſonable creature, and ſterre of myracle to people beſtiall not learned, were ſent to enioyme. But I louers clerke in al my conmyng and with al my mightes, trewly I haue no lothe grace in vertue of myracles, ne for no diſconfite falſeheedes ſuffiſeth not auctorities alone, ſithen that ſuche heretikes and maintainours of falſities. Wherfore I wot well ſithen that they been men, and reaſon is approued in hem, the clowde of errour hath her reaſon bewond probable reaſons, which that catchēde wit rightfully may not with ſtite. But my trauayling ſtudie I haue ordeyned hem, with that auctoritie miſgloſed by mans reaſon, to graunt ſhal be enduced.

Now ginneth my penne to quake, to thinken on the ſentences of the enuious people, whiche alway been ready, both ryder and goer to ſkorne and to iape this leude Booke and me for rancour and hate in their heartes they ſhullē ſo diſpiſe, that although my booke be leude, yet ſhall it been more leude holden, and by wicked wordes in many maner apaired. Certes me thinketh the ſowne of their badde ſpeache, right now is full bothe myne eares. O good precious Margarite, myne hearte ſhould weepe, if I wiſte ye token hede of ſuche maner ſpeach, but trewly I wote wel in that your wiſedome ſhall not aſſerte. For of GOD maker of kinde witneſſe I tooke, that for none enuie ne ill haue I drawe this matter together, but only for goodnes to maintain, and errours in falſetes to diſtroy. Wherfore (as I ſayd) with reaſon I thinke, thilke forſaid errours to diſtroy and dequace. Theſe reaſons and ſuche other, yf they enduce menne in loues ſeruice, trewe to beleeue of parfite bliſſe, yet to full fayth in credence of deſerte, fully mowe they not ſuffiſe, ſithen fayth hath no merite of mede, when mans reaſon ſheweth experience in doyng. For vtterly no reaſon the parfite bliſſe of loue by no way may make to be comprehended. Lo what is a perfell of louers ioye, parfite ſcience in good ſeruice, of their deſire to comprehende in bodely doynge, the lyking of the ſoule, nat as by a glaſſe to haue contemplacion of tyme comming, but thilke firſt imagined and thought, after face to face in beholding: what heart, what reaſon, what vnderſtandyng can make his heauen to be feeled and know without aſſay of doyng? Certes none. Sithen then of loue commeth ſuche fruite in bliſſe, and loue in himſelfe is the moſte amonge other vertues, as Clerkes ſaine: The ſeede of ſuch ſpringing in all places, in all countreis, in all worldes ſhould been ſowe.

But o wel away, thilke ſeed is forſake, and mowen not been ſuffred the londe tillers to ſet a werke, without meddlyng of cockle, bad wedes which ſometime ſlonken hath caught the name of loue among pdiotes and badde meanyng people. Neuer the latter, yet how ſo it be that menne cleape thilke king preciouſeſt in kinde, with many eke names, that other thinges, that the foule peuen the like noble name, it ſheweth well that in a maner men haue greate lyking in wurſhipping thilke name, wherefore this worke haue I writte, and to the tyteld of loues name, I haue it auowed in a maner of ſacrifice, that where euer it be radde, it mow in merite by the excellence of thilke name the more wex in authoritie and wurſhippe of taking in hede, and to what entent it was ordayned, the in feeres mowen been moued. Euery thing to whom is owand occaſion done as for his ende. Ariſtotle ſuppoſeth that the actes of euery thing been in a manner his finall cauſe. A finall cauſe is noblerer, or els euen as noble as thilke thynge that is finally to thilke ende, wherefore action of thing euerlaſtyng is deemed to be eternall, and not tempozall, ſithen it is his finall cauſe: Right ſo the actes of my booke loue, and loue is noble, wherefore though my boke be leud, the cauſe with which I am ſtered, and for whome I ought it done, noble forſooth ben bothe. But bycauſe that in connynge I am yong, and can yet but creepe, this leude A, b, c, haue I ſette into learnyng, for I can not paſſen the tellyng of three as yet: and yf GOD will in ſhort tyme, I ſhall amend this leudneſſe in ioyning of ſyllables, which thing for dulneſſe of witte I may not in three letters declare. For trewly I ſay the goodneſſe of my Margarite pearle wouldе peue matter enditing to many Clerkes: Certes her mercy is more to me ſwetter than any liuinges, wherefore my lippes mowen not ſuffice in ſpeaking of her full laude and worſhippe as they ſhuld. But who is that in knowyng of the orders of Heauen, and putteth his reaſons in the earthe: I forſoothe may not with blere eyen, the ſhining Sunne of vertue in bright whele of this Margarite beholde, therefore as yet I may her not diſcriue in vertue as I would. In tyme comming in another treatiſe thorow goddes grace, this Sunne, cleerenelle of vertue to be knowe, and how ſhe enlumſneth all this day, I thinke to declare.

In

IN this meane while this comfortable lady gan sing a wounder mater of enditing in Latine, but trewly the noble colours in Rhetorike, wise knit were so craftely, that my conning woll not stretche to remembre, but the sentence I trowe somedele haue I in minde. Certes they were wonder sweete of sowne, and they were touched all in lamentation wise, and by no werbelles of mirth: Lo thus gan she sing in Latin, as I may constrew it in our English tongue.

Alas that these heuenly bodies their light and course shewen, as nature yaue hem in cōmaundement at the ginning of the first age, but these thinges in free choyse of reason han none vnderstanding: but man that ought to passe all thing of doing, of right course in kind, ouer whelmed soothnesse by wrongfull tycle, and hath drawen the Sterre of enuie to gone by his side that the clypes of mee that should be his shinande Sonne, so ofte is sey, that it wened thilke errour thorowe hem come in, should beene myne owne default. Trewely therefore I haue me withdraw, and made my dwellyng out of land in an yle by my selfe, in the Occian closed, and yet sayne there many they haue me harberowed, but GOD wote they faylen. These thinges mee greuen to thinke, & namely on passed gladnesse, that in this worlde was wonte me disporte of highe and low, and now it is fayled: they that wolden maistries me haue in thilke stounds, In heauen on high aboue Saturnes sphere, in seasonable tyme were they lodged, but now come queint coūsailours that in no house woll suffre me soiourne, whereof is pitee: And yet saine some that they me haue in celler with wine shet, in garnere there corne is laid, couered with wheat, in sacke sowed with woll, in purse with money fast knit, amōg pans mouled in a wiche, in presse among clothes laid, with rich pelure araied, in stable among horse and other beasts, as hogges, sheep, & nete, and in other maner wise. But thou maker of light (in winking of thine iye the sonne is queint) woste right well that I in true name was neuer thus herberowed, Sometime to forne the sonne in the seuenth partie was smitē, I bare both crosse & mitre, to yeue it where I would. With me the Pope went a foote, & I tho was worshipped of al holy church, kings baden me their crownes holden. The law was set as it shuld: to fore the iudge as wel the poore durst shewe his grefe as the riche, for all his money. I defended tho tailages, & was ready for the poore to pay. I made great feasts in my time, and noble songs, and maried damosels of gentill feture, withouten golde or other richesse. Poore Clerkes for witte of schoole, I sette in churches, and made soche persones to preach: and tho was seruice in holy churches honest and deuout, in pleasaunce both of God and of the people. But now the leude for simonie is auaunted, and shendeth all holy Churche. Now is steward for his achates, now is courtiour for his debates, nowe is eschetour for his wronges, now is lofell for his songes, personer and prouendre alone, with whiche many thrifte should encrease. And yet is this shrewe behind, Free harte is forsake, and losengeour is take. Lo ie accordeth, for suche there been that voluntary lustes haunten in court with ribaudrie, That till midnight and more woll play and wake, but in the Churche at matins he is behind, for euill disposicion of his stomake: therfore he shuld eat beane bred, and so did his sire, his estate therewith to strengthen. His aulter is broke, and low lithe in point to gone to ẏ yearth, but his horse must been easie and hie to beare him ouer great waters. His chalice poore, but he hath rich cups. No towayle but a sheete, there God shall been handeled: and on his meat borde there shall been borde clothes and towelles many paire. At masse serueth but a clergion: fiue squiers in hall. Poore chauncell, open holes in euery side: beddes of silke with tapites going all about his chambre. Poore masse booke & leude chapelayne, and broken Surplice with many an hole: good houndes and many, to hunt after Harte and Hare, to feede in their feestes. Of poore men haue they great care, for they euer craue, and nothyng offren, they wolden haue hem doluen. But among legystres there dare I not come, my doing they saine maken hem needy, they ne wold for nothing haue me in towne, for then were tort and forth naught worth an haw about, and pleasen no men, but thilke greeuous and torcious been in might and in doing: these things toforne said mowe well if men list ryme, trewly they accorde nothing. And for as moch as all thinges by me shulden of right ben gouerned, I am sory to see that gouernaunce fayleth, as thus: To seene smal and low gouerne the hie, & bodies aboue. Certes that polisie is nought, it is forbode by them that of gouernaunce treaten and enformen. And right as beastly witte should been subiect to reason, so earthly power in it self, the lower should been subiect to the hier.

What is worth thy body but it be gouerned with thy soule? right so litel or noght is worth earthly power, but if regnatife prudence in

heedes gouerne the smal, to which heedes the small owen to obey, and suffre in their gouernaunce. But soueraignesse ayenwarde should thinke in this wise I am seruant of these creatures to me deliuered: not Lorde, but defendour: not Maister, but enfourmer: not possessour, but in possession, and to hemlyche a tree, in which sparowes shullen stelen, here byrdes, to nourishe and foorth bryng vnder suertie ayenst all reueynous foules and beastes, and not to be tyraunt themselfe. And then the smal in reste and quiete, by the heedes well disposed, owen for their soueraines health and prosperite to pray, and in other doyngs, in maintenaunce thereof perfourme, withouten other administracion in rule of any manner gouernaunce. And they wit haue in hem, and grace to come to soche thinges, yet should they cease till theyr heedes them cleaped, although profite and pleasaunce should follow. But trewly other gouernaunce ne other medling ought they not to clayme, ne the heedes on hem to put. Trewly amonges cosinage dare I not come, but if richesse be my meane, soothly shee & other bodily goods maketh nigh cosinage, there neuer propinquite ne aliance in liue was, ne should haue be, nere it for her medling maners, wherefore kindely am I not there leged. Pouert of kinrede is behind, richesse suffreth him to passe: Truely he saith he come neuer of Japhetes children: whereof I am sory that Japhetes children for pouert, in no linage ben rekened, and Caines childrē for riches be maked Japhetes heyres. Alas this is a wonder chaunge bytweene tho two Noes children, sithen that of Japhetes offspryng comeden knightes, and of Cain discended the line of seruage to his brothers children. Lo howe gentillesse and seruage, as cosins, both discended out of two bretherne of one body: Wherfore I say soothnesse, the gentilesse in kinrede maken not gentil linage in succession, without desert of a mans owne selfe. Where is now the line of Alisaundrie the noble, or els of Hector of Troie? Who is discended of right blood of lyne fro king Artour? Parde sir Perdicas, whome that king Alisandre made to been his heyre in Greece, was of no Kinges blood, his dame was a tombistere: Of what kinred been the Gentils in our dayes: I trowe therfore if any good be in gentilesse, it is onely that it seemeth a maner of necessite bee input to gentilmē, that they shoulden not varien fro the vertues of their auncesters. Certes all maner linage of men ben euen liche in birth, for one father, maker of all goodnes, enformed hem all, and all mortall folke of one seed are greyned. Wherto auaunt men of her linage, in cosinage, or in elde fathers. Loke now the ginning & to God maker of mans person, there is no clerke ne no worthy in gentilesse: & he that norisheth he his corare with vices & vnresonable lustes, and leaueth the kind course, to which end him brought foorth his birth, trewly he is vngentill, & among clerkes may not been nempned. And therfore he that woll been gentil, he mote daunten his flesh fro vices that causen vngentilnes, and leaue also reignes of wicked lustes, and drawe to him vertue, that in all places gentilnesse gentilmen maketh. And so speak I in feminine gendre in generall, of tho persones at the reuerēce of one, whom euery wight honoureth, for her bountie & her noblenes imade her to GOD so dere, that his moder she became, and she me hath had so great in worship, that I nill for nothing in opē declare that in any thing ayenst her secte may so wene: For all vertue and all worthines of plesaunce in hem haboundeth. And although I would any thing speake, truely I can not, I may finde in iuell of hem no maner mater.

Right with these wordes shee stinte of that lamentable melody, and I gan with a liuely hearte to praye, if that it were lyking vnto her noble grace, she would her deine to declare me the mater that firste was begonne, in which she lefte, and stinte to speake beforne she ganne to singe.

O (qd. she) this is no newe thing to me to seene you men desiren after mater, which your selfe caused to voyd.

Ah good Lady (qd. I) in whom victorie of strength is proued aboue all other thing, after the iudgement of Esdram, whose lordship all lignes: Who is that right as Emperour hem commaundeth, whether thilke been not women, in whose lykenesse to me yee aperen. For right as man halte the principalite of all thing vnder his beyng, in the masculine gender, & no more genders been there but masculine, and feminine, all the remnaunt beene no genders but of grace, in facultie of Grammer. Right so in the feminine, the women holdē the vpperest degree of all thynges, vnder thilke gendre contained. Who bringeth forth kings, whyche that beene lordes of see & of yearth, and all peoples of women beene borne: they nourish hem that graffen vines, they make men comfort in their glad cheres. Her sorrow is death to mannes heart. Without women the beeyng of menne were impossible. They conne with their sweetnesse the cruell hart rauish, and make it meek, buxome, and bending, with-

without violence meuyng. In beautie of their eyen, or elles of other manere fetures is all mens desires, yee more than in Golde, Precious stones, eyther any richesse. And in this degree Lady your selfe many hearts of men haue so bounden, that parfite blisse in womānkynd to been men wenen, and in nothing els. Also Lady, the goodnesse, the vertue of women, by propertie of discretion, is so well knowen, by litelnesse of malice, that desire to a good asker by no way conne they warne: and ye then that woll not passe the kind werching of your sectes by generall discrecion, I wotte well ye woll so enclyne to my prayer, that grace of my request shal fully been graunted. Certes (qd she) thus for the more parte fareth all mankinde to pray, and to crie after womans grace, and fayne manie fantasies to make hartes to encline to your desires: and when these sealy women freely of their kinde beleuen your wordes, and wenen all be Gospell the promise of your behestes, then graunt they to you their hertes, and full fillen your lustes, where through their libertie in Maistership that they tofore had, is thralled, and so maked Soueraine and to be prayd, that first was seruaunt, and voice of prayer vsed. Anone as filled is your luste, many of you be so trewe, that litell hede take ye of soche kindnesse, but with traisoun anone ye thinke hem beguile, and lette light of that thinge which first ye maked to you wonders dere: so what thing to women is to loue any wight ere she hym well know, and haue him proued in many half, for euery glittering thing is not golde, and vnder colour of faire speach many vices may be hid and concealed. Therefore I rede no wight to trust on you too rath, mens chere and her speach right guilefull is full oft, wherefore without good assay it is not worth on many on you to truste: Truely it is right kindly to euery man that thinketh women betraye, and shewen outward all goodnesse, till he haue his will performed. Lo the bird is beguiled with the mery voice of the foulers whistell. When a woman is closed in your nette, then woll ye causes finden, and beare vnkindnesse her on hand, or falset vpon her put, your owne malicious traison with soch thing to excuse. Lo then han women none other wreech in vengeaunce, but blober and wepe till hem list stint, and sorily her mishap complaine, & is put into wening that all men been so vntrew. How often haue men chaunged her loues in a litell while, or els for failing their wil in their places hem set & for frēdship shal be one, & fame with another hym list for to haue, and a third for delite, or els were he lost both in packe & in clothes: is this faire? nay God wot. I may nat tel by thousand partes, the wrongs in trecherye of soch false people, for make they neuer so good a bonde, all set ye at a mute when your harte tourneth: And they that wenen for sorrow of you dey, the pite of your false harte is flowe out of towne. Alas therefore, that euer any womā wold take any wight in her grace, till she know at the full on whome she might at all assayes truste. Women con no more craft in queinte knowyng, to vnderstand the false discernable conceitments of mans beguilings. Lo how it fareth, though ye men gronē and crien, certes it is but disceit, & that preueth well by thendes in your werking. How many women haue bene lorne, & with shame foule shent by long lasting tyme, which thorow mens gile haue been disceiued? euer their fame shall dure, and their deedes radde and songe in many londes, that they han done recoueren shall they neuer, but alway been deemed lightly, in such plite ayen should they fall, of which slaūders and tenes ye false men and wicked bene the very causes, on you by right ought these shames and these reproues all holy discend. Thus arne ye all nighe vntrew, for all your faire speche your hart is ful fickel. What cause han ye women to dispise & better fruite than they been, ne swetter spices to your behoue, mowe ye not find, as farre as worldly bodies stretchen. Loke to their forming at the making of their persons by God in ioy of Paradice, for goodnesse of mannes propre bodie were they maked, after the lawes of the Bible, rehearsing Gods wordes in this wise: It is good to mankind that we make to him an helper. Lo in paradise for your helpe was this tree grafted, out of which all linage of manne discendeth: if a man be noble fruite, of noble fruite it is sprongen: the blysse of Paradise to mens sorie hartes, yet in this tree abydeth. O noble helpes been these trees, and gentill ie well to ben worshipped of euery good creature: He that hē anoieth, doth his own shame, it is a comfortable perle ayenst al tenes. Euery cōpany is mirthed by their present being. Truly I wist neuer vertue, but a woman were therof the root. What is heauen the worse, though Sarazins on it lien? Is your faith vntrue, though renogates make therein leasings. If the fire doth any wight bren, blame his owne wit that put himselfe so far in the heat. Is not fire gentillest, and most clement cōfortable amōgs all other? fire is cheefe worker in fortheryng sustenaunce to mankind, shall fire bene blamed, for it brende a foole naturally, by his owne stultie wit in steryng? Ah wicked fooles, for your proper malice, and shrewdnesse of

your selfe, ye blame and dispise the precious thing of your kind, and which things among other most ye desiren. Crewly Nero and his children been shrewes, that dispisen so their dames. The wickednesse and guling of men, in disclaundring of thilke that most hath hem gladded and pleased, were impossible to write or to nempne. Neuer the later yet I say, he that knoweth a waie, may it lightly passe: eke an hearbe proued may safely to smertande sores be laide: So I say in him that is proued is nothing sothe euill to gesse. But these things haue I rehersed to warne you women all at ones, that to lightly without good assay ye assenten not to mans speach. The Sunne in the day light, is to knowen from the moone that shineth in the night. Now to thee thy self (qd. she) as I haue oft said, I know well thine herte, thou art none of all the toforе nempned people, for I know well the continuaunce of thy seruice, þ neuer sithen I set thee a werke, might thy Margarite for pleasaunce, freendship, ne fairehede of none other be in point moued from thine harte, wherefore into myne household hastely I woll that thou entre, and all the parfite priuite of my werkyng make it bee know in thy vnderstanding, as one of my priuie familiers. Thou desiresi (qd. she) fayne to heare of tho thinges where I left. Ye forsoothe (qd. I) that were to me a great blisse. Nowe (qd. she) for thou shalt not wene that womans cõditions for fayre speech, such thing belongeth.

Thou shalte (qd. she) vnderstand first among all other thinges, that al that cure of my seruice, to me in the parfite blisse in doing, is desired in euery mans harte, be he neuer so moche a wretche, but euery man trauayleth by diuers studie, and seeke thilke blisse by diuers waies, but all the endes are knitte in felicitie of desire in the parfite blisse, that is soch ioy, when men it haue gottẽ, there liueth no thing more to been coueited: But how that desire of soch perfection in my seruice be kindely sette in louers hartes, yet her erronious opinions misturne it by falsnesse of wening. And although mennes vnderstanding be misturned, to know whiche shoulde been the way vnto my persone, and whyther it abydeth: yet wote they there is a loue in euery wight, weneth by that thyng that he coueyteth most, he should come to thilke loue, and that is parfite blisse of my seruauntes, but then full blisse may not bee, and there lacke anie thyng of that blisse in anie side. Eke it followeth then, that he that must haue full blisse, lacke no blisse in loue on no side.

Therefore Ladie (qd. I tho) thilke blisse I haue desired, and sothe to forne this my selfe by wayes of riches, of dignite, of power, and of renome, wening me in tho thinges had ben thilke blisse, but ayenst the heere it tourneth. When I supposed beste thilke blisse haue get and come to the full purpose of your seruice, sodainly was I hindred, and throwen so ter abacke, that mee thinketh an impossible to come there I lefte. I woll (qd. she) and therefore haste thou tayled, for thou wentest not by the hie waie, a littell misgoyng in the ginning, causeth mikell errour in the ende, wherefore of thilke blisse thou failedest, for hauyng of richesse, ne none of thother thinges thou nempnedest, mowen not make sothe parfite blisse in loue, as I shall shewe. Therefore they be not worthie to thilke blisse, and yet somewhat must been cause and way to thilke blisse: Ergo, there is some sothe thing, and some waie, but it is littell in vsage, and that is not openly iknow. But what feelest in thine hart of the seruice, in which by me thou art entred: weenest aught thy selfe, yet be in the hie way to my blisse? I shall so shewe it to thee, thou shalt not con say the contrary.

Good Ladie (qd. I) altho I suppose it in my harte, yet would I heare thyne wordes, how ye meanen in this matter? (qd. she) that I shall with my good will. The like blisse desired, somedeale ye knowen, altho it be not perfitely, for kindely entencion leadeth you thereto, but in three maner liuings, is al such waies shewed. Euery wight in this worlde to haue this blisse, one of the like three wayes of liues must proceede, which after opinions of great Clerkes arne by names cleaped, beastialliche, reasonabliche, in vertuous: Manliche is worldliche, beastialiche is lustes and delitable, nothing restrayned by bridle of reason: all that ioyeth and yeueth gladnesse to the hart, and it be ayenst reason, is likened to bestiall liuing, which thing foloweth lusts and delites. wherefore in such thing may not that precious blisse, that is maister of all vertues, abide. Your fathers toforne you haue cleaped such lustye lyuings, after the flesh, passions of desire, whych are vnnominable toforе God and man bothe. Then after determination of such wise, wee accorden, that such passions of desire shull not ben nempned, but holden for absolute from all other liuings and prouings, and so liueth into liuings, manliche and reasonable, to declare the matters begon. But to make thee fully haue vnderstandyng in manlyche liuynges, which is holden worldliche in these thynges,

so

so that ignorance be made no letter. I woll (qd.she) nempn these foresaid waies by names and conclusions.

First richesse, dignitie, renome, and power, shull in this worke be cleaped bodily goodes, for in hem hath been a great throwe, mannes trust of stikinesse in loue, as in riches sufficsance to haue maintayned that was begonne by worldly cattell in dignitie, honour, and reuerence of hem that werne vnderput, by mastrie thereby to obey. In renome and glory of peoples praising, after lustes in their hearte, without heede taking to qualitie and manner of doing, and in power, by trouth of Lordeships mainteinaunce, thyng to proceede forth in doing. In all which thinges a long time, mannes couetise in commune hath ben greatly grounded, to come to the blisse of my seruice, but truly they were beguiled, and for the principall must needs faile, and in helping mowe not auaile. See why for holdest him not poore that is needy? Yes parde (qd.I.) And him for dishonoured, that much folke dein not to reuerence. That is sooth (qd.I.) And what him that his mights failen, and mowe not helpen. Certes (qd.I) me seemeth of all menne he should be holden a wretch. And wenest not (qd.she) that hee that is little in renome, but rather is out of the praisings, of mo men than a few be not in shame? Forsooth (qd.I) it is shame and villanie to him that coueiteth renome, that more folke not prayse in name, than prayse. Sooth (qd.she) thou sayest sooth, but all these thynges are followed of such manner doing, and wenden in riches sufficsaunce, in power might, in dignitie worship, and in renome glorie, wherefore they descended into deceyuable wening, and in that seruice deceit is followed. And thus in generall, thou and all such other that so wrechen, faylen of my blisse, that yee long han desired, wherefore truly in lise of reason is the high way to this blisse, as I thinke more openly to declare hereafter. Neuer the latter, yet in a little to comfort thy hearte, in shewing of what way thou art entred thy self, and that thy Margarite may knowe thee set in the high way, I woll enforme thee in this wise. Thou hast failed of thy first purpose, because thou wentest wrong, and lefte the high way on thy right side, as thus, thou lookedest on worldly liuing, and that thing thee beguyled, and lightly therefore as a little assay thou longedest, but when I turned thy purpose, and shewed thee a part of the high way, tho thou abode therin, and no death ne ferdnesse of none enemye might thee out of thilke waye reue, but euer one in thine heart, to come to thilke blisse, when thou were arrested, and first time empriſoned, thou wer loth to change thy way, for in thy hearte thou wendest to haue beene there thou shouldest, and for I had ruth to seen thee miscaried, and wist well thine ablenes my seruice to further and encrease, I come my selfe without other meane to visite thy persone, in comfort of thy hert: and parde in my comming thou were greatly gladded, after which time, no disease, no care, no tene might moue me out of thy hart. And yet I am glad and greatly enpited, How continually thou haddest me in mind, with good auisement of thy conscience, whē thy king and his princes, by huge words and great, looked after variance in thy speech, and euer thou were ready for my sake, in pleasaunce of that Margarite pearle, and many mo other, thy body to oblige in to Marces doing, if any contraried thy sawes, stedfast waye maketh stedfast heart, with good hope in the ende. Truly I woll that thou it well know, for I see thee so set, and not chaunging heart haddest in my seruice, and I made thou haddest grace of thy king, in forpeuenesse of mikell misdeede: to the gracious king art thou mikell holden, of whose grace and goodnesse, sometime hereafter I thinke to enforme, when I shewe the ground, where as morall vertue groweth. Who brought thee to worke? who brought this grace about? Who made thy heart hardie? Truely it was I, for haddest thou of me failed, then of this purpose had neuer taken in this wise. And therefore I say, thou might well trust to come to thy blisse, sithen thy gunning hath beene heard, but euer graciously after thy hearts desire hath proceeded. Stiuer tined with many heates, menne knowne for true, and safely men may trust in thee alway in working. This diseases hath proued, what way hence forward thou thynkest to hold. Now in good fayth Lady (qd.I tho) I am nowe in, me seemeth it is the hygh way and the right. Yea forsooth (qd.she) and now I woll disproue thy first waies, by whych many men wenen to get thilke blisse. But for as much as euery heart that hath caught full loue, is tyed with queint kittinges, thou shalt vnderstande, that loue, and thilke foresayed blisse, to forne declared, in this proouings, shall hote the knotte in the heart. Well (qd.I) this impossession I woll well vnderstand. Nowe also (qd.she) for the knotte in the hearte must bee from one to another, and I knowe thy desire: I woll thou vnderstande these matters, to been sayed of thy selfe, in disprooupng of thy firste seruice, and in strengthening of thilke that thou hast vndertake to thy Margarite pearle. A Goddes halfe (qd.I) right well I feele, that all this case is possible and true,

and therefore I admitted all togither. Understanden well (qd. she) these termes, and look no contradiction thou graunt. If God woll (qd. I) all these things woll I not faile, and if I graunt contradiction, I should graunt an impossible, and that were a foule inconuenience, fro which things Lady wis hereafter I thinke me to keepe.

WEll (qd. shee) thou knowest that euery thynge is cause, wherethrough any thing hath beyng, that is cleaped caused: then if riches causen knotte in hearte, thilke riches arne cause of the like precious thing being: But after the sentence of Aristotle, Euery cause is more in dignitie, than his thyng caused, wherethrough it followeth, richesse to ben more in dignity than thilke knot, but richesse arne kindely naughtie, badde, and needie, and the like knotte is thing kindly, good, most praised, and desired: Ergo thyng naughtie, badde, and needye, in kindly understanding, is more worthye, than thyng kindly, good, most desired and praysed: The consequence is false, needes the antecedent mote beene of the same condition. But that richesses been badde, naughtie, and needie, that woll I proue, wherefore they mowe cause no such thing, that is so glorious a good: The more richesse thou hast, the more needs hast thou of helpe, hem to keepe. Ergo thou needest in richesse, which neede thou shouldest not haue, if thou hem wantest. Then must riches been needye, that in their hauing maken thee needie to helpes, in suretie thy richesse to keepen, wherethrough followeth rychesse to been needie. Euery thing causing euils, is bad and naughtie: but riches in one causen miscase, in another they mowen not euenly stretchen all about. Whereof commeth plee, debate, theft, begilings, but riches to win, which thynges been bad, and by richesse arne caused: ergo the like richesse been badde, which badnesse and need been knit into riches, by a manner of kindely propertie, and euery cause, and caused accorden: so that it followeth the like richesse, to haue the same accordaunce, with badnesse and mede, that their cause asketh. Also euery thinge hath his beeing by his cause, then if the cause be destroyed, the being of caused is banished: And so if richesse causen loue, and richesse weren destroyed, the loue shoulde vanish, but the like knot and it be true, maye not vanish for no going of no richesse: Ergo richesse is no cause of the knotte. And manye men, as I sayed, setten the cause of the knotte in richesse, the like knitten the richesse, and nothyng the euill: the like persons, what euer they been, wenen that richesse is most worthye to be had, and that make they the cause: and so wene they thilke riches bee better than the persone. Commonly suche asken rather after the quantitie, than after the qualitie, and such wenen as well by hemselfe, as by other, that coniunction of his life and of his soule is no more precious, but in as mikell as he hath of richesse. Alas, howe may hee holden suche thyngs precious or noble, that neither han life ne soule, ne ordinaunce of werching limmes: such richesse been more worthie, when they been in gathering, in departing ginneth his loue of other mennes praysing. And auarice gathering, maketh be hated, and needy to many out helpes: and when leueth the possession of such goods, and they ginne vanish, then entereth sorrow and tene in their harts. O bad and strait been thilke, that at their departyng maketh men tenefull and sorrie, and in the gathering of hem make menne needie: Muche folke at ones mowen not togither much therof haue. A good guest gladdeth his hoste, and all his meinie, but he is a bad guest, that maketh his hoste needie, and to be afeard of his guestes going. Certes (qd. I) me wondereth therefore, that the common opinion is thus: hee is worth no more, than that hee hath in cattell. O (qd. she) looke thou be not of that opinion, for if golde or money, or other manner of riches shinen in thy sight, whose is that? Not thine: and tho they haue a little beautie, they be nothyng in comparison of our kinde, and therefore ye should not set your worthinesse in thing lower than your selfe: for the richesse, the fairenesse, the worthinesse of thilke goodes, if there bee any such preciousnesse in hem, are not thine, thou madest hem so neuer, from other they come to thee, and to other they shull from thee: wherefore embracest thou other wights goods, as tho they were thyne? Kind hath draw hem by hemselfe. It is sooth the goods of the yearth been ordained in your foode and nourishing, but if thou wolt holde thee apayed with that sufficeth to thy kinde, thou shalt not be in daunger of no such riches, To kind sufficeth little thing, who that taketh heed. And if thou wolt algates wyth superfluitie of riches be athyroted, thou shalt hastelich be annoyed, or els euill at ease. And fairnesse of fields, ne of habitations, ne multitude of meiny may not be reckened as riches, that are thine owne, for if they be bad, it is great sclaunder and villanie to the occupier, and if they be good or faire, the matter of the workman that hem made, is to praise. How should otherwise bountie be counted for thyne, the like

like goodnesse and faireneſſe be proper to tho things hemselfe, then if they be not thine, sorrow not when they wend, ne glad thee not in pompe and in pride, when thou hem hast for their bountie and their beauties, commeth out of their owne kind, and not of thine owne persone: as faire been they in their not hauing, as when thou hast hem, they be not faire, for thou hast hem, but thou hast getten hem for the fairnesse of themselfe. And there the balance of men is deemed in riches outfoorth, wenen me to haue no proper good in themselfe, but seech it in straunge thyngs. Truly the condition of good wening is in thee mistourned, to wene your nobleneſſe be not in your selfe, but in the goods and beautie of other things. Parde the beasts that han but feeling soules, haue sufficiaunce in their owne selfe: and yee that beene like to God, seken encreaſe of sufficiaunce, from so excelent a kind, of so low things, ye do great wrong to him, that you made lordes ouer all yearthly things, and ye put your worthineſſe vnder the number of the feet, of lower things and foule, when ye iudge thilke riches to bee your worthineſſe, then put ye your selfe by estimation, vnder thilke foule thinges, and then leue ye the knowing of your selfe, so be ye viler than any dombe beast, that commeth of shrewd vice. Right so thilke persons that louen none euill, for deare worthineſſe of the persone, but for straunge goods, and saith the adoornement in the knotte lieth in such thing, his errour is perillous and shrewd, and he wrieth much benime, with much wealth, and that knot may not be good, when he hath it getten. Certes, thus hath riches with flickering sight annoied many: and often when there is a throwe out shrew, he coyneth all the gold, all the precious stones that mowen be founden to haue in his bandon, hee weneth no wight bee worthy to haue such thyngs but he alone. Howe many hast thou know now in late time, that in their richeſſe, supposed sufficiaunce haue followed, and now it is all failed. Ye lady (qd. I) that is for misse meddling, and otherwise gouerned thilke richeſſe, than they should. Yea (qd. shee tho) had not the flood greatly areised, & throw to hemward both grauell and sande, he had made no meddling. And right as sea yeueth flood, so draweth sea ebbe, and pulleth ayen vnder wawe, al the first out throw, but if good piles of noble gouernaunce in Loue, in well meaning manner, beene sadly grounded, to which hold thilke grauell, as for a while, that ayen lightly mowe not it tourne: and if the piles ben true, the grauell and sand wol abide. And certes, full warning in loue shalt thou neuer through hem get ne couer, that lightly with an ebbe ere thou beware, it will ayen meue.

In richeſſe many men had tenes and diseases, which they should not haue had, if thereof they had sayled. Through which now declared, partly it is shewed, that for richeſſe should the knot in heart, neyther beene cauſed in one, ne in other: truly knot may been knit, and I trowe more stedfast in loue, though richeſſe failed, and elf in richeſſe is the knotte, and not in heart. And then such a knotte is false, when the sea ebbeth and withdraweth the grauell, that suche richeſſe voydeth, thilke knotte woll vnknit. Wherefore no trust, no waye, no cause, no parfite beeing is in richeſſe, of no suche knotte, therefore another way must wee haue.

HOnour in dignitie is wened to peuen a full knotte. Ye certes (qd. I) and of that opinion ben many, for they sayne, dignitie, with honour, and reuerence, causen knots to encheinen, and so abled to knit togither, for the excellence in soueraintie of such degrees.

Now (qd. she) if dignitie, honour, and reuerence, causen thilke knot in heart, this knot is good and profitable. For euery cause of a cause, is cause of thing cauſed: Then thus, good things and profitable, ben by dignity, honour, and reuerence cauſed. Ergo they accord̄e, and dignities been good with reuerences and honour, but contraries mowen not accorden: wherefore by reason there should no dignitie, no reuerence, none honor accord with shrewes, but that is false: They haue beene cause to shrewes, in many shrewdneſſe, for wyth hem they accorden. Ergo from beginning, to argue ayenward, till it come to the last conclusion, they are not cause of the knot. Lo all day at eie arne shrewes not in reuerence, in honour, and in dignity. Yes forsooth, rather than the good. Then followeth it, that shrewes rather than good, shull ben cause of this knot. But of thys contrary, of all louers is beleeue, and for a soth openly determined to hold.

Now (qd. I) faine would I heare, how such dignities accorden with shrewes.

O (qd. she) that woll I shewe in manyfolde wise. Ye wene (qd. she) that dignities of office here in your Citie, is as the Sunne, it shineth bright withouten any cloud: whyche thyng, when they commen in the hands of malicious tyraunts, there commeth muche harme, and more greuaunce thereof, than of the wild fire, though it brende all a streete. Certes, in dignitie of office, the werks of ỹ occupier shewen

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the mallice and the badnesse in the persone, with shrewes they maken manifolde harmes, and muche people shamen. Howe often han rancours, for mallice of the gouernour shoulde been maintained? Hath not then such dignities caused debate, rumours, and euils? Yes God wote, by such thynges haue been trusted to, make mennes vnderstandyng encline to many queint thyngs. Thou wotest wel what I meane. Ye (qd. I) therefore as dignity such thyng in tene ywrought, so ayenwarde the substaunce in dignitye chaunged, relyed to bryng ayen good plite in doyng. Do waye, do waye (qd. she) if it so betide, but that is seide that such dignitie is betake in a good mannes gouernaunce. What thing is to recken in the dignities goodnesse? Parde the bountie and goodnesse is hers, that vsen it in good gouernaunce, and therfore commeth it, that honour and reuerence should been doen into dignitye, because of encreasing vertue in the occupyer, and not to the ruler, because of soueraignetye in dignitie. Sithen dignitie may no vertue cause, who is worthie worship for such goodnesse? Not dignitie, but persone, that maketh goodnesse in dignitie to shine. This is woonder thyng (qd. I) for me thinketh, as the persone in dignitie is worthye honour for goodnesse, so tho a persone for badnesse, maugre hath deserued, yet the dignitie leneth to bee commended. Let be (qd. she) thou errest ryght foule, dignitie with badnesse, is helper to performe the fellonous doynge: parde were it kindely good, or any propertie of kindely vertue, hadden in hemselfe, shrewes should hem neuer haue, with hem should they neuer accord. Water and fire that been contrarious, mowen not togider been assembled, kind woll not suffer such contraries to ioyne. And sithen at eye by experience in doyng, we seene that shrewes haue hem more often, than good men, siker mayest thou be, that kindely good in such things, is not appropred. Parde were they kindly good, as well one as other shoulden euenlich in vertue of gouernaunce ben worth: but one faileth in goodnesse, another doth the contrary, and so it sheweth kindely goodnesse, in dignitie not be grounded. And this same reason (qd. she) may be made in generall, on all the bodily goods, for they commē oft to throw out shrewes. After this he is strong, that hath might to haue great burthens, and he is light and swift, that hath soueraigntie in ronning to passe other: right so he is a shrew, on whom shreude thinges and bad han most werching. And right as Phylosophy maketh Philosophiers, and my seruice maketh louers: ryght so if dignities weren good or vertuous, they should maken shrewes good, and tourne her mallice, and make hem be vertuous, but that doe they not, as it is prooued, but causen rancour and debate: Ergo they be not good, but vtterly bad. Had Nero neuer been Emperor, should neuer his dame haue be slaine, to maken open the priuitie of his engendrure. Herodes for his dignitie slewe manye children. The dignitie of king John woulde haue destroyed all England. Therefore mokell wisedome and goodnesse both needeth in a person, the mallice in dignitie, stily to bridle, and with a good bitte of areste to withdraw, in case it would praunce otherwise than it should: truly yee yeue to dignities wrongfull names in your cleping. They should hete not dignitye, but monster of badnesse, and mainteiner of shrewes. Parde, shine the Sunne neuer so bright, and it bring foorth no heat, ne seasonably the hearbes out bring of the yearth, but suffer frosts and cold, and thearth barraine to ligge, by time of his compasse in circuit about, ye would wonder and dispreise that Sunne. If the Moon be at full, and sheweth no light, but darke and dimme to your sight appereth, and make destruction of the waters, woll ye not suppose it be vnder cloud, or in clips? And that some priuie thyng, vnknowne to your wits, is cause of such contrarious doing? Thē if clerkes, that han full insight and knowyng of such impediments, enforme you of the sooth, very ideotes ye been, but if ye yeuen credence to thilke clerkes words. And yet it dooth me tene, to seene many wretches reioycen in such many Planets. Truly little con they on Philosophy, or els on my lore, that any desire hauen such lighting planets, in that wise any more to shew. Good Lady (qd. I) tell yee mee how ye meane in these things. Lo (qd. she) the dignities of your cittie, Sunne and Moone, nothyng in kinde shew their shining as they should. For the Sunne made no brennyng heat in loue, but fresed enuie in mens hearts, for feeblenes of shining heat: and the Moone was about vnder an old cloud, the liuings by waters to destroy. Lady (qd. I) it is supposed they had shined as they should. Ye (qd. she) but now it is prooued at the full, their beauty in kindly shining fayled: wherefore dignitie of himseluen, hath no beautie in fairenesse, ne driueth not away vices, but encreaseth, and so be they no cause of the knotte. Now see in good truth, holde ye not such sonnes woorthye of no reuerence and dignities, woorthye of no worship, that maketh men to doe the more harmes? I not (qd. I.) No (qd. she) and thou see a wise good man, for his goodnesse and wisenesse wolt thou not do him worship?

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Thereof he is worthie. That is good skill (qd. I) it is due to such, both reuerence and worship to haue. Then (qd. she) a shrew for his shrewdnesse, altho he be put forth to forne other for ferde, yet is he worthie for shrewdnesse to be unworshipped: of reuerence no part is he worthie to haue, to contrarious doyng belongeth, and that is good skill. For right as he be smiteth the dignities, thilke same thyng ayenward him smiteth, or els should smite. And ouer this thou wost well (qd. she) that fire in euery place heateth where it be, and water maketh wet: Why? For kindely werking is so yput in hem, to doe such thyngs: for euerye kindely in werkyng sheweth his kinde. But though a wight had been Maior of your citie many Winter together, and come in a strange place, there he were not knowne, he shoulde for his dignitie haue no reuerence. Then neyther worship ne reuerence is kindely proper in no dignitie, sithen they shoulden doen their kind in such doyng, if any were. And if reuerence ne worship kindely be not sette in dignities, and they more therein been shewed than goodnesse, for that in dignitie is shewed, but it proueth, that goodnesse kindely in hem is not grounded. I wis neyther worship ne reuerence, ne goodnesse in dignitie, done none office of kind, for they haue none such propertye in nature of doyng, but by false opinion of the people. Lo, howe sometyme, thilke that in your Citie werne in dignitie noble, if thou lyst hem nempne, they beene nowe ouertourned, both in worship, in name, and in reuerence, wherefore suche dignities haue no kindely werchyng of worship, and of reuerence, he that hath no worthynesse on it selfe. Now it riseth, and nowe it vanisheth, after the variaunt opinion in false heartes of vnstable people.

Wherfore, if thou desire the knot of this iewell, or els if thou wouldest suppose, she should set the knot on thee for such manner of dignitye, then thou weenest beautie or goodnesse of the ilke somewhat encreaseth the goodnesse or vertue in the bodie: but dignitie of hemselfe ben not good, ne yeuen reuerence ne worship by their owne kind, how should they then yeue to any other a thyng, that by no waye nowe they haue hemselfe? It is seene in dignitie of the Emperour, and of many mo other, that they nowe not of hemselue keepe their worship, ne their reuerence, that in a little while it is now vp, and now down, by vnstedfast hearts of the people. What bounty nowe they yeue, that with cloude lightlye leaueth his shining? Certes, to the occupier is mokell apeired, sithen suche doynge doeth villanye to him that may it not maintaine, wherefore thilke way to the knot is crooked: and if any desire to come to the knot, he must leaue thys way on his left side, or els shall he neuer come there.

Hayleth aught (qd. she) power of myght, in mayntenaunce of worthye, to come to thys knot. Warde (qd. I) ye, for harts ben rauished from such manner thyngs. Certes (qd. she) though a fooles hearte is with thyng rauished, yet therefore is no generall cause of the powers, ne of a sikerer parter heart, to be looked after. Was not Nero the most shrew, one of thilke that men rede, and yet had he power to make Senatours, Iustices, and Princes of many landes? Was not that great power? Yes certes (qd. I.) Well (qd. she) yet might he not helpe himselfe out of disease, when he gan fall. Howe many ensamples canst thou remember of kings, great and noble, and huge power holden, and yet they might not keep hemselue from wretchednesse. How wretched was king Henry Curtmantill ere he died? he had not so much as to couer with his members: and yet was he one of the greatest kings of all ỳ Normands offspring, and most possession had. O, a noble thing and cleare is power, that is not founden mightie to keepe himselfe.

Now truly, a great foole is he, that for such thyng would set the knot in thine heart. Also power of realmes is not thilke greatest power, amongs the worldly powers reckened? And if such powers han wretchednesse in hemselfe, it followeth other powers of feebler condition to been wretched, and then that wretchednesse should ben cause of such a knot. But euery wight that hath reason, wote well that wretchednesse by no waye maye beene cause of none suche knotte, wherefore suche power is no cause. That powers haue wretchednesse in hemselfe, may right lightly been preued.

If power lacke on any side, on that side is no power, but no power is wretchednesse: for all be it so, the power of emperors or kings, or els of their realms (which is the power of the Prince) stretchen wide & broad, yet besides is there mokel folke, of which he hath no cõmandement ne lordship, and there as lacketh his power, his nonpower entreth, where vnder springeth ỳ maketh hem wretches. No power is wretchednesse, and nothing els: but in this manet hath kings more portion of wretchednesse, than of power. Truly such powers been vnmightie, for euer they ben in drede, how the

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like power from lesing may be keped of sorrow, so dede sorily prickes euer in their harts: Little is the power, whych careth and feardeth it selfe to maintaine. Unmightie is that wretchednesse, which is entered by the feardfull wening of the wretch himselfe: and knot ymaked by wretchednesse, is betweene wretches, and wretches all thynge bewaylen: wherefore the knotte should be bewayled, and there is no such parfite blisse that wee supposed at the ginning. Ergo power in nothyng, should cause such knottes. Wretchednesse is a kyndely propertie in such power, as by way of dede, which they mowe not eschew, ne by no way liue in likernesse. For thou wost well (qd. she) hee is nought mightye, that woulde done that hee maye not done ne perfourme. Therefore (qd. I) these kings and lords that han sufficiaunce at the full, of men and other things, mowen well ben holden mighty: their commaundements been done, it is neuermore denied. Foole (qd. she) or he wot himself mightie, or wote it not: For he is nought mightie, that is blind of his might, and wote it not. That is sooth (qd. I.) Then if he wote it, he must needs been adradde to lesen it. He that wote of his might, is in doubt that hee mote needes lese, and so leadeth him drede to been vnmightie. And if he retch not to lese, little is that worth, that of the lesing reason retcheth nothing: and if it were mightie in power or in strength, the leasing should ben withset, and when it commeth to the leasing, he may it not withsitte. Ergo thilke might is lewd & naughtie. Such mights arne like to posts and pillars that vpright stonden, and great might han to beare many charges, and if they croke on any side, little thyng maketh hem ouerthrow. This is a good ensample (qd. I) to pillers and postes that I haue seen ouerthrowed my selfe, and hadden they ben vnderput with any helpes, they had not so lightly fall. Then holdeth thou him mightie, that hath many men armed, and many seruaunts, and euer he is adradde of hem in his heart, and for he gasteth hem sometime, he mote the more feare haue. Commonly he that other agasteth, other in him ayenward werrhen the same: and thus warnished mote he be, and of warnish the houre drede: Little is that might, and right leaude, who so taketh heed. Then seemeth it (qd. I) that such famulers about kinges and great lords, shull great might haue. Although a sipher in augrim haue no might in signification of it selue, yet he yeueth power in signification to other, and these clepe I the helpes to a post, to keepe him from falling. Certes (qd. she) thilke skils been leaud. Why? but if the shores been well grounded, the helpes shullen sliden and suffer the charge to fall, her myght little auayleth. And so me thinketh (qd. I) that a poste alone stonding vpright vpon a balle, may lenger in great burthen endure, than croked pillers for all their helpes, and her ground be not liker. That is sooth (qd. she) for as the blinde in bearing of the lame ginne stomble, both should fall, right so such pillers so enuironned with helpes in fayling of the ground, fayleth all togider: howe oft then such famulers in their most pride of prosperitie ben suddainly ouerthrowne? Thou hast know many in a moment so ferre ouerthrow, that recouer might they neuer, when the heauinesse of such falling commeth by case of fortune, they mow it not eschew: and might and power, if there were any, should of strength such things voyd and weiue, and so it is not. Lo then whyche things is this power, that tho men han it they ben agast, and in no time of full hauing be they liker: and if they would weyue drede, as they mowe not, little is in worthinesse. Fie therefore on so noughtie thyng any knotte to cause. Lo in aduersitie, thilke been his foes that glosed and seemed friends in wealth, thus arne his familiers his foes and his enemyes: And nothyng is werse ne more mightie for to annoy, than is a familier enemie, & these things may they not weiue, so truely their might is not worth a cresse. And ouer all thing, he that may not withdrawe the bridle of his fleshlye lustes and his wretched complaintes (nowe thinke on thy selfe) truly he is not mighty: I can seene no way that lith to the knot. Thilke people then that setten their hearts vpon such mights and powers, often ben beguiled. Parde is not mighty, that may doe any thing, that another maye done him the selue, and that men haue as great power ouer hym, as hee ouer other. A iustice that deemeth men, ayenward hath ben often deemed. Busirus slewe his guests, and he was slayne of Hercules his guest. Hugest betrayshed many menne, and of Collo was he betrayed. He that with sword smiteth, with sword shall bee smitten. Then gan I to studien a while on these thyngs, and made a countenaunce with my hand in manner to been husht. Now let seene (qd. she) me thinketh somewhat there is within thy soule, that troubleth thy vnderstanding, say on what it is. (Qd. I tho) me thinketh that although a man by power haue such might ouer mee, as I haue ouer other, that disprooueth no might in my persone, but yet may I haue power and might neuer the later. See nowe (qd. she) thyne owne leaudnesse: He is mightie that may without wretchednesse, and hee is vn-

is vnmightie that may it not withstitte: but then he that might ouer thee, and he woll put on the wretchednesse, thou might it not withstitte. Ergo thou seest thy selfe what followeth. But now (qd. she) wouldest thou not scorn and thou see a flye han power to done harme to another flie, and thilke haue no might ne aventurning himselfe to defend. Yes certes (qd. I.) Who is a frayler thyng (qd. she) than the fleshly body of a man, ouer whych haue oftentime flyes, and yet lasse thyng than a flye mokell myght in greuaunce and annoying, withouten any withstitting, for all thilke mannes mights. And sithen thou seest thine fleshly body in kindely power fayle, howe should then the accident of a thyng been in more suretie of being thē substantiall: wherfore thilke things that we cleape power, is but accident to the fleshly bodye, and so they may not haue that suretie in might, whych wanteth in the substantiall body. Why there is no waye to the knot, that looketh aright after the high waye as he should.

VErely it is prooued, ỳ richesse, dignitie, and power, been not trew way to the knot, but as rath by such things the knot to be vnbound: Wherefore on these things I rede no wight trust, to get any good knot. But what should we say of renome in the peoples mouths should that beene any cause, what supposest thou in thine heart?

Certes (qd. I) yes I trow, for your flye reasons I dare not safely it say. Then (qd. she) woll I proue, that shrewes as rathe shull ben in the knot as the good, and that were ayenst kind. Fayne (qd. I) would I that heare, me thinketh wonder how renome should as well knit a shrewe as a good persone: renome in euery degree hath auaunced, yet will I neuer the contrarye: shoulde then renoume accorde with a shrewe? It may not sinke in my stomacke till I heare more. Now (qd. she) haue I nat said alwayes, that shrewes shull not haue the knot. What needeth (qd. I) to reherse that any more, I wote well euery wight by kindely reason, shrewes in knitting woll eschewe. Then (qd. she) the good ought thilke knot to haue. How els (qd. I.) It were great harme (qd. she) that the good were weiued and put out of espoire of the knot, if he it desired. O (qd. I) alas, on such thing to thinke, I wene that heauen weepeth to see such wrongs here beene suffered on yearth: the good ought it to haue, and no wight els. The goodnesse (qd. she) of a person may not been know outfoorth, but by renome of the knowers, wherefore he must bee renomed of goodnesse to come to the knot. So must it be (qd. I) or els all lost that we carpen. Soothly (qd. she) that were great harme, but if a good man might haue his desires in seruice of thilke knot, and a shrewe to be weined, and they been not knowen in generall but by lacking and praysing and in renome, and so by the consequence it followeth, a shrewe been praysed and knit, and a good to be forsake and vnknit. Ah (qd. I tho) haue ye lady ben here abouten, yet wold I see by grace of our arguments better declared, how good and bad do accorden by lacking and praysing, me thinketh it ayenst kind. Nay (qd. she) and that shalte thou see as peene: these elements han contrarious qualities in kinde, by whych they mow not accord no more than good and bad: and in qualities they accorde. So that contraries by qualitye accorden by qualitye. Is not yearth drie, and water that is next and between the earth, is wete, drie and wete ben contrarie, and mowen not accorde, and yet this discordaunce is bounde to accorde by clouds, for both elements ben cold. Right so the eyre that is next the water, is wete, and eke it is hote. This eyre by his heat contrarieth water that is cold, but thilke contrariously is oned by moysture, for both bee they moist. Also the fire that is next the yearth, and it encloseth all about, is drie, wherethrough it contrarieth eyre that is wete: and in hete they accord, for both they been hote. Thus by these accordaunces, discordaunts been toyned, and in a manner of accordaunce they accorden by connection, that is knitting togider: of that accord commeth a manner of melodie, that is right noble. Right so good and bad arne contrarye in doinges, by lacking and praysing: good is both lacked and praysed of some, and badde is both lacked and praysed of some: wherefore they contrariously accorde both by lacking and prayinge. Then followeth it, though good be neuer so mokell praysed, oweth more to ben knit than the bad: or els bad for the renome that he hath, must be taken as well as the good, and that oweth not. No forsooth (qd. I.) Well (qd. she) then is renome no way to the knot: lo foole (qd. she) how clerkes writen of such glorye of renoume. O glory, glory, thou art none other thynge to thousandes of folke, but a great sweller of cares. Many one hath had full great renome by false opinion of vaniaunt people: And what is fouler than folke wrongfully to beene praysed, or by mallice of the people guiltlesse lacked? Needes shame followeth thereof to hem that with wrong prayseth, and also to the deserts

praised, and villanie and reproofe of him that disclaundreth.

Good child (qd. she) what echeth such renome to the conscience of a wise man, that looketh and measureth his goodnes, not by sleuelesse words of the people, but by soothfastnesse of conscience: by God nothing. And if it bee faire a mannes name be eched by much folkes praysing, and fouler thing that mo folke not praysen. I said to thee a little here beforn, that no folke in straunge countreies nought praysen, suche renoume maye not commen to their eares, because of vnknowing, and other obstacles, as I sayed: Wherefore more folke not praysen, and that is right foule to him that renome desireth, to wete lesse folke praysen, than renome enhaunce. I trowe the thanke of a people is naught worth, in remembraunce to take, ne it proceedeth of no wise iudgement, neuer is it stedfast perdurable: It is veine and sleyng, with winde wasteth and encreaseth. Truly such glory ought to be hated. If gentillesse be a cleare thyng, renome and glorye to enhaunce, as in reckening of thy linage, than is gentillesse of thy kinne, for why it seemeth that gentillesse of thy kinne, is but praysing and renoume that come of thyne auncestres deserts, and if so be that praysing and renome of their deserts, make their cleare gentilnesse, then mote they needes beene gentill for their gentle deedes, and not thou: for of thy selfe commeth not such manner gentillesse, praysing of thy deserts. Then gentillesse of thyne auncesters, that forrain is to thee, maketh thee not gentle, but vngentle and reprooued, and if thou continuest not their gentillesse. And therfore a wise man ones said: Better is it thy kin to ben by thee gentled, than thou to gloriste of thy kinnes gentillesse, and hast no desert therof thy selfe.

How passing is the beauty of fleshly bodies? More flittyng than mouable flours of Summer. And if thine eyen weren as good as the Linx, that may seen thorow many stone wals, and both faire and foule in their entrailes, of no manner hewe should appeare to thy sight, that were a foule sight. Then is fairenesse by feeblesse of eyen, but of no kinde, wherefore thilke should be no way to the knotte: When thilke is went, the knot wendeth after. Lo now at all prooues, none of all these thyngs mowe parfitly ben in vnderstanding, to beene way to the duryng blisse of the knot. But now to conclusion of these matters, herkeneth these words. Very summer is know from the winter: in shorter course draweth the dayes of December, than in the moneth of June: The springs of May faden and followen in October. These thynges be not vnbounden from their old kind, they haue not lost her worke of their proper estate. Men of voluntarious will withsit that heuens gouerneth. Other things suffren thinges patiently to werche: Man in what estate he be, yet would he ben chaunged. Thus by queint thyngs blisse is desired, and the fruit that commeth of these springs, nis but anguis and bitter, although it be a whyle sweet, it may not be withhold, hastely they depart: Thus all day fayleth things that fooles wend. Right thus hast thou fayled in thy first wening. He that thinketh to sayle, and draw after the course of that starre, de Polo Antartico, shall he neuer come Northward to the contrary sterre of Polus Articus: of whyche thyngs if thou take keepe, thy first outwaye going, prison and exile may be cleaped. The ground falsed vnderneath, and so haste thou fayled. No wight I wene blameth hym that stinteth in misgoyng, and seecheth ready way of his blisse. Now me thinketh (qd. she) that it sufficeth in my shewing the wayes: by dignitie richesse, renome, and power, if thou looke clearely, arne no wayes to the knot.

Every argument lady (quod I tho) that ye han maked in these fore nempned matters, mee thinketh hem in my full witte conceiued, shall I no more, if God wil, in the contrary be beguyled: But fayne would I, and it were your will, blisse of the knot to me were declared, I might feele the better howe my hearte myght assent to pursue the end in seruice, as he hath begon. O (qd. she) there is a melody in heuen, whiche clerkes cleapen armony, but that is not in breaking of voyce, but it is a manner sweet thyng of kindly werching, that causeth ioy out of nomber to recken, and that is ioined by reason and by wisedome, in a quantitye of proportion of knitting. God made all thyng in reason and in witte of proportion of melodye, we mowe not suffice to shew. It is written by great clerkes and wise, that in earthlye thyngs lightly by studie and by trauayle, the knowing may be getten: but of such heauenly melodye, mokell trauayle woll bring out in knowing right little. Sweetnesse of this paradyce hath you rauished, it seemeth ye slepten, rested from all other diseases, so kindely is your heartes therein ygrounded. Blysse of two hearts in full loue knitte, may not aright been imagined: euer is their contemplation in ful of thoughty study to pleasaunce, matter in bryngyng comforte eueriche to other. And therefore of earthly thynges, mokell

kell matter lightly commeth in your learning. Knowledge of vnderstandyng that is nygh after yee, but not so nigh the couetise of knitting in your heartes: More soueraigne desire hath euery wight in little hearing of heauenly conning, than of mokell materiall purposes in yearth. Right so it is in propertie of my seruaunts, that they beene more affyched in stering of little thyng in his desire, than of mokell other matter, lasse in his conscience. This blisse is a manner of sowne delicious, in a queint voice touched, and no dinne of notes: there is none impression of breaking labour. I can it not otherwise nempne, for wantyng of priuie wordes, but paradise terrestre, full of delicious melodie, withouten trauayle in sowne perpetuell seruice, in full ioy coueited to endure. Onely kind maketh hearts in vnderstanding so to sleepe, that otherwise maye it not been nempned, ne in other manere names for likyng sweetnesse can I nat it declare, all sugar and honey, all minstralcie and melodye been but soote and gall in comparison, by no manner proportion to recken, in respect of this blissfull ioy. This armonie, this melodie, this perdurable ioy may nat bee in doing, but betweene heauens and elements, or twey kindly hearts, full knit in trouth of naturell vnderstanding, withouten wening and deceite, as heauens and planets, whych thinges continually for kindely accordaunces, foryeteth al contrarious meuings, that into passyue diseases may sowne, euermore it thristeth after more werking. These thyngs in proportion be so well ioyned, that it vndoeth all thyng, which into badnesse by any way may bee accompted. Certes (qd. I) this is a thyng precious and noble. Alas, that falsenesse euer or wantrust should euer be mainteined, this ioy to void. Alas that euer any wretch should thorow wrath or enuy, iangling dare make, to shoue this melody so farre abacke, that openly dare it not been vsed: truely wretches beene fulfilled with enuy and wrath, and no wyght els. Flebring and tales in such wretches dare appear openly in euery wights eare, with full mouth so charged, mokell mallice moued many innocents to shend, God would their soule therewith were strangeled. Lo, trouth in this blisse is hid, and ouer all vnder couer hym hideth: He dare nat come a place for waiting of shrewes. Commonly badnesse, goodnes amaistereth with my selfe & my soule this ioy would I buy, if the goodnesse were as much as the nobly in melody. O (qd. she) what goodnesse may be acōpted more in this materiall world, truly none, that shalt thou vnderstand. Is not euery thing good that is contrariaunt and destroying euill? How els (qd. I.) Enuy, wrath, and falsenesse been generall (qd. she) and that wote euery man being in his eight mynd, the knot the whych we haue in this blesse, is contrariaunt, and distroyeth such manner euils. Ergo it is good, what hath caused any wight to do any good dede? Find me any good, but if this knot be the cheefe cause: Needes mote it be good, that causeth so many good deedes. Euery cause is more, and worthier than thing caused, and in that mores possession, al things lesse been compted. As the king is more than his people, & hath in possession all his realme after: Right so the knot is more than al other goods, thou might recken all things lasse, and that to him longeth oweth into his mores causes of worship and of will do tourne, it is els rebell, and out of his mores defendyng to voyde. Right so of euery goodnesse into the knot and into the cause of his worship oweth to tourne. And truely, euery thyng that hath being, profitably is good, but nothyng hath to been more profitably than this knot: Kinges it maintayneth, and hem theyr powers to maintayne: It maketh misse to beene amended, with good gouernaunce in doing: It closeth harts so togider, that rancour is outthresten: Who that it lengest keepeth, lengest is gladded. I trow (qd. I) heretikes, and misse meaning people hence forward woll maintain this knotte, for therethrough shull they beene maintayned, and vtterly woll tourne, and leaue their old euill vnderstanding, and knit this goodnesse, and profer so fer in seruice that name of seruaunts might they haue. Theyr iangles shall cease, me thinketh hem lacketh matter now to alledge. Certes (qd. Loue) if they of good will thus tourned as thou sayest wollen truly performe, yet shull they bee abled party of this blisse to haue: and they wol not, yet shull my seruaunts the wer well susteyne in mine helpe of maintenaunce to the ende. And they for theyr good trauaile shullen in reward so been meded, that endlesse ioy, body and soule togider, in thys shullen abiden, there is euer action of blisse withouten possible corruption, there is action perpetuell in werke without trauayle, there is euerlasting passyfe withouten anye of labour: continuell plite without ceasing coueited to endure. No toung may tell, ne heart may thinke the least poynt of this blisse. God bring me thider (qd. I then.) Continueth well (qd. she) to the end, and thou myght not faile then, for though thou speede not here, yet shall the passion of thy martired life been written, and radde toforne the great Iupiter, that God is of routh, an high in the hollownesse of heauen, there he sit in his trone,

and euer thou ſhalt forward beene holden among all theſe heuins for a knight, that mightieſt with no penaunce been diſcomfited. He is a very martir, that liuingly going, is gnawne to the bones. Certes (qd. I) theſe beene good words of comfort, a little mine heart is reioyced in a merry wiſe. Ye (qd. ſhe) and hee that is in heauen feeleth more ioy, than when he firſt heard thereof ſpeake. So it is (qd. I) but wiſt I the ſooth, that after diſeaſe comfort would follow with bliſſe, ſo as ye haue often declared, I would well ſuffer this paſſion with the better cheare, but my thoughtfull ſorrow is endleſſe, to thinke how I am caſt out of a welfare, and yet daineth not this euill none heart none heed to me ward throw, which things would greatly nee by wayes of comfort diſport, to weten in my ſelfe a little with other me beene ymoned: and my ſorrowes peiſen not in her ballaunce the weight of a peaſe: Slinges of her daunger ſo heauily peiſen, they drawe my cauſes ſo high, that in her eyen they ſemen but lite and right little.

O, for (qd. ſhe) heauen with ſkies, that foule clouds maken, and darke wethers, with great tempeſts and huge, maketh the merry dayes with ſoft ſhining ſonnes. Alſo the yeare withdraweth flowres, and beautie of herbes and of yearth. The ſame yeares maketh ſpringes and iolitie in Vere ſo to renouell with painted colours, that earth ſeemed as gay as heauen. Seeſ that blaſteth, and with wawes throweth ſhippes, of which the liuing creatures for great perill of hem dreden: right ſo the ſame ſeeſ maketh ſmooth waters and golden ſayling, and comforteth hem, with noble hauen that firſt were ſo ferde. Haſt thou not (qd. ſhe) learned in thy youth, That Iupiter hath in his warderobe bothe garments of ioy and of ſorrow? What woſt thou how ſoone he woll turne of thee that garment of care, and clothe thee in bliſſe? Parde it is not ferre fro thee. Lo an olde prouerbe alleadged by many wiſe: When bale is greateſt, then is bote a nie boze. Whereof wilt thou diſmay? Hope well, and ſerue well, and that ſhall thee ſaue, with thy good bileue. Ye, ye (qd. I) yet ſee I not by reaſon how this bliſſe is comming, I wote it is contingent, it may fall another. O (qd. ſhe) I haue mokell to done to cleare thine vnderſtanding, and void theſe errours out of thy mind, I woll proue it by reaſon thy wo may not alway endure. Euery thing kindely (qd. ſhe) is gouerned and ruled by the heuenly bodies, which hauen full werching here on earth, and after courſe of theſe bodies, al courſe of your doings here been gouerned and ruled by kind. Thou woſt well by courſe of planets all your dayes proceeden, and to euerich of ſingular hours be enterchaunged ſtoundmele about, by ſubmitted worching naturally to ſuffer, of whyche chaunges cometh theſe tranſitorie times, that maketh reuoluing of your yeares thus ſtoundmele, euery hath full might of worching, till all ſeuen han had her courſe about. Of whyche worchings and poſſeſſion of houres, the daies of the weeke haue take her names, after denomination in theſe ſeuen planets. Lo your ſundaye ginneth at the firſt houre after noone on the ſaturday, in which houre is then the ſunne in ful might of worching, of whom ſunday taketh this name. Next him followeth Venus, and after Mercurius, and then the Moone, ſo then Saturnus, after whom Ious, and then Mars, and ayen then the Sunne, and ſo forth be xxiiii. houres togider, in which houre, ginning in the ii. day ſtant the Moone, as maiſter for that time to rule, of whom munday taketh his name, & this courſe followeth of all other daies generally in doing. This courſe of nature of theſe bodies changing, ſtinten at a certaine terme, limitted by their firſt kind, and of hem al gouernments in this elemented world proceden, as in ſprings, conſtellations, engendrures, and all that followen kind and reaſon, wherefore the courſe that followeth ſorrowe and ioye, kindely moten enterchaungen their times, ſo that alway one wele as alway one wo may not endure. Thus ſeeſt thou apertly thy ſorrow into wele mote ben changed, wherfore in ſuch caſe to better ſide euermore encline thou ſhouldeſt. Truly nere the end of ſorrowe anone entreth ioy, by manner of neceſſitie, it woll ne may none other betide, and ſo thy contingence is diſproued: if thou hold this opinió any more, thy wit is right lewd. Wherefore in full concluſion of al this, thilk Margarit thou deſireſt, hath been to thee dere in thy hart, and for her haſt thou ſuffered manye thoughtfull diſeaſes, hereafter ſhall bee cauſe of mokell mirth and ioy, and looke how glad canſt thou beene, and ceaſe all thy paſſed heauineſſe with manifolde ioyes: and then woll I as blithely here thee ſpeaken thy mirths in ioy, as I now haue yheard thy ſorowes and thy complaints. And if I mowe in aught thy ioy encreaſe, by my trouth on my ſide ſhall nat be leaued for no manner trauaile, that I with all my mights right blithely woll helpe, and euer been ready you both to pleaſe. And then thanked I that lady with all goodly manner that I worthely coud, and truly I was greatly reioiced in mine heart of her faire behеſts, and profered mee to be ſtawe in all that ſhe me would ordain while my life leſted.

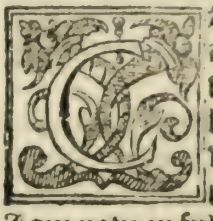
ME thinketh (qd. I) that ye haue right well declared, that way to the knotte should not beene in none of these displooupng things, and now order of our purpose this asketh, that yee should me shew if any way be thither, ¶ which thilke way should been, so that openly may be sey the very high way in full confusion of these other things.

Thou shalt (qd. she) vnderstand, that one of three liues (as I first said) euery creature of mankind is sprongen, and so forth proceedeth. These liues been thorow names departed in three manner of kinds, as bestiallich, manlich, and reasonablichе, of which two been vsed by fleshly body, and the third by his soule. Bestial among reasonables is forboden in euery lawe and euery sect, both in Christen and other, for euery wight displeseth hem that liueth by lusts and delites, as him that is thrall and bounden seruaunt to thynges vyght foule, such beene compted worse than men, he shall nat in their degree been reckened, ne for such one allowed. Heritickes saine they chosen like bestiall, that voluptuously liuen, so that (as I first said to thee) in manly and reasonable liuyngs, our matter was to declare but manye like in lyuing after flesh, or els fleshly wayes to these, may nat blisse in this knot be conquered, as by reason it is proued. Wherefore by reasonable life he must needs it haue. Sithe a way is to this knot, but nat by the first tway liues, wherefore needs mote it been to the third: and for to liue in flesh, but nat after flesh, is more reasonablich than manlych reken ed by clerkes. Therfore how this way commeth in, I woll it blithly declare.

See now (qd. she) that these bodily goods of manliche liuings, yeelden forrowfully stounds and smertande houres. Who so well remember him to their ends, in their worchings they ben thoughtfull and sorry. Right as a bee that hath had his honey, anone at his flight beginneth to sting: So thilke bodily goods at the last mote away, and then sting they at her going, wherethrough entreth and clean voideth all blisse of this knot.

Forsooth (qd. I) me thinketh I am well serued, in shewing of these words. Although I had little in respect among other great and worthy, yet had I a faire parcell, as me thoght for the time, in forthering of my sustenaunce, which while it dured, I thought me hauyng mokell honey to mine estate. I had richesse sufficiauntly to weiue neede. I had dignity to be reuerenced in worship. Power me thought that I had to keepe fro mine enemies, and me seemed to shine in glory of renome, as mãhood asketh in meane, for no wight in mine administration, coud none cuils ne trechery by soth cause on me put. Lady, your selue woten well, that of tho confederacies, maked by my soueraigns, I nas but a seruaunt, and yet mokell meane folke woll fullye ayenst reason thilke matters mainteine, in which maintenaunce glorien themselfe, and as often ye hauen saied, thereof ought nothing in euill to be laid to me wards sithen as repentant I am tourned, and no more I thinke, neither tho things ne none such other to sustene, but vtterly destroy without medling manner, in all my mights. How am I now cast out of all sweetnesse of blysse, and mischeeuously stongen my passed ioye? Sorrowfully must I bewayle, and liue as a wretch. Euery of tho ioyes is turned into his contrary: for richesse, now haue I pouertye, for dignitie now am I enprisoned, in steede of power, wretchednesse I suffer, and for glory of renome I am now displised, and foulich hated: thus hath farne fortune, that suddainly am I ouerthrowen, and out of all wealth dispoyled. Truly me thinketh this way in entree is right hard, God graunt me better grace ere it be all passed, the other way lady, me thought vyght sweet. Nowe certes (qd. Loue) me list for to chide. What aileth thy darke dulnesse? woll it not in clerenesse been sharped. Haue I not by manye reasons to thee shewed, suche bodily goods failen to peue blesse, their might so ferre forth woll not stretch? Shame (qd. she it is to say) thou lest in thy words. Thou ne hast wist but right few, that these bodily goods had all at ones, commonly they dwellen not togither. Hee that plentie hath in riches, of his kinne is ashamed: another of linage vyght noble and well knowe, but pouertie him handleth, he were leuer vnknowe. Another hath these, but renome of peoples praysing may hee not haue, ouer all hee is hated, and defamed of things right foule. Another is faire and semely, but dignitie him faileth: and he that hath dignitie, is crooked or lame, or els mishapen, and foully displised. Thus partable these goods dwellen, commonly in one household been they but silde. Lo how wretched is your trust, on thing that woll not accord. He thinketh thou clepest thilke plite thou were in, silinesse of fortune, and thou sayest for that that silinesse is departed, thou art a wretch. Then followeth this vpon thy wordes, euery soule reasonable of man may not dye, and if death endeth selinesse, and maketh wretches, as needes of fortune maketh it an end. Then soules after death of the body, in wretchednesse should lyuen. But wee knowe many that han getten

the blisse of heauen after their death. Howe then may this life maken men blisfull, that when it passeth, it peueth no wretchednes, and many tunes blisse, if in this life he con liue as he should. And wolt thou accompt with Fortune, that nowe at the first she hath doen thee tene and sorrow: if thou looke to the maner of all glad things and sorrowful, thou maist not nay it, that yet, and namely now, thou standest in noble plite in a good ginning, with good forth going hereafter. And if thou were to be a wretch, for such wealth is passed, why then art thou not well fortunate, for badde thinges and anguis wretchednes ben passed? Art thou now come first into the hostrie of this life, or els the both of this world, art thou now a suddaine guest into this wretched exile? Wenest there be any thyng in this yearthly stable? Is not thy first arrest passed, that brought thee in mortall sorrow? Ben these not mortal things agone, with ignorannce of beastiall wit, and haste receiued reason in knowing of vertue? What comfort is in thy hart? The knowyng sikerly in my seruice be grounded. And woste thou not well, as I sated, that death maketh end of all fortune? What then, standest thou in noble plite, litle heed or recking to take, if thou let fortune passe ding, or els that she flie when her list, now by thy liue. Parde a man hath nothing so like as his life, and for to hold that, he doth all his cure and dilligent trauaile. Then say I thou art blisfull and fortunate selfe, if thou know thy goods, that thou hast yet bee loued, whych nothing may doubt, that they ne ben more worthie than thy life? What is that (qd. I.) Good contemplation (qd. she) of well doing in vertue, in time comming, both in plesaunce of me, and of thy Margarite pearle: hastely thyne heart in full blisse, with her shall be eased. Therefore dismay thee not, fortune in hate grecuously ayenst thy bodily person, ne yet to great tempest hath shee not sent to thee, sithen the holding cables and ankers of thy life holden by knitting so fast, that thou discomfort thee nought of time that is now, ne dispaire thee not of time to come, but peuen thee comfort in hope of well doyng, and of getting againe the double of thy lesing, with encreasing loue of thy Margarite pearle thereto. For this hiderto thou hast had all her full danger, and so thou might amend al that is misse, and all defaultes that sometime thou diddest, and that now in all thy time, to that ilke Margarite in full seruice of my lore, thine hearte hath continued, wherefore she ought much ẏ rather encline fro her daungerous seat. These things ben yet knit, by the holding anker in thy liue, & holden mote they: To God I pray all these things at full been performed For while thys anker holdeth, I hope thou shalt safely escape, & while thy true meaning seruice about bring, in dispite of all false meaners, that thee of new haten, for this true seruice, thou arte nowe entered.



Certes (qd. I) among things I asked a question, whych was the way to the knot. Truely lady, how so it be, I tempt you with questions and answeres, in speaking of my first seruice, I am now in full purpose in the pricke of the hart, that thilk seruice was an enprisonment, and alway bad and naughty, in no manner to be desired. So that in getting of the knot may it nothing auaile. A wise gentill heart looketh after vertue, and none other bodily ioies alone. And because tofore this, in tho wates I was set, I wot well my selfe I haue erred, and of the blisse failed, and so out of my way hugely haue I ronne. Certes (qd she) that is sooth, and there thou hast miswent, eschew ẏ path from henceforward I rede. Wonder I truely, why the mortall folke of this world seeth these wayes outforth, and it is priued in your selfe. Lo how ye been confounded with errour and folly. The knowing of very cause and way, is goodnesse and vertue. Is there any thyng to thee more precious than thy self? Thou shalt haue in thy power, that thou wouldest neuer lese, and that in no way may be taken fro thee, and thilke thing is that is cause of this knot. And if deth mowe it not reue, more than an yearthly creature, thilke thing then abideth with thy selfe soul. And so our conclusion, to make such a knot thus getten, abideth with this thyng, and with the soule, as long as they last. A soule dieth neuer, vertue and goodnesse euermore with the soule endureth, and this knot is perfite blisse. Then this soule in this blisse, endlesse shall endure. Thus shull harts of a true knot been eased: thus shull their soules beene pleased: thus perpetually in ioy shul they sing. In good truth (qd I) here is a good beginning, yeue vs more of this way. (Qd. she) I sated to thee not long sithen, that reasonable life was one of three things, and it was prooued to the soule. Euery foole of reason, hath two things of steryng life, one in vertue, and another in the bodily worksyng: And when the soule is the maister ouer the bodie, then is a manne maister of himselfe: and a man to be a maister ouer himselfe, liueth in vertue, and in goodnesse, and as reason of vertue teacheth. So the soule and the bodye worching vertue together, liuen reasonable life, whiche clearkes

cleped

clepen felicitie in liuing, and therein is the hie way to this knot. These old Philosophers, that hadden no knowyng of Diuine grace of kindely reason alone, wenden that of pure nature, without any helpe of grace, me might haue ishoned the other liuinges, reasonably haue I liued: and for I thinke hereafter, if GOD woll (and I haue space) thilke grace after my leude knowyng declare: I leaue it as at this tyme. But (as I sayed) he that out foorth looketh after the wayes of this knot, conning with which he should know the way in foorth, sleepeth for the tyme, wherefore he that woll this way know, must leaue the looking after false waies out foorth, and open the yen of his conscience, and vnclose his hearte. Seest not he that hath trust in the bodily life, is so busie bodily woundes to annoint, in keepyng from smert (for all out may they not be healed) that of woundes in his true vnderstãdyng, he taketh no heede, the knowyng euen foorth sleepeth so hard, but anone as in knowing awake, then ginneth the priuie medicines, for healyng of his true entent, inwards lightly healeth conscience, if it be well handled. Then must needs these wayes come out of the soule by steryng ilke of the body, and els may no man come to perfite blisse of this knot: and thus by this meane he shall come to the knot, and to the perfite fulnesse that he wende haue had in bodily goodes outfoorth? Ye (qd. I) shall he haue both knot, riches, power, dignitie, and renome in this manner way? Yee (qd. she) that shall I shewe thee. Is hee not riche that hath sufficiance, and hath the power that no man may amaistrien? Is not greate dignitie to haue worshippe and reuerence? And hath he not glory of renome, whose name perpetuall is duryng, and out of nomber in comparacion? These be the things that men wenen to getten out foorth (qd. I.) Ye (qd. she) they that loken after a thing that naught is thereof in all ne in partie, longe mowe they gapen after: that is soth (qd. I:) therfore (qd. she) they that seechen gold in greene trees, and wene to gader precious stones emong vines, and laine her nettes in mountaynes to fishe, & thinken to hunt in deepe Seas after Harte and Hinde, and seechen in yearth thilke things that surmounteth Heauen. What may I of hem saie? But foolishe ignorance, misleadeth wandryng wretches by vncouth wayes, that shullen be forleten, and maketh hem blinde fro the right pathe of true waie, that should been vsed. Therefore in generall errour in mankinde, departeth thilke goodes by misse seching, which he should haue hole, and he sought by reason. Thus goeth he beguiled of that he sought, in his hode men haue blowe a tape. Now (qd. I) if a man be vertuous, and all in vertue liueth, how hath he all these things? That shall I prouen (qd. she.) What power hath any man, to let an other of liuing in vertue? For prisonment or any other disease, he take it patiently, discomfiteth he not, the tiraunt ouer his soule, no power may haue? then hath that man so tourmented soche power, that he nill be discomfite, ne ouercome may he not been, sithen patience in his soule ouercometh, and as not ouercommen. Soch thing that may not be a maistred, he hath neede to nothyng, for he hath sufficiaunce inow to helpe himselfe. And thilke thing that thus hath power and sufficiaunce, and no tiraunt may it reue, and hath dignitie to sette at naught all thynges, here it is a great dignitie that death may a maistrie. Wherefore thilke power sufficiaunce so enclosed with dignitie, by all reason renome must haue. This is thilk riches with sufficiaunce ye should looke after: this is thilke worshipfull dignitie yee should conceit: this is the ilke power of might, in which yee should trust: this is thilke renome of glory, that endlesse endureth, and all nis but substaunce in vertuous liuing. Certes (qd. I) all this is sothe, and so I see well that vertue with full gripe, encloseth all these thinges. Wherefore in sooth I may say, by my trouth vertue of my Margarite, brought me first into your seruise, to haue knitting with that iewell not sodaine longynges ne folkes small wordes, but onely our conuersacion togider: and then I seeyng thentent of her true meanyng, with flourishing vertue of Pacience, that she vsed nothing in euill, to quite the wicked leasings, that false tongues olt in her haue laied. I haue sey it my selfe, goodly forgeuenesse hath sponge out of her hart, vnitie and accorde aboue all other things, she desireth in a good meeke maner, & suffreth many wicked tales.

TRuely Lady, to you it were a gret worship, that soch things by due chastisement were amended. Ye (qd. she) I haue thee excused, al soch things as yet mowe not be redressed: thy Margarites vertue I commende well the more, that pacientlie soche annoies suffreth. Dauid king was meeke, and suffred mokell hate, and many euill speaches: no dispite ne shame that his enemies him deden, myght not moue pacience out of his hart, but euer in one plite mercie he vsed. Wherefore GOD himselfe toke reward to the things, and thereon soch punishment let fall. Truely by reason

it ought be enſample of drede, to all manner peoples mirthe. A man vengeable in wrath, no gouernance in punishment ought to haue. ☞ Plato had a cause his ſeruaunt to ſcourge, and yet cleped he is neyghbour, to perfourme the doyng himſelf would not, leaſt wrath had hym a maiſtred, and ſo might he haue layd on to moch: euermore grounded vertue ſheweth the entent fro within. And truely I wot well for her goodneſſe and vertue, thou haſte deſired my ſeruice, to her pleaſaunt well the more, and thy ſelfe thereto fully haſte profered. Good Lady (qd. I) is vertue the hie way to this knot, that long we haue handled? Be forſooth (qd. ſhe) and without vertue, goodly this knotte may not be gotten. Ah now I ſee (qd. I) how vertue in me fayleth, and I as a ſere tree, without burionyng or fruite alway welke, and ſo I ſtonde in diſpayre of this noble knotte, for vertue in me hath no manner worſkyng. A wide where about haue I trauepled. Peace (qd. ſhe) of thy firſt waie thy trauaile is in idell, and as touching the ſecond way, I ſee well thy meanyng. Thou wouldeſt conclude me if thou coudeſt, bycauſe I brought thee to ſeruice, and euery of my ſeruaunts I helpe to come to this bliſſe, as I ſaid here before: and thou ſaideſt thy ſelfe, thou mighteſt not be holpen as thou wenеſt bicauſe that vertue in the faileth. And this bliſſe perfitely without vertue, may not be gotten, thou weneſt of theſe wordes, contadiccion to followe. Parde at the hardeſt I haue no ſeruaunt, but he be vertuous in deed & thought, I brought thee in my ſeruice, yet art thou not my ſeruaunt: but I ſay, thou might ſo werch in vertue hereafter, that then ſhalt thou be my ſeruaunt, and as for my ſeruaunt accompted. ☞ For habite maketh no Monke, ne wearyng of guilt ſpurres, maketh no Knight. Neuer the latet, in comfort of thyne hart, yet woll I other wiſe anſwere. Leſtes Lady (qd. I tho) ſo yee muſte needes, or els I had nigh caught ſoche a cordiacle for ſorowe, I wot it well I ſhould it neuer haue recouered. And therefore now I praie to enforme me in this, or els I holde me without recouerie. I may not long endure till this leſſon be learned, and of this miſchief the remedie knowen. Now (qd. ſhe) ☞ be not wrothe, For there is no man on lyue, that may come to a precious thing, long coueyted, but he ſometime ſuffre tenefull diſeaſes, and weneſt thy ſelfe to been vnliche to all ☞ other? That may not been: And with the more ſorowe that a thyng is getten, the more he hath ioy, the like thing afterwards to kepe, as it fareth by children in Schole, that for learnyng ofte beaten, when their leſſon they forgetten, commonly after a good diſciplining with a perde, they keepe right well doctrine of their ſchole.

Right with theſe woordes, on this Lady I threwe vp mine eyen, to ſee her countenaunce & her cheare, and ſhe apperceyuing this fatalie in mine hart, gan her ſemblaunt goodly on me caſt, and ſaid in this wiſe.

It is well knowe, both to Reaſon and Experience in doyng, euery actiue wooreth on his paſſiue, and when they been togither, actiue and paſſiue, been ileaped by theſe Philoſophers, if fyre bee in place, chaſing thyng able to bee chaked or heate, and the like thinges beene ſette in ſoche a diſtaunce, that the one may werche, the other ſhall ſuffre. The like Margarite thou deſireſt, is full of vertue, and able to bee actiue in goodneſſe: But euery hearbe ſheweth his vertue, outfoorth from within, the Sunne yeueth light, that thinges may be ſey.

Euery fire heateth the like thynge that it neighed, & it be able to be heate, vertue of this Margarite outfoorthe, and nothyng is more able to ſuffer wooreching, or wooreke catche of the actife, but paſſife of the ſame actife, and no paſſike to vertues of this Margarite, but thee in all my donet caune I finde, ſo that her vertue muſte needes on thee werche, in what place euer thou bee, within diſtaunce of her woorthineſſe, as her very paſſike thou art cloſed: but vertue may thee nothyng profite, but thy deſire bee perfourmed, and all thy ſorowes ceaſed. Ergo through werchyng of her vertue, thou ſhalt eaſely been holpen, and dryuen out of all care, and welcome to this long by thee deſired.

Ladie (qd. I) this is a good leſſon, in ginnyng of my ioye: But wete ye well forſooth, though I ſuppoſe ſhee haue moche vertue, I woulde my ſpouſale were prooued, and then may I liue out of doubt, and reioyce me greatly, in thinkyng of tho vertues ſo ſhewed. I heard thee ſaye (qd. ſhee) at my beginning, when I receiued thee firſt for to ſerue, that thy iewell, thilke Margarite thou deſireſt, was cloſed in a muſkle, with a blewe ſhell. Be forſooth (qd. I) ſo I ſaid, & ſo it is. Wel (qd. ſhe) euery thing kindely, ſheweth it ſelfe, this iewell cloſed in a blewe ſhell, excellence of colours, ſheweth vertue from within, and ſo euery ☞ wight ſhould rather looke to the proper vertue of thyngs, than to his forayne goods. If a thyng bee engendered of good matter, commonly, and for the more parte it followeth,

after

after the congelement vertue of the first matter, and it be not corrupte with vices, to proceede with encrease of good vertues: Eke
☞ right so it fareth of badde. Truely great excellence in vertue of linage, for the more part discendeth by kinde to the succession in vertues to follow. Wherefore I say, the colours of euery Margarite, sheweth from within the fineuelle in vertue.

Kindely heauen, when merie weather is aloste, appeareth in mannes ye of colour in Blewe, stedfastnesse in peace, betokenyng within and without: Margarite is engendred by heauenly Dewe, and sheweth in it selfe, by fineuelle of colour, whether the engendzure, were maked on morrowe or on eue: thus sayeth kinde of this perle. This precious Margarite that thou seruest, sheweth it selfe discended by nobley of vertue, from his heauenliche dewe, nourished and congeled in meekenesse, that mother is of all vertues, and by werkes that men seene withouten the signification of the coloures, been shewed mercie and pitie in the harte, with peace to all other, and all this is iclosed in a Mulkle, who so readily these vertues loken. All thing that hath soule, is reduced into good by meane thynges, as thus: Into GOD manne is reduced by soules reasonable, and so foorthe beastes, or bodies that mowe not mouen, after place been reduced into man, by beastes meue that mouen from place to place: so that thilke bodies that han feelyng soules, and moue not from places, holden the lowest degree of solyng thynges in feelyng, and soche been reduced into man by meanes. So it followeth, the Mulkle as mother of all vertues, halte the place of meekenesse, to his lowest degree discendeth doune of heauen, and there by a manner of birgin engendzure, arne these Margarites engendzed, and afterward congeled. Made not meekenesse so lowe the hie heauen, to enclose and eathout thereof so noble a dewe, that after congelement a Margarite, with endlesse vertue and euerlasting ioy, was with full vessell of grace yeuen to euery creature, that goodly would it receyue. Certes (qd. I) these thinges been right noble, I haue ere this heard the same sawes. Then (qd. shee) thou woste well these thinges been sothe? Ye forsothe (qd. I) at the full. Now (qd. she) that this Margarite is ful of vertue, it is well proued, wherefore some grace, some mercie emong other vertues, I wotte right well on thee shal discend? Ye (qd. I) yet would I haue better declared vertues in this Margarite, kindely to been grounded. That shall I shew thee (qd. she) if thou wouldest it learne? Learne (qd. I) what needeth soche wordes: were ye not well Lady your selfe, that all my cure, all my diligence, and all my might, haue tourned by your counsayle, in pleasaunce of that perle, all my thought and all my studie, with your helpe desireth, in worshippe the like Iewell, to encrease all my trauayl, and all my businesse in your seruice, this Margarete to glad in somchalue: me were leuer her honour, her pleasaunce, and her good cheare, thorow me for to be maintayned and kept, and I of soche thyng in her likyng to be cause, than all the wealth of bodily goodes ye could reckon. And would neuer GOD, but I put my selfe in greate ieopardy of all that I would, that is now no more but my lyfe alone, rather then I should suffer thilke iewell in any poinct been blemished, as farre as I may suffre, and with my might stretch. Soch thing (qd. she) may moskell further thy grace, and thee in my seruice auaunce. But now (qd. Loue) wilt thou graunt me thilke Margarite to been good? O good good (qd. I) why tempt ye me and tene with soch maner speach: I would graūt that, though I should anone die, and by my trouth fight in the quarel, if any wight would counterplead. It is so moche the lighter (qd. Loue) to proue our entent. Ye (qd. I) but yet would I heare, how ye would proue, that she were good by reasonable skill, that it mowe not been denied, for although I know, and so doeth many other, manifolde goodnesse and vertue in this Margarite been printed, yet some men there been, that no goodnesse speaken: and where euer your wordes been heard, and your reasons been shewed, soch euill speakers Lady, by auctoritie of your excellence, shullen been stopped and ashamed. And more, they that han none acquaintaunce in her persone, yet mowe they knowe her vertues, and been the more enformed in what wyse they mowe set their harts, when hem list into your seruice any entree make, for truely all this to begin, I wote well my selfe, that thilke iewell is so precious a pearle as a womanly woman in her kinde, in whom of goodnesse, of vertue, and also of aunsweryng, shape of limmes, and fetures so well in all poinctes accordyng, nothyng fayleth: I leue that kinde her made with great studie, for kinde in her persone nothyng hath forget, and that is seene. In euery good wightes harte, thee hath grace of commending, and of vertuous praising. Alas that euer kind made her deadly, saue only in that I wot well, that Nature in forming of her, in nothing hath erred.

Certes

GEttes (qd. Loue) thou haste well begonne, and I aske thee this question: Is not in generall euery thyng good? I not (qd. I.) No (qd. she) saue not not GOD euery thyng that he made, and werne right good. Then is wonder (qd. I) how euill thynges commen a place, sithen that al things weren right good. Thus (qd. she) I woll declare: euerithe qualitie, and euery action, and euery thyng that hath any maner of beyng, it is of GOD, and God is made, of whom is all goodnesse, and al beyng, of hym is no badnesse: Badde to bee is naught: Good to be is somewhat, and therefore good and beyng, is one in vnderstanding. How may this be (qd. I) for often han shewes me assayed, and mokell badnesse therein haue I founden, and so me seemeth bad, to be somewhat in kinde. Thou shalt (qd. she) vnderstande that sothe maner of badnesse, which is vsed to purifie wrong doers is somewhat, and GOD it made, and beyng hath, and that is good: Other badnesse no beyng hath vtterly, it is in the negatiue of somewhat, and that is naught, and nothyng beyng. The parties essentiall of beyng, arne sayed in double wise, as that it is, and these parties been found in euery Creature, for all thyng a this halfe the first beyng, is beyng through participation, taking partie of beyng, so that euery creature is difference, betweene beyng, and of him through whom it is and his owne being: right as euery good is a manner of beyng, so is it good through beyng, for it is naught other to be: and euery thing though it be good, it is not of himselfe good, but it is good by that, it is ordinable to the great goodnesse. This dualitie after Clerkes determission, is founden in euery creature, be it neuer so single of onhed. Yee (qd. I) but there as it is saied, that GOD saw euery thing of his making, and were right good, as your selfe sayd to me, not long tyme sithen: I aske whether euery creature is saied good, through goodnesse vnformed, eyther els formed, and afterwarde if it bee accept viterly good? I shall say thee (qd. shee) these great passed Clerkes, han deuided good, in to good beyng alone, and that is nothing but good, for nothyng is good in that wise, but God: Also in good by participacion, and that is ycleaped good, for farre fette, and representatiue of goodly goodnesse, And after this manifold good is said, that is to say, good in kind, and good in gēdre, and good of grace, and good of hope.

Of good in kinde, Augustine saith, all that been, been good: but peraunter thou wouldest wete, whether of hemselfe it bee good, or els of an others goodnesse, for naturell goodnesse of euery substaunce, is nothing els than his substaunciall beyng, whiche is ycleaped goodnesse, after comparison that he hath to his first goodnesse, so as it is inductatiue, by meanes into the first goodnesse. Boece sheweth this thyng at the full, that this name good is in generall name in kinde, as it is comparisoned generally to his principall end, which is God, knotte of all goodnesse. Euery creature crieth GOD vs made, and so they han full appetite to thilke GOD by affection, soch as to him belongeth: and in this wise all thinges been good, of the great God, which is good alone. This wonder thing (qd. I) how yee haue by many reasons proued, my first way to be errour and misgoing, and cause of badnesse and feeble meaning, in the ground ye alledged to be rooted: whence is it, that soch badnesse hath springes, sithen all thinges thus in generall been good, and badnesse hath no being, as ye haue declared: I wene if all things been good, I might then with the first way, in that good haue ended, and so by goodnesse haue commen to blisse in your seruice desired. All thyng (qd. shee) is good by beyng in participacion, out of the first goodnesse, which goodnesse is corrupte by badnesse, and bad meaning maners: GOD hath in goods thyngs, that they been good by beyng, and not in euell, for there is absence of rightfull Loue, for badnesse is nothing onely but euill will of the vser, and through guiltes of the doer, wherfore at the ginning of the worlde, euery thing by himselfe was good, & in vniuersall they werne right good. An eye or a hand is fairer and better in a body, sette in his kindly place, than frō the body discouered. Euery thing in his kindly place beyng kindly, good doth werche, and out of that place voyded, it dissolueth and is defouled him selue. Our noble GOD in glitterande wise by armonie this worlde ordeined, as in purtreitures, storied with colours medled, in which blacke and other darke colours, commenden the golden, and the Assured painture, euery put in kindely place, one beside an other, more for other glitteretb: right so little faire, maketh right faire, more glorious: and right so of goodnesse, and of other thinges in vertue. Wherfore other bad, and not so good pearles as this Margarite, that wee han of this matter, yeuen by the aire little goodnesse, and little vertue, right mokell goodnesse, and vertue in thy Margarite to been proued, in shining wise to be found & shewed. How shold euer goodnesse of peace haue been know, but if vnpeace sometime reigne, and mokell euill

wroth?

wrothe: Howe should mercie been proued, and no trespasse were, by due iustification to be punished: Therefore grace and goodnesse of a wight is found, the sorrowful harts in good meanyng to endure, been comforted, vnite, and accorde betweene hartes knitte in ioy to abide.

What wenest thou that I reioice, or els accoumpte him emong my seruaunts, that pleaseth Pallas, in vndoyng of Mercurie, all be it that to Pallas he be knitte by title of Lawe, not accordyng to the reasonable conscience: and Mercurie in doyng, haue grace to been suffered: or els hym that weneth the Moone, for fayrenesse of the eue Sterre. Lo, otherwhile by nightes light of the Moone, greatly comforteth in darke thoughtes and blinde. Understanding of loue, peueth great gladnes: who so liste no bleue, when a soothe tale is shewed, adewe and adewe blis, his name is entred. Wise folke and worthy in gentillesse, bothe of vertue and of liuyng, peuen full credence in soothnesse of loue with a good harte, there as good euidence or experience in doing, sheweth not the cõtrary. Thus mightest thou haue full preise in thy Margarites goodnesse, by commendement of other iewels badnesse, and vnclenesse in doing. Stoundemele diseases peueth seuerall houres in ioy.

Now by my trouth (qd. I) this is wel declared, that my Margarite is good, for fithen other been good, and shee passeth many other in goodnes and vertue, wherethrough by maner necessary she must be good: and goodnesse of this Margarite is nothyng els but vertue, wherefore she is vertuous, and if there fayled any vertue in any side, there were lacke of vertue: bad nothyng els is ne may be, but lacke and want of good and goodnes, and so should she haue that same lacke, that is to sayne bad, and that may not be, for she is good, and that is good me thinketh all good: and so by consequence me seemeth vertuous, and no lacke of vertue to haue. But the Sunne is not know but he shine, ne vertues hearbes but they haue her kinde werchyng, ne vertue but it stretche in goodnes or profite to another, is no vertue: Then by al waies of reason, fithen mercy and and pitie ben moste commended among other vertues, and they might neuer been shewed refreshment of helpe and of comforte, but now at my most need, and that is the kind werking of these vertues: trewly I wene I shall not varie from these helpes.

Fyre, and if he peue none heat, for fire is not deemed. The Sunne but he shyne, for sunne is not accompted. Water but it wete, the name shal been chaũged. Vertue but it werch, of goodnes dothe it fayle, and in to his contrary the name shall be reuersed, and these been impossible: wherefore the contradictory that is necessarie, needes must I leue. Certes (qd. shee) in thy person and out of thy mouth these wordes lien well to been said, and in thine vnderstanding to be leued, as in entent of this Margarite alone: and here now my speech in conclusion of these wordes.

IN these thynges (qd. shee) that me list now to shewe openly, shall be founde the matter of thy sicknesse, and what shall been the medecine that may bee thy sorrowes liste and comforte, as well thee as all other that amisse haue erred, and out of the waye walked, so that any droppe of good will in amendement been dwelled in theyr hearts. Prouerbes of Salomon opẽly teacheth, how sometime an innocent walkid by the way in blindnesse of a darke night, whome mette a woman (if it be lefully to saie) as a strumpet arayed, redily purueied in turning of thoughts with veine ianglings, and of rest impacient dissimulacion of my termes, saiyng in this wise: come and be we dronken of our sweet pappes, vse we coueitous collinges. And thus drawen was this innocent, as an Oxe to the larder. Lady (qd. I) to me this is a queint thing to vnderstand: I pray you of this parable declare me the entent. This innocente (qd. she) is a scholer learning of my lore, in seching of my bliss, in which thing ỹ day of his thought turning enclineth in to eue, and the Sonne of very light fayling, maketh darke night in his conning. Thus in darkenesse of many douts he walketh, and for blindenes of vnderstandyng, he ne wote in what way he is: forsoth soch one may lightly been begiled. To whom came loue fained, not clothed of my liuery, but vnlefull lusty habite, with softe speech and merie, and with faire honied wordes heretikes and mis meanyng people, sklieren and wimplen their errours. Austen witnesseth of an heretike that in his first beginning, he was a mã right experte in reasons, and sweete in his words, and the werkes miscorden. Thus fareth fayned loue in her first werchinges: thou knowest these things for trewe, thou hast hem proued by experience. Sometyme in doyng to thyne owne person, in whiche thing thou haste founde matter of mokell disease. Was not fained loue redily purueyed, thy wittes to

catch

catch and tourne thy good thoughtes? trewly she hath wounded the conscience of many, with florishing of mokel iangling words: and good worthe thanked I it for no glose, I am glad of my Prudence thou hast so manly her veined. To me arte thou moche holden, that in thy kinde course of good meaning I returne thy minde: I trow ne had I shewed thee thy Margarite, thou haddest neuer returned. Of first in good parfite ioye was euer fayned loue impacient, as the water of Syloe, whiche euermore floweth with stilnesse & priuy noyse till it come nygh the brinke, and then ginneth it so out of measure to bolne, with nouelleries of chaungyng stornes, that in course of euery rennyng, it is in point to spill all his circuit of bankes. Thus fayned loue priuely at the fullest of his flowyng, newe stormes debate to arayse. And all be it that Mercurius often with hole vnderstandyng, knowen soche perillous matters, yet Veneriens so lustie been and so leude in theyr wits, that in soch things right litell or naught done they fele, and wryten and cryen to their fellowes: here is blisse, here is ioye, and thus in to one same errour, mokell folke they drawen. Come they sayne, and be wee dronken of our pappes, that been fallas and liyng glose of which now they not souke milke of health, but deadly venym and poyson, corruption of sorrowe. Mylke of fallas, is venym of disceite: Milke of liyng glose is venym of corrupcion. Lo what thing commeth out of these papes: vse we coueited collinges, desire we and meddle we false wordes with sote, and sote with false, truely this is the sorinesse of fayned loue, needes of these surfets, sicknesse must follow. Thus as an Ox to thy langoryng death wert thou drawn, ẏ sote of the smoke hath thee all defased. Euer the deeper thou sometime wadest, the sooner thou it founde: if it had thee killed it had be littell wonder. But on that other side, my trew seruants not faynen ne disceyue conne, soothly their doyng is open, my foundement endurech, be the burthen neuer so great, euer in one it lasteth: it yeueth lyfe and blissfull goodnesse in the laste endes, though the ginninges been sharpe. Thus of two contraries, contrary ben the effects. And so thilke Margarite thou seruest, shall seene thee by her seruice, out of perillous tribulacion delyuered, bycause of her seruice in to newe disease fallen, by hope of amendment in the last end, with ioy to be gladned, wherefore of kinde pure, her mercy with grace of good helpe, shall she graunt, and els I shall her so straine, that with pitie shall she ben amaistred. Remembre in thine harte how horrible sometime to thyne Margarite thou trespassest, and in a great wyse ayenst her thou forfeitest: cleape ayen thy minde, and knowe thyne owne guiltes. What goodnesse, what bountie, with mokell followyng pitie found thou in that time? Wert thou not goodly accepted in to grace? By my plucking was she to foryeuenesse enclined. And after I her stired to draw thee to house, & yet wendest thou vtterly for euer haue ben refused. But well thou woste, sithen that I in soche sharpe disease might so greatly auayle, what thinkest in thy witte? How ferre may my wit stretch? And thou lach not on thy side I woll make the knotte: Certes in thy good bering I woll accorde with the Psauter. I haue found Dauid in my seruice true, and with holy oyle of peace and of rest long by him desired, vtterly he shall be annointed. Trust well to me, and I woll thee not fayle. The lening of the firste way with good harte of continuaunce, that I see in the groūded, this purpose to parfourme, draweth my by maner of constrayning, that needes must I been thine helper: although mirthe a while be taried, it shall come at soch season, that thy thought shall been ioyed: and would neuer GOD, sithen thyne hart to my reasons arne assented, and openly haste confessed thine amisse going, and nowe criest after mercy, but if mercie followed: thy blisse shall been ready ywis, thou ne wost how sone.

Now be a good childe I rede. The kind of vertues in thy Margarite rehearsed, by strength of me in thy person shull werch. Comfort thee in this, for thou maist not miscarie. And these words said, she streight her on lēgth and rested a while.

¶ Thus endeth the second booke, and here after followeth the third booke.

Of nombre sain these clerks that it is naturell some of discrete thinges, as in telling one, two, three, and so foorth: but among all nombres three is determined for moste certaine. Wherfore in nombre certain this werke of my besie leudenes, I thinke to end and parfourme.

Ensample by this worlde in three times is deuided: Of which the first is cleped Demacian, that is to say, going out of true waie: and all that tho dieden, in hell were they punished for a mans sinne, till grace and mercy fet hem thence,

thence, and there ended the first time. The second time lasteth from the cõming of merciable grace, vntill the ende of transitory time, in which is shewed the true way in forsoing of the badde, and that is yeleped time of grace: & that thing is not yeuen by desert of yelding one benefite for another, but onely through goodnesse of the yeuer of grace in thilke tyme. Who so can well vnderstand, is shapen to be saued in soules blisse. The thirde time shall giue when transitory thinges of worldes han made their end, and that shall been in ioy, glorie, and red both body and soule, that well han deserued in the tyme of grace. And thus in that heauen togither shull they dwell perpetuelly, without any ymaginatike yuell in any halue. These times are figured by tho three dayes that our God was closed in yearth, and in the third arose, shewyng our resurrection to ioy & blisse, of tho that it deseruen, by his merciable grace. So this leude booke in three matters accordaunt to tho times, lightely by a good inseer may been vnderstande, as in the first errour of misse goyng is shewed with sorrowful pine, punished is cried after mercie. In the second is grace in good way proued, which is sayling without desert, thilke first misse amending in correction of tho errours and cuē way to bring with comforte of welfare, in to amendement wexing. And in the thirde ioye and blisse, graunted to him that well can deserue it, and hath sauour of vnderstandyng in the tyme of grace. Thus in ioye of my third booke shall the matter be till it ende. But speciall cause I haue in my heart to make this processe of a Margarit pearle, that is so precious a gemme, with cleere and littell of which stones or Jewell, the tongues of vs English people tourneth the right names, and clepeth hem Margarite pearles: thus varieth our speech from many other langages. For trewly Latine, French, and many mo other langages cleped hem Margery peerles, the name Margarite or Margrit peerles: wherefore in that denomination I woll me accord to other mens tõges, in that name cleping. These clerkes that treaten of kindes, and studien out the propertie thereof things, sayne the Margarit is a littell white pearle, throughout hollow and rounde, and vertuous, and on the sea sides in the more Britaine, in muskle shels, of the heauenly dewe the best been engendred: in which by experiēce ben found three fayre vertues. One is, it yeueth comforte to the feling spirites in bodily persones of reason. Another is good, it is profitable health ayenst passions of sorie mens hearts. And the third it is needfull and noble in staunching of blood, there els too much would out ren. To which perle and vertues me list to liken at this tyme Philosophie, with her three speces, that is, naturell, and morall, & reasonable: of which things heareth what saine these great Clerks. Philosophie is knowyng of deuinely and manly things ioyned with studie of good liuyng, and this stante in two thinges, that is, conning and opinion: conning, is when a thing by certaine reason is conceiued: but wretches, and fooles, and lewd men, many will conceyue a thyng and maintaine it as for a sothe, though reason be in the contrary, wherefore conning is a straunger. Opinion, is while a thyng is in non certayne, and hidde from mens very knowledging, and by no parfite reason fully declared, as thus: if the sonne be so mokell as men weenen, or els if it be more than the earth. For in soothnesse the certaine quantite of that Planet is vnknowen to erthly dwellers, and yet by opiniõ of some men, it is holden for more than midde erth. The first spece of Philosophie is naturel, which in kindely things treaten, and sheweth causes of heauen, & strength of kindely course: as by Arsmetrike, Geometry, Musike, and by Astronomy, teeheth waies and course of heauens, of Planetes, and of Sterres about Heauen and Earth, and other Elements. The second spece is morall, which in order of liuing maners teeheth, and by reason proueth vertues of soule moste worthy in our liuyng, which been Prudence, Justice, Temperaunce, and Strength. Prudence is goodly wisedome in knowyng of thynges: Strength voideth all aduersities alsche euen. Temperaunce distroyeth bestiall lyuing with easie bearyng. And Justice rightfully iudgeth, and iudging, departeth to euery wight that that is his owne. The third spece tourneth in to reason of vnderstanding, all thinges to be said sothe and discussed, and that in two things is deuided: one is Art, another is Rhetorique, in which two all lawes of mans reason been grounded or elles maintayned. And for this booke is all of Loue, and thereafter beareth his name, and Philosophie and lawe must hereto accorden by their clergial discripcions: as Philosophie for loue of wisedome is declared: Lawe for mayntaynaunce of peace is holde: and these with loue muste needes accorden, therefore of hem in this place haue I touched. Order of homely things and honest manner of lyuing in vertue, with rightful iudgement in causes, and profitable administracion in communalties of realmes and Cities, by euenhede profitably to rayne, nat by singuler auãtage, ne by priuy enuy, ne by folein purpose in couetise of worship or of goods, ben dis-

posed in open rule shewed, by Loue, Philosophie, and lawe, and yet loue toforne all other. Wherefore as fusterne in vnitie they accorden and one end that is peace and rest, they causen nourishyng, and in the ioy mainteynen to endure. Nowe then, as I haue declared, my boke accordeth with discripcio of thre things, and the Margarite in vertue is likened to Philosophie, with the three speces. In which matters euer twey been accordant with bodily reason, and the third with the soule: But in conclusion of my booke and of this Margarit pearle, in knittyng togider lawe by three sondry manners shalbe lykened, that is to saye, Law, Right, and Custome, which I woll declare: all that is law, commeth of Gods ordinaunce by kindely worchyng: & thilke things ordayned by mans wittes arne icleped right, which is ordayned by many maners and in constitution written: But custome is a thing that is accepted for right or for lawe, thereas lawe and right kaylen, and there is no difference, whether it come of Scripture or of reason. Wherefore it sheweth that lawe is kindly gouernaunce: right commeth out of mannes probable reason: and custome is of commen vsage by length of time vsed, and custome nat write is vsage, and if it be writte constitution it is twritten and yeleped: But lawe of kinde is commen to euery nation, as coniunction of man and woman in loue, succession of childre in heritaunce, restitucion of thing by strength taken or leant, and this lawe among all other halte the soueraynest gree in worshipp, which lawe beganne at the beginnyng of reasonable creature, it varied yet neuer for no chaunging of tyme: cause forsooth in ordainyng of Lawe, was to constrayne mens hardines in to peace, and withdrawing his yuil will, and turning malice in to goodnesse, and that innocence surely withouten tenchful anoy among shrewes, safely might inhabite by protection of safe conducte, so that shrewes harme for harme by drydle of feardenesse shoulden restrayne. But forsothe in kindely lawe nothing is commended, but sothe as Goddes will hath confirmed, ne nothing denied but contrarynesse of Goddes will in Heauen: eke then all lawes or custome, or els constitution by vsage, or writing, that contrarien lawe of kinde, vtterly been repugnant and aduersary to our gods will of Heauen. Trewly lawe of kinde for goddes owne lusty will is verily to maintaine, vnder which law (and vnworthy) both professe and reguler arn obediencer & bounden to this Margarit pearle, & by knots of loues statutes and stablishment in kind, which that goodly may not ben withsette. Lo vnder this bonde am I constrained to abide and man vnder luyng lawe ruled, by that lawe oweth after desertes to been rewarded by paine or by mede, but if mercy weiue the paine: so than be parte, reasonfully may be sey, that mercy both right and lawe passeth, thentent of all these matters, is the left cleere vnderstanding, to weten at the end of this third boke ful knowyng thorow Goddes grace, I thinke to make neuerthelater, yet if these things han a good and a sleght inseer which that can souke hony of the harde stone, oyle of the drie rocke, may lightly feele nobly of matter in my lewde imagination closed.

But for my booke shal be of ioy (as I said) and I so ferre sette fro thilke place, fro whens gladnesse should come, my corde is to short to let my bocket ought to catche of that water, and fewe menne bee abouten my corde to rech, & many in full purpose been ready it shorter to make, & to enclose thenter, ỹ my boket of ioy nothyng should catch, but empty returne, my carefull sorrowes to encrease, and if I die for payne, that were gladnesse at their heartes. Good Lord send me water in to ỹ cop of these Mountaines, and I shall drinke thereof my thrustes to stanch: and sey these be comfortable welles in to health of goodnes of my sauiour am I holpē. And yet I say more, the house of ioy to me is not opened. How dare my sorrowfull gooll then in any matter of gladnesse thynken to trete & for euer sobbings and complaintes be ready refrete in his meditacions, as werbles in many folde stoundes comming about I not than. And therefore what maner of ioy coude endite, but yet at dore shall I knocke, if the key of Dauid wouldē the locke vnshyt and he bring me in, whiche that childrens tonges both openeth & closeth. Whose spirite, where hee will worcheth, departing goodly as him liketh. Now to Gods laude & reuerence, profite of the readers, amendment of maners of the herers, encreasing of worshipp among loues seruaunts, releuing of my heart in to grace of my iewel, and frendship pleasance of this pearle, I am stered in this making, & for nothing els: and if any good thing to mēs likyng in this scripture be found, thanketh the maister of grace which that of that good & all other is authour, & principall doer. And if any thing be insufficiēt or els mislikyng, with that that the lewdnesse of mine vnable conning, for body in disease annoyeth the vnderstāding in soule. A diseasely habitation letteth the wits many thinges, and namely in sorow. The custome neuer the later of loue, be long tyme of seruice in termes I thinke to pursue, which beene linely to yeue vnderstandinge in other

things.

thinges. But nowe to enfourme thee of this Margarites goodnesse, I may her not halse prayse. Wherefore not she for my booke, but this booke for her is worthy to be commended, tho my booke be leude: right as thinges nat for places, but places for things ought to be desired and praysed.

NOw (qd. Loue) truely thy wordes I haue well vnderstond. Certes me thinketh hem right good, and me wondreth why thou so lightly passest in ỹ law. Sothly (qd. I) my wit is leude & I am right blind and that mater deepe, how should I then haue waded, lightly might I haue drenched & spilt there my selfe. Yea (qd. she) I shal helpe thee to sqimme. For right as law punisheth brekers of precepts, and the contrary doers of the writen constitutions: right so ayenward, law rewardeth and yeueth mede to hem that lawe strengthen. By one law this rebel is punished, & this innocent is mede, the shrew is empriſoned, and this rightful is corowned. The same law that toyneth by wedlocke without forsaking, the same law yeueth libel of departicion bycause of deuorse, both deemed and declared. Se ye (qd. I) I find in no law to mede & reward in goodnes, the gilte of deserts. Foole (qd. she) gilte conuerted in your law, mykel merite deserueth. Also Pauly of Rome was corowned, that by him ỹ mainteyners of Pompeus weren knowen and distroied: and yet tofore was this Paulin chefe of Pompeus counsaile. This law in Rome hath yet his name of mesuring in mede, the bewraying of the conspiracy ordained by tho senatours the death. Julius Cesar is accõpted into Catons right wisnesse, for euer in trouth florisheth his name among the knowers of reason. Perdicas was crowned in the heritage of Alexãder the great, for telling of a priuy hate that king Porrus to Alexander had. Wherefore euery wight by reason of law after his rightwisenes apertly his mede may chalenge: & so thou that maintainest lawe of kind, and therefore disease hast suffred in the law, reward is worthy to be rewarded and ordayned, and apertly thy mede might thou chalenge. Certes (qd. I) this haue I well lerned, & euer henforward I shal draw me thereafter in one hed of will to abide this lawe, both maintaine and kepe, and so hope I best entre in to your grace, well deseruing in o worship of a wight without needfull compulsion ought medefully to be rewarded. Truly (qd. Loue) that is soth, and tho by constitucion good seruice in to profite & auauntage stretch, vtterly many men it demen to haue more desert of mede, then good will nat compelled. Se now (qd. I) how may men holden of this the contrary. And what is good seruice? Ok you wold I here this question declared. I shall say thee (qd. she) in a fewe wordes, resonable workings in plesaunce & profite of thy soueraine. How should I this performe (qd. I.) Right wel (qd. she) & here me now a litteli. It is hardly (qd. she) to vnderstand, that right as mater by due ouerchaungings followeth his perfection and his forme: right so euery man by rightfull werkings ought to follow the lefull desires in his heart, & see tofore to what end he deserueth, for many times he that loketh not after thendes, but vtterly therof is vnknowen, befalleth oftẽ many euels to done, wherthrough er he be ware shamefully he is confoũded, the end thereof neden to be before looked to euery desire of such forsight, in good seruice thre thinges specially needeth to be rulers in his workes. First ỹ he do good, next that he do by electiõ in his owne hart, & the third, that he do goodly withoutẽ any surquedry in thoughts. That your werkes shulden be good in seruice, or in any other acts, authorites many may be alledged, neuer ỹ latter, by reason thus may it be shewed. Al your workes be cleped second & mouen in vertue of the first worcher, which in good workis wrought you to proceed, & right so your werkes mouen in to vertue of the laste end, and right in the first working were nat, no man should in the second worch. Right so but ye feled to what end, and sence their goodnesse closed, ye should no more retch what ye wrought but the gunning gan with good, and there shall it cease in the last ende, if it be well considred. Wherfore the mide, if other waies it draw then accordaunt, to thends, there stinteth the course of good, and another manner course entreth, & so it is a party by him selue, and euery part be not accordaunt to his all, is foule and ought to be eschewe, wherefore euery thing that is wrought and be nat good, is nat accordaunt to thendes of his all hole, it is foule, and ought to be withdraw. Thus the persons that neither done good ne harme, shamen soule their making: Wherefore without working of good acts in good seruice, may no man bene accepted. Trewly the like that han might to do good, & done it not, the crowne of worship shal be take from hem, & with shame shul they be anulled. And so to make one werke accordaunt with his endes, euery good seruaunt by reason of consequence must doe good needs. Certes it sufficeth not alone to do good but goodly withal folow, ỹ thanke of goodnes

els in nought he deserueth: For right as all your beyng, come from the greatest good, in whom all goodnesse is closed. Right so your ends been direct to the same good. Aristotell determineth that end and good been one, and conuertible vnderstanding, and he that in wil doth away good, & he that loketh not to thend loketh not to good, but he that doth good and doth not goodly, draweth away thy direction of the end, not goodly, must needs be bad. Lo bad is nothing els, but absence or negatiue of good, as darkenesse is absence or negatiue of light. Then hee that doth goodly directeth thilke good into thend of badde. So muste thing not good follow, eke badnes to such folk oft followeth. Thus contrariaunt workers of thend that is good, been worthy that contrary of thend that is good to haue. How (qd. I) may any good deed be done, but if goodly it helpe. Yes (qd. Loue) the Deuill doth many good deedes, but goodly he leueth behind, for euen badly & in desceiuable wise he worketh. Wherefore the contrary of thend him followeth. And do he neuer so many good dedes, bycause goodly is away, his goodnes is not rekened. Lo then tho a man do good, but he do good, but he do goodly thend in goodnesse wol not folow, and thus in good seruice both good deed and goodly done, musten ioyne togider, and that it be done with free choyse in heart: and els deserueth he nat the merite in goodes, that woll I proue. For if thou doe any thing good by chaunce or by hap, in what thing art thou thereof worthy to be cōmended? for nothing by reason of that, turneth in to thy praising ne lacking. Lo thilke thing done by hap by thy will is nat caused, and thereby should I thanke or lake deserue: and sithen that faileth, thend which that well should rewarde, must needs faile. Clerkes saine, no man but willing is blessed, a good deede that hee hath done is not done of free choyse willing, without which blissednes may nat follow. Ergo nether thanke of goodnesse ne seruice in that is contrary of the good end, so then to good seruice longeth good deed goodly done, thorowe free choise in heart. Truely (qd. I) this haue I well vnderstād. Wel (qd. she) euery thing thus done sufficient by lawe that is cleped Iustice, after reward claime. For lawe & Iustice was ordained in this wise soch deserts in goodnes after quantite in doing, by mede to reward, & of necessite of soch Iustice, that is to say, rightwisenes was free choise in deseruing of wel or of euill graūted to reasonable creatures. Euery man hath free arbitrement to chose good or iuell to performe. Now (qd. I) tho if I by my good will deserue this Margarit pearle, & am thereto cōpelled, & haue free choise to do what me liketh: She is thē holden as me thinketh to reward thentent of my good will. Goddes forbode els (qd. Loue) no wight meneth otherwise I trow, free will of good hert after mede deserueth. Hath euery man (qd. I) free choise by necessary maner of wil in euery of his doings, ẏ him liketh by Gods proper purueiaunce, I wold see that well declared to my leud vnderstanding for necessary & necessite ben words of mokel intenciō, closing (as to say) so mote it be needs, and otherwise may it nat betide. This shalt thou learne (qd. she) so thou take hede in my spech. If it were nat in mans own liberte of free will to do good or bad, but to the one teied by bonde of Gods preordinaūce: Then do he neuer so well it were by needful cōpulciō of thilke bonde & not by free choise, whereby nothing he desireth, and do he neuer so yuell it were not man for to wite, but onelich to him ẏ soch thing ordained hem to don. Wherefore he ne ought for bad be punishe, ne for no good deed be rewarded, but of necessite of rightwisnes was therefore free choice of arbitrement, put in mans proper disposicion: truely if it were otherwise, it contraried Gods charitie, that badnesse and goodnesse, rewardeth after desert of paine, or of mede. Me thinketh this wonder (qd. I) for God by necessitie forwote al things comming, and so mote it needs be: and thilke things that ben doen, be our free choice comen nothing of necessitie, but onely by wil: how may this stande togider? and so me thinketh truely, that free choice fully repugneth Gods forweting. Truely lady, me seemeth they mowe not stand together.

Then gan loue nigh me neere, & with a noble countenaunce of visage and limmes, dressed her nighe my sittyng place. Take forth (qd. she) thy penne, and redily write these words, for if God woll, I shal hem so enforme to thee, that thy leudenesse, which I haue vnderstand in that matter, shall opēly be clered, & thy sight in full loking therein amended. First, if thou thinke that Gods prescience, repugne liberty of arbetrie of arbitrement, it is impossible that they should accord in onehed of soth to vnderstāding. Ye (qd. I) forsoth so I it conceiue. Well (qd. she, if thilke impossible were away, the repugnaunce that seemeth to be therein, were vtterly remoued. Shew me thabsence of that impossibilitie qd. I.) So (qd. she) I shall. Now I suppose that they mowe stande togyther, prescience of God, whom followeth necessity of things comming, and liberty of arbitrement,

through

through which thou beleeuest many thyngs, to bee without necessitie. Both these proporcions be soothe (qd. I) and well mow stande togider, wherefore this case as possible I admit. Truely (qd. she) and this case is impossible. How so (qd. I.) For hereof (qd. she) followeth & wexeth an other impossible. Proue me that (qd. I.) That I shall (qd. she) for some thing is comming without necessity, and God wote that toforne, for all thyng commyng he before wote, and that he beforne wot of necessitie is commyng: as he beforne wot, be the case by necessary maner then, or els thorowe necessity, is something to be without necessity, and whiderto euery wight that hath good vnderstandyng, is seene these things to be repugnaunt. Prescience of GOD, which that followeth necessitie, and libertie of arbitrement, fro which is remoued necessitie, for truly it is necessary, that God haue forwetyng of thyng, withouten any necessity comming. Ye (qd. I) but yet remeue ye not away fro mine vnderstādyng, the necessity following Goddes before wetyng, as thus. GOD beforne wote me in seruice of Loue, to be bounden to this Margarite pearle, and therefore by necessitie, thus to loue am I bound, and if I not had loued, through necessity had I been kept from al loue deedes. Certes (qd. Loue) bycause this matter is good & necessary to declare, I thinke herein well to abide, and not lightly to passe. Thou shalt not (qd. she) say all onely God beforne wote, me to be a louer, or no louer, but thus: GOD beforne wote me to be a louer, without necessitie. And so it followeth, whither thou loue, or not loue, euery of hem is and shalbe. But now thou seest the impossibility of the case, & the impossibility of thilke that thou wendest had been impossible, wherfore the repugnaunce is adnulled. Ye (qd. I) and yet do ye not away the strength of necessity, when it is said, though necessity it is me in loue to abide, or not to loue without necessity, for God beforne wote it. This maner of necessity forsothe seemeth to some men into coaccion, that is to sayne, constrainyng, or els prohibicion that is defendyng, wherfore necessity is me to loue of wil. I vnderstand me to be constrained, by some priuy strength, to the will of louyng, & if no loue to be defended from the will of louing, and so through necessity me seemeth to loue, for I loue, or els not to loue, if I not loue, wherethrough neyther thanke ne maugre, in tho things may I deserue.

Now (qd. she) thou shalte well vnderstand that often wee sayne thyng, through necessitie, to be that by no strength, to be neyther is coacted, ne constrayned, and thorow necessity not to bee, that with no defendyng is remoued, for we sayne, it is thorowe necessitie, God to be immortall nought dedliche, and it is necessity, GOD to bee rightfull, but not that any strength of violent manner constrayneth hym to be immortall, or defendeth hym to be vnrightfull, for nothyng may make hym dedly or vnrightfull. Right so if I say, through necessitie is thee to be a louer or els none, onely thorow will, as GOD beforne wete: it is not to vnderstande, that any thyng defendeth or forbit thee thy will, which shal not be, or els constrayneth it to be, which shalbe: that same thyng forsooth God before wot, which he beforne seeth, any thyng commende of onely will, that will neyther is constrayned ne defended through any other thyng. And so through liberty of arbitrement it is doe, that is doen of will. And truely my good childe, if these thyngs be well vnderstand, I wene that none inconuenient shalt thou finde, betweene Goddes forwetyng, and liberty of arbitrement, wherefore, I wote well they may stand togider. Also farthermore, who that vnderstandyng of Prescience, properliche considereth, through the same wise, that any thyng be afore wist, is sayed for to be commyng, it is pronounced, there is nothyng toforne wist, but thyng commyng, fore wetyng is but of trouth, doubt may not be wist: wherefore, when I sey, that God toforne wot any thing, through necessity is thilke thyng to be commyng, al is one if I sey, if it shalbe, but this necessity neyther constrayneth, ne defendeth any thyng to be, or not to be. Therefore soothly if loue is put to be, it is sayed of necessity to be, or els for it is put not to be, it is affirmed not to be of necessity: not for that necessity constrayneth or defendeth, loue to be, or not to be. For when I saye, if loue shalbe of necessity it shalbe, here followeth necessity. The thyng toforne put, it is as much to say, as if it were thus pronounced: that thyng shall bee: none other thyng signifieth this necessitie, but onely thus, that shall be, may not togider be, and not be. Euenlyche also it is sooth, loue was, and is, and shall be, not of necessitie, and need is to haue be all that was, and needefull is to be all that is, and comming to all that shal be: and it is not the same to say, loue to be passed, and loue passed to be passed, or loue present to be present, and loue to be present, or els loue to be comming, and loue comming to bee comming: diuersitie in setting of words, maketh diuersitie in vnderstanding, altho in the same sentence they accorden of signification, right as it is not all one: loue sweet to be sweet, and loue to be sweet: for much loue is bitter, and

sorrowfull ere hearts been cased, and yet it gladdeth thilke sorrowfull hart on sothe loue to thinke. Forsooth (qd. I) other while I haue had mokell blisse in heart of loue, that stoundmele hath me sorily annoied: and certes lady for I see my self thus knit, with this Margarite pearle, as by bond of your seruice, and of no libertie of will, my heart will nowe not accord this seruice to loue: I can deemin in my selfe none otherwise, but through necessitie am I constrayned in this seruice to abide. But alas then, if I through needfull compulsion, maugre me be withhold, little thanke for all my great trauaile haue I then deserued. Now (qd. this lady) I say as I saied: Wee liketh this matter to declare at the full, and why: For many men haue had diuers fantasies and reasons, both on one side thereof, and in the other. Of which right soone I trowe, if thou wilt vnderstand, thou shalt conceue the sentence, to the partie more probable by reason, and in sooth knowing, by that I haue of this matter maked an end. Certes (qd. I) of these things long haue I had great lust to bee learned, for yet I wene, Gods will and his prescience accordeth with my seruice, in louyng of this precious Margarite pearle. After whom euer in my heart, with thursting desire wete I doe brenne, vnwasting I langour and fade, and the day of my destenie, in death or in ioy I vnbide, but yet in the end I am comforted bee my supposaile in blisse, and in ioy to determine after my desires. That thing (qd. Loue) hastely to thee neigh, God graunt of his grace and mercie, and this shall bee my prayer, till thou bee likened in hearte at thine owne will. But nowe to enforme thee in this matter (qd. this Ladie) thou wost where I left, that was loue to be sweet, and loue sweet to be sweet, is not all one for to say: For a tree is not alway by necessitie white, sometime ere it were white it might haue be not white: and after time it is white, it may be not white: but a white tree euermore needfull is to be white: for neyther tofore ne after it was white, might it be togider white and not white. Also loue by necessitie is not present, as now in thee, for er it were present, it might haue be, that it should nowe not haue be, and yet it may be, that it shall not be present: but thy loue present, which to her Margarite thee hath bound, needfull is to be present. Truly some doing of action, not by necessitie, is comming farre tofore ne it be, it may be that it shall not be comming: thing forsooth comming, needful is to be comming, for it may not be that commyng shall not be commyng. And right as I haue saied of present and of future times, the same sentence in soothnesse is of the preterit, that is to say, time passed, for thing passed, must needs be passed, and ere it were it might haue not be, wherefore it should not haue passed. Right so whē Loue comming is saied of loue that is to come, needfull is to be that is said, for thing comming neuer, is not comming, and so oft the same thyng, we sayne of the same, as when we saine euery man is a man, or euery louer is a louer, so must it bee needs, in no way may he be man, and no man togither. And if it be not by necessitie, that is to say, needfull all thing comming to be comming, then some thing comming is not comming, and that is impossible, right as these tearmes needfull, necessitie and necessarye, betoken and signifying needes to be, and it may not otherwise be. Right these tearmes impossible signifieth, that thing is not, & by no way may it be then throgh perte necessitie, al thing comming is comming, but that is by necessitie, followeth with nothing to be constrained. Lo when that comming is saied of thing, not alway thing through necessitie is, altho it bee comming. For if I say to morrowe, Loue is comming in this Margarites heart, not therfore through necessitie shall thilke loue be, yet it may be that it shal not be, altho it were comming. Neuer the later, sometime it is sooth, that some thing be of necessitie, that is saied to come: and if I say to morrow by comming the rising of the Sunne. If therefore with necessitie I pronounce comming of thing to come, in this maner loue to morne comming in thine Margarite, to thee ward by necessitie is commyng, or els the rising of the Sunne to morne comming through necessitie, is comming. Loue soothly, which may not be of necessity alone following, through necessity comming it is made certaine. For future of future is said, that is to saine, comming of commyng is said: as if to morrow comming, is through necessitie comming it is. Arising of the sunne through two necessities in comming, it is to vnderstand, that one is to forgoing necessitie, which maketh thing to be, therefore it shal be, for needfull is that it be. Another is following necessitie, which nothing constraineth to bee, and so by necessitie it is to come, why: for it is to come.

Now then, when we sayne, that God beforne wote thing comming needfull, is to be comming, yet therefore make wee not in certaine, euermore thing to be through necessitie comming. Soothly thyng commyng maye not be, not comming by no way, for it is the same sentence of vnderstanding: as if wee say thus, If God beforne wote any thyng, needfull is that to be comming. But yet therefore

followeth

followeth not that prescience of God, thyng thzough necessitie to be comming: foz altho God tofozne wote all things comming, yet not therfoze he befozn wote euery thing comming thozow necessitie. Some things hee befozne wote, comming of free will, out of reasonable creature. Certes (qd. I) these tearms need and necessitie, haue a queint manner of vnderstanding, they woulden dullen many mens wits. Therefoze (qd. she) I woll hem openly declare, and moze clearely than I haue tofozne, ere I depart hence. Here of this matter (qd. she) thou shalt vnderstand, that right as it is not needfull God to wilne that he will, no moze in many things is not needfull a man to wilne that he woll. And euer right as needfull is to bee, what that God woll, right so to be it is needfull, that man woll in tho thyngs whych that God hath put into mannes subiection of willing: as if a man woll loue, that he loue: and if he ne woll loue, that he loue not: and of such other things in mannes disposition. Foz why: now then, that God woll, may not be, when he woll the will of man thozow no necessitye to be constrained, oz els defended foz to wilne, and he woll the effect to follow the will, then is it needfull will of man to be free, and also to be that he woll. In this maner it is sooth, that thozow necessitie is mans werke in louyng, that he woll doe, altho he woll it not with necessity. (Qd. I then) how stant it in loue of thilk will, sithen men louen willing of free chotse in heart. Therefoze if it be thozow necessitie, I pray you Lady of an answere this question to assoile. I woll (qd. she) answere thee bliuely: right as men will not thozow necessitie, right so is not loue of will thozow necessitie, ne thorow necessitie wzought the like same will, foz if he would it not with good will, it should not haue been wzought, although that he doth it is needfull to be doen. But if a man do sinne, it is nothing els but to will, that he should not: right so sinne of will is not to be manner necessary doen, no moze than will is necessary. Neuer the later, this is sooth, if a man woll sinne, it is necessary him to sinne, but though thilke necessitie, nothing is constrained ne defended in the will, right so thilke thing that free will woll and may, and not may, not wilne, a needfull is that to wilne hee may not wilne, but thilke to wilne needefull is, foz impossible to him it is one thing, and the same to wilne, hee may not wilne, but thilke to wilne needful is: foz impossible to him it is one thing and the same to wilne, and not to wilne.

The werke fozsooth of will, to whom it is yeue, that it be that he hath in will, and that he woll not, voluntarie of spontanie it is, foz by spontanie will it is doe, that is to say, with good will, not constrayned: then by will not constrained, it is constrained to be, and that is it may not together be. If this necessitie maketh libertie of will, whych that afozne they weren, they might haue ben eschued and shunned: God then, which that knoweth al truth, and nothing but truth, all these thynges, as they arne spontanie, oz necessarie sight, and as he seeth, so they ben: and so with these things well considered, it is open at the full, that without all manner repugnaunce, GOD befozne wote all manner things ben doen by free will, whyche afozne they weren, might haue been neuer they should be, and yet beene they thozow a manner necessitie, from free will discendeth.

Hereby may (qd. she) lightly ben know, that not all thinges to be is of necessitie, though GOD haue hem in his prescience, foz some things to be, is of liberty of will: and to make thee to haue full knowing of Gods befozn weting, heare me (qd. she) what I shal say. Blithly lady (qd. I) me lust this matter entirely to vnderstand. Thou shalt (qd. she) vnderstand, that in heauen is Gods being, although he be ouer all by power, yet ther is abiding of diuine persone, in which heauen is euerlasting presence, withouten any mouable time there, foole haue I not saied tofozne this, as time hurteth, right so ayenward, time healeth and rewardeth: and a tree oft layied, is holde moze in deintye, when it fruit fozth bringeth.

I Marchaunt that foz ones lesing in the Sea, no moze to aduenture thinketh, he shall neuer with auenture come to richelle: so ofte must menne on the Oke smite, till the happye dent haue entred, which with the Okes owne sway maketh it to come all at ones. So ofte falleth the lethy water on the hard rocke, till it haue thzough pierced it. The euen draught of the Wyer drawer maketh the wyer to ben euen, and supple werching. and if he stinted in his draught, the wyer breaketh asunder. Euery Tree well springeth, when it is wel grounded, and not often remoued. What shall this fruit be (qd. I) now it ginneth ripe? Grace (qd. shee) in parfite ioy to endure, and therewith thou begonne. Grace (qd. I) mee thinketh, I should haue a reward foz my long trauayle? I shall tell thee (qd. she) tribution of thy good wils, to haue of thy Margarite pearle, it beareth not the name of mede, but onely of good grace, and that commeth not of thy desert, but of thy Margarites goodnesse and vertue alone. (Quod I) should all my long trauayle haue no reward, but thzough grace, and sometime your selues sayed, right wisenesse euen-

liche rewardeth to quite one benefite for another. That is sooth (qd. Loue) euer as I saied, as to hym that doeth good, whych to doen, he were neyther holden, ne yet constrained. That is sooth (qd. I.) Truely (qd. she) all that euer thou doest, thine Margarite pearle, of will, of loue, and of reason, thou owest to doen it, yet is it nothyng els but yeelding of thy debt, in quiting of thy grace, which she thee lent, when ye first mette. I wene (qd. I) right little grace to me she deliuered. Certes it was hard grace, it hath nigh mee astrangled. That it was good grace, I wote well thou wilt it graunt, ere thou depart hence. If any man yeue to another wight, to whom that he ought not, and whych that of himselfe nothyng may haue, a garment or a coat, though he weare the coat, or els thilke clothyng, it is not to put to hym that was naked, the cause of his clothing, but onely to him that was yeuer of the garment. Wherfore I say, thou that were naked of loue, and of thy selfe none haue mightest, it is not to put to thyne owne persone, sithen thy loue came through thy Margarite pearle, Ergo she was yeuer of the loue, although thou it vse, and there sent she thee grace, thy seruice to begin. She is worthy the thanke of this grace, for she was the yeuer.

All the thoughts, busie doings, and pleasaunce in thy might, and in thy wordes, that thou canst deuise, been but right little, in quiting of thy debt: had she not been, such thyng had not beene studied. So all these matters kindly drawn homeward to this Margarite pearle, for from thence were they borrowed, all is holly hers, to wit, the loue that thou hanest, and thus quitest thou thy debt, in that thou stedfastly seruest. And keep wel that loue, I thee rede, that of her thou hast borrowed, and vse it in her seruice, thy debt to quite, and then art thou able right soone to haue grace, wherefore after mede, in none halue mayest thou looke.

Thus thy ginning and ending is but grace alone, and in thy good deseruyng, thy debt thou acquitest: without grace is nothynge worth, whatsoeuer thou werch. Thanke thy Margarite of her great grace, that hitherto thee hath guided, and pray her of continuance forth in thy werkes hereafter, and that for no misbappe thy grace ouerthwartlye tourne. Grace, glory, and ioy, is comming through good folkes deserts, and by gettyng of grace, therein shullen end. And what is more glorye, or more ioy than wisedome, and loue in parfite charitie, whyche God hath graunted to all tho that well can deserue. And wyth that, this Ladye all at ones start into myne heart: here woll I onbide (qd. she) for euer, and neuer woll I gone hence, and I woll keep thee from medling, while me list here onbide: thyne entremeting maners into stedfastnesse shullen be chaunged.

Soberlyche tho threwe I vp myne eyen, and hugelye tho was I astonied of this suddain aduenture, and fayne would I haue learned howe vertues shoulden ben known, in whych thyngs I hope to God hereafter she shall mee enfoym, and namely sithen her resting place is nowe so nigh at my will: and anone all these thyngs that this lady saied, I remembred me by my selfe, and reuolued the liues of mine vnderstanding wits.

Tho found I fully all these matters persitely there written, how misse rule by fayned loue both realmes and citties hath gouerned a great throw. Howe lightly mee might the faults espye, how rules in loue should beene vsed, how sometime with fayned loue foule I was beguiled, how I should loue haue know, and how I shall in loue with my seruice proceede.

Also furthermore, I found of perdurable letters, wonderly there grauen, these matters, whych I shall nempne. Certes, none age, ne other thing in yearth, may the least sillable of this in no point deface, but clerely as the Sun in mine vnderstanding soule they shinen. This may neuer out of my mind, howe I may not my loue keepe, but through willyng in heart: wilne to loue may I not, but I louyng haue. Loue haue I none, but through grace of thys Margarite perle. It is no manner doubt, that will woll not loue, but for it is louyng, as will woll not rightfully, but for it is ryghtfull it selue. Also will is not louyng, for he woll loue, but he woll loue, for he is louyng: it is all one to will to be louyngs, and louyngs in possession to haue. Right so will woll not loue, for of loue hath he no partie, and yet I denye not louyng, will wilne more loue to haue, whych that he hath not, whē he would more than he hath, but I say he may no loue wilne, if hee no loue haue, through whych thilke loue he should wilne: but to haue this louyng will, may no manne of himselfe, but onely through grace tofore goyng: right so may no man it keepe, but by grace following. Consider now euery man aright, and let seene if that any wight of himselfe mowe this louyng well get, and bee thereof first nothyng haue: for if it should of himself spring, either it must be willing or not willyng. Willyng by himselfe may hee it not haue,

haue, ſithen him faileth the matter that ſhould it forth bring, the matter him fayleth: why? he may thereof haue no knowyng, till when grace put it in his heart. Thus willyng by himſelfe, may he it not haue, and not willyng may he it not haue. Parde euery conceit of euerye reaſonable creature, otherwiſe will not graunt: will in affirmatiſe with not willyng by no way mowe accord. And although this loning woll come in mine heart by freeneſſe of arbitrement, as in this booke fully is ſhewed, yet owe I not therfore as much allow my free will, as grace of that Margarite, to me leaned, for neyther might I without grace tofore goyng, and afterward following, thilke grace get ne keepe, and leſe ſhall I it neuer, but it free will it make, as in willing otherwiſe than grace hath me graunted. For right as when any perſone taketh, willyng to be ſober, and throweth that away, willing to be dronke, or els taketh will of drinkyng out of meaſure: whyche thyng anone, as it is doen, maketh through his own guilt by freewill, that leſeth his grace. In which thing therefore, vpon the nobley of grace I mote truſten, and my buſie cure ſet the ilke grace to keepe, that my free will otherwiſe than by reaſon it ſhould werch, cauſe not my grace to voyd: for thus muſt I both looke to free will and to grace. For right as naturell vſage in engendering of chyldren may not ben without father, ne alſo but wyth the mother, for neyther father ne mother in begetting may it lacke: right ſo grace and free will accorden, and without hem both maye not loning, will in no partie been getten. But yet is not free will, in gettyng of that thyng, ſo mokell thanke worthy as is grace, ne in the keeping thereof ſo much thank deſerueth, and yet in getting and keeping both doen they accord. Truly oftentime grace, free will helpeth in fordoing of contrary things, that to willing loue not accorden, and ſtrength will aduerſities to withſtt, wherfore all together to grace oweth to been accepted, that my willyng deſerueth: Free will to loning in this wiſe is accorded. I remember mee well, howe all this booke (who ſo heede taketh) conſidereth all things, to werchings of mankind euenly accordeth, as in tourning of this word loue into trouth, or els rightwiſeneſſe, whether ỹ it like. For what thing that falleth to mã, in helping of free arbitrement, thilke rightwiſeneſſe to take, or els to keep, through which a man ſhal be ſaued, of which thing all this booke mention hath maked, in euery point thereof, grace oweth to be thanked.

Wherefore I ſay, euery wight hauing this rightwiſeneſſe, ryghtfull is, and yet therefore I feele not in my conſcience, that to all rightful is behoten the bliſſe euerlaſting, but to hem that been rightfull, withouten any vnrightfulneſſe. Some man after ſome degree may rightfully been accompted, as chaſt man in liuing, and yet beene they langlers, and full of enuy preſſed: to hem ſhall this bliſſe neuer ben deliuered. For right as very bleſſe is without all manner need, right ſo to no man ſhall it bee yeuen, but to the rightfull, void from all manner vnrightfulneſſe found, ſo no manne to her bliſſe ſhall been followed, but he be rightfull, and with vnrightfulneſſe not bound, and in that degree fully be know. This rightfulneſſe in as much as in himſelfe is, of none euill it is cauſe, and of all manner goodneſſe truely it is mother. This helpeth the ſpirit to wyth hütte the leaud luſtes of fleſhly lyking: this ſtrengtheth and mainteineth the law of kind, and if that otherwhile me weneth harm of this precious thyng to follow, therthrough is nothing the cauſe, or somewhat els commeth it about, who ſo taketh heed. By ryghtfulneſſe forſooth werne many holye Saintes, good ſauour in ſweetneſſe to GOD almightie, but that to ſome folkes they weren ſauour of death, into deadly end, that come not of the ſaints rightwiſeneſſe, but of other wicked mens badneſſe hath proceeded. Truly the ilke will, whych that the Lady of Loue me learned, affection of will to nempne, which is in willing of profitable thyngs, euill is it not, but when to fleſhly luſts it conſenteth, ayenſt reaſon of ſoule: but that this thyng more clearely bee vnderſtand, it is for to know whence and how the ilke will is ſo vicious and ſo readye euill deeds to performe.

Grace at the ginning ordayned thilke will in goodneſſe, euer to haue endured, and neuer to badneſſe haue aſſented: menne ſhoulde not beleeue, that God thilke will maked to be vicious. Our firſt father, as Adam and Eue, for vicious appetites, and vicious will to ſuche appetites conſentyng, been not one thyng in kinde, other thyng is doen for the other. And how this will firſt into manne, firſt aſſented, I hold it profitable to ſhewe: but if the firſt condition of reaſonable creature woll be conſidered and apertly looked, lightlye the cauſe of ſuch will may been ſhewed. Intention of God was, that rightfully and bleſſed ſhould reaſonable nature ben maked, himſelfe for to keepe, but neyther bliſſfull ne rightfull myght it not be, wythouten will in them bothe. Wyll of ryghtfulneſſe, is the ilke ſame rightfulneſſe, as heretofore is ſhewed: but will of bliſſe is not the ilke bliſſe, for euery manne hath not thilke bliſſe, in whome the will thereof is abyding.

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In this blisse, after euery vnderstandyng, is suffisaunce of couenable commodities, without any manner neede, whether it be blisse of Angels, or els the like, that grace first in Paradice suffered Adam to haue. For although Angels blisse be more than Adams was in paradice, yet may it not be denied, that Adam in Paradice ne had suffisaunce of blisse: for right as great hearte is wythoute all manner of coldnesse, and yet may another hearte more heat haue, right so nothyng defended Adam in Paradice to been blissed, without all manner need.

Although Angels blisse be much more, forsooth it followeth not, lasse than another to haue therefore him needeth, but for to want a thyng, whych that behoueth to been had, that may need beene cleaped, and that was not in Adam, at the first ginning: God and the Margarite weten what I meane. For sooth where as is need, there is wretchednesse: God wythout cause to forne goyng, made not reasonable creature wretched, for him to vnderstand and loue, had he first maked. God made therefore man blissed, wythout all manner indigence, togither and at ones tooke reasonable creatures blisse, and of will of blissednesse, and will of rightfulnesse, which is rightfulnesse it selue, and libertie of arbitrement, that is free will, with whych thilke rightfulnesse may hee keepe and lese. So and in that wise ordayned thilke two, that will, whych that instrument is cleaped, as heretofore mention is maked, should vse thilke rightfulnesse, by teachyng of his soule to good manner of gouernaunce, in thought and in words, and that it should vse the blisse in obedient manner, withouten anye incommoditie. Blisse forsooth into mans profite, and rightwisenesse into his worship. God deliuered at ones: but rightfulnesse so was yeuen, that man might it lese, whych if he not lost had not, but continually haue it kept, hee should haue deserued the aduauncement into the fellowship of Angels, in whych thyng, if he that lost, neuer by himselfe forward should hee it mowe ayenward recouer: and as well the blisse that hee was in, as Aungels blysse, that to him wards was comming, should bee nome at ones, and he depriued of them both. And thus fill man vnto likenesse of vnreasonable beasts, and with hem to corruption and vnlusts appetites was he vnder thrown, but yet will of blisse dwelleth, that by indigence of good, whyche that he lost through great wretchednes, by right should he ben punished. And thus for he weiued rightfulnes, lost hath he his blisse: but fayle of his desire in his own commoditie may he not, and were commodities to his reasonable nature, whych he hath lost may he not haue. To false lustes, whych been bestiall appetites he is tourned: follye of vnconning hath him beguiled, in wening that thilke been the commodities that owen to ben desired. This affection of will by liberye of arbitrement, is enduced to wilne thus thyng that he should not, and so is will not maked euill, but vnrightfull, by absence of rightfulnes, whyche thyng by reason euer should hee haue. And freenesse of arbitrement may he not wiln, when hee it not haueth, for whyle hee it had, thilke helpe it not to keepe: so that wythoute grace may it not been recouered. Will of commoditie, in as much as vnrightfull it is maked, by willyng of euill lusts, willing of goodnesse may he not wilne, for will of instrument to affection of will, is thralled, sithen that other thyng may not it wilne, for will of instrument to affection desireth, and yet been both they will cleaped: for that instrument woll, through affection it wilneth, and affection desireth thilke thyng, whereto instrument hym leadeth. And so free will to vnlustye affection full seruaunt is maked for vnrightfulnes may he not releeue, and without rightfulnesse full freedome may it neuer haue. For kindly liberty of arbitrement without it, beine and idle is forsooth. Wherefore yet I say, as often haue I said the same, When instrument of will lost hath rightfulnesse, in no manner but by grace may hee ayen retourne rightfulnesse to wilne. For sithen nothynge but rightfulnesse alone should he wilne, what þ euer he wilneth without rightfulnesse, vnrightfully hee it wilneth. These then vnrightfull appetites and vnthrifty lusts which the flies desireth, in as mokell as they ben in kind, ben they not bad, but they ben vnrightfull and bad, for they ben in reasonable creature where as they being in no way should been suffred. In vnreasonable beastes neyther ben they euill, ne vnrightfull, for there is their kind beyng.

KNowne may it well ben now, of these thinges to forne declared, that man hath not alway thilke rightfulnesse, whych by dutie of right euermore hauen he should, and by no waye by himselfe may he it get ne keepe, and after he it hath, if he it lese, recouer shall he it neuer, without especiall grace: wherfore the cõmune sentence of the people in opinion, þ euery thyng after destinie is ruled, false and wicked is to beleue: For though predestination be as well of good as of bad sithen that it is said God hadnest made, which he neuer ne wrought, but for

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he suffereth hem to be maked, as that he hardeth when he nought misayeth, or ledde into temptation, when he not deliuereth, wherfore it is none inconuenient, if in that manner bee said, God tofore hane destemed both badde, and her bad werkes, when hem ne their euill deeds neither amendeth, ne thereto hem grace leueth. But specially the predestination of goodnesse, alone is said by these great clerkes, for in him God doth that they been, and that is goodnesse they werchen. But the negatife hereof in badnesse is holden, as the lady of loue hath me learned, who so aright in this booke looketh. And vtterly it is to weten, that predestination properly in GOD may not been demed, no more than befornewting. For in the chapitre of Gods befornewting, as loue me rehearsed, all these matters apertely may been founden. All thyngs to GOD ben now togither and in presence duryng. Truly presence and predestination in nothyng disacorden, wherefore as I was learned, how Gods before weting and free choice of will mowe stonden together, me thinketh the same reason me leadeth, that destinie and free will acorden, so that neither of hem both to other in nothyng contrarieth. And reasonablich may it not been demed, as often as any thing failleth free will werchyng, as if a man another man wrongfully annoyeth, wherefore he hym sleeth, that it bee constrayned to that end, as mokell folke cryeth and sayth: Lo, as it was destemed of God tofore knowe, so it is thorow necessitie fall, and otherwise myght it not betide. Truely neyther hee that the wrong wrought, ne he that hymselfe venged, none of thilke thyngs through necessitie wrought: for if that with free will there had it not willed, neyther had wrought that hee perfourmed: and so vtterly grace that free will in goodnes bringeth and keepeth, and fro badnes it tourneth, in all thynge most thanke deserueth.

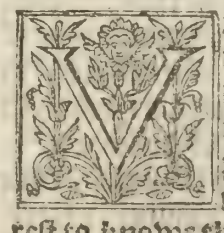
This grace maketh sentence in vertue to abide, wherfore in body and in soule of full plentye of conning, after their good deseruyng in the euerlastyng ioy, after the day of dome shull they endlesse dwell, and they shull ben learned, that in kingdome with so mokell affect of loue and of grace, that the least ioy shall of the greatest in glory reioyce and been gladded, as if he the same ioy had. What wonder sith GOD is the greatest loue, and thee ne ought to looke thyngs with reasonyng to prooue, and so is instrument of will, will: and yet varieth hee from effect and vsing both. Affection of will also for will is cleaped, but it varieth from instrument in this manner wise, by that name, liche when it commeth into mind, anone right it is in willyng desired, and the negatife thereof with willyng may not accord: this is closed in hart, though vsage and instrument slepe. This sleepeth, when instrument and vs waken: and of such manner affection truly, some man hath more, and some man lesse. Certes, trewe louers wenen euer thereof too little to haue. False louers in little wenen haue ryght mokell. Lo instrument of will in false and true both eueniche is proportioned, but affection is more in some place than in some, because of goodnesse that followeth, and that I thynke hereafter to declare. Vse of this instrument is will, but it taketh his name, when wilned thyng is in doing. But vtterly grace to catch in thy blisse, desired to been rewarded. Thou must haue then affection of will at the full, and vse when his time asketh, wisely to been gouerned. Soothly my disciple, without feruent affection of will may no man been saued: this affection of good seruice in good loue, may not been grounded, wythout feruent desire to the thyng in will coueited. But hee that neuer retcheth to haue, or not to haue, affection of will in that hath no resting place. Why? for when thyng commeth to mind, and it be not taken in heed to commin or not come, therfore in that place affection lapieth: and for thilke affection is so little, thorow which in goodnes he should come to his grace, the littlenesse will it not suffer to auaile by no way into his helps: Certes grace and reason thilke affection followeth. This affection with reason knit, dureth in euerych true heart, and euermore is encreasing, no feardnesse, no strength may it remoue, while truth in heart abideth. Soothly when falshede gynneth entre, truth drayeth away grace and ioy both, but then thilke falshed that truth hath thus voided hath vnknit the bond of vnderstanding reason, betweene will & the hart. And who so that bond vndoth, and vnknitteth will to be in other purpose thā to the first accord, knitteth him with contrary of reason, and that is vnreason. Lo then, will and vnreason bringeth a man from the blisse of grace, which thing of pure kind, euery man ought to shun and to eschew, and to the knot of will and reason confirme. Me thinketh (qd. she) by thy studient looks, thou wenest in these wordes mee to contrarien from other sayings heretofore in other place, as when thou were sometime in affection of will, to thynges that nowe han brought thee in disease, whyche I haue thee counsailed to void, and thine hart discouer, and there I made thy wil to ben chaunged, which now thou wenest I argue to withhold & to keepe. Shortly I say, that reuers in these wordes may not been found: for though drou-

dronkennes be forboden, men shull not alway ben drinkelesse. I trow right for thou thy will out of reason should not tourne, thy will in one reason should not vnbind, I say thy will in thy first purpose with vnreason was closed: Construe forth of the remnaunt what thee good liketh. Truely that will and reason should bee knit together, was free will of reason, after time thine hearte is assentaunt to them both, thou might not chaunge, but if thou from rule of reason varie, in whych variaunce to come to thilke blisse desired, contrariously thou werchest: and nothyng may know will and reason but loue alone. Then if thou void loue, then weuest the bond, that knitteth, and so needs or els right lightly, that other gonne a sondry, wherefore thou seest apertly, that loue holdeth this knot, and amaistreth hem to bee bound. These things, as a ring, in circuit of wreth ben knit in thy soule without departing. Ah let be, let be (qd. I) it needeth not of this no rehersaile to make, my soule is yet in parfite blysse, in thinking of that knot.

NOw truly lady I haue my ground well vnderstonde, but what thing is thilke spire that into a tree shuld wexe: Expoune mee that thyng, what yee thereof meane. That shall I (qd. she) blithly, and take good heed to the words I thee rede. Continuaunce in thy good seruice, by long processe of time in full hope abiding, without any change to wiln in thine heart: this is the spire, whych if it bee well kept and gouerned, shal so hugely spring, till the fruit of grace is plenteously out sprongen: For although thy will be good, yet may not therfore thilk blisse desired, hastely on thee discenden, it must abide his sesonable time. And so by processe of growing, with thy good traueile, it shall into more and more wex, till it be found so mighty, that winds of euill speech, ne scornes of enuye make nat the trauaile ouerthrow, ne frosts of mistrust, ne hailes of ielousie right little myght haue in harmyng of suche springs. Euery yong setling lightly with smal stormes is apeired, but when it is woxen somdele in greatnesse, then han great blastes and weathers but little might any disauantage to hem for to werch. Mine owne soueraigne lady (qd. I) and welth of mine hart, & it were liking vnto your noble grace, therethrough nat to be displeased, I suppose ye erren, now ye maken ielousie enuy, and distourbour to hem that ben your seruaunts. I haue learned oft toforn this time, that in euery louers hart great plentie of ielousies greeues ben sow, wherefore me thinketh ye ne ought in no manner accompt thilke thing among these other welked winers and venomous serpents, as enuy, mistrust, and euil speech. O foole (qd. she) mistrust with foly, with euill will medled, engendreth ẏ welked padde. Truly if they were destroyed, ielousie vndone were for euer, and yet some manner of ielousie I wot well is euer redy in all the hearts of my trew seruaunts, as thus: to bee iealous ouer himselfe, least he be cause of his owne disease. This iealousie in full thought euer should bee kept for ferdnesse to lese his loue by miskeping thorow his own doing in leudnes, or els thus: Least she that thou seruest so feruently, is beset there her better liketh, that of all thy good seruice she counteth nat a cresse. These iealousies in heart for acceptable qualities ben deemed: these oughten euery true louer by kindly euermore hauen in his mind, till fully ẏ grace and blisse of my seruice be on him discended at will. And he that then iealousie catcheth, or els by wening of his owne foolish wilfulnesse mistrusteth, truly with fantasie of venime he is foule beguiled. Euill wil hath grounded thilk matter of sorrow in his leaud soule, and yet nat for then to euery wight shuld me not trust, ne euery wight should me not trust, ne euery wight fully misbeleeue, the mean of these things owē to be vsed. Soothly, withouten causefull euidence, mistrust in iealousie should not be wened in no wise person commonly, such leudwickednes should me nat find. He that is wise, & with euill will nat be acomered, can abide well his time, till grace & blisse of his seruice followyng haue him so mokel eased, as his abiding tofore hand hath him diseased. Certes lady (qd I tho) of nothing me wondreth, sithen thilke blisse so precious is & kindly, good and well is, & worthy in kind, when it is medled with loue & reason, as ye toforn haue declared. Why, anon as hie one is sprōg, why springeth not the tother? and anone as the one commeth, why receiueth not ẏ other? For euery thing that is out of his kindly place, by full appetite, euer commeth thiderward kindly to draw, and his kindly being thereto him constraineth. And the kindly stede of this blisse, is in such will medled to vnbide, and needs in ẏ it should haue his kindely being. Wherfore me thinketh anon as that wil to be shewed, & kind him profereth, thilk blysse should him hie thilk will to receiue, or els kind of goodnes worchen not in hem as they shuld. Lo, be the sunne neuer so ferre, euer it hath hys kind werchyng in earth: great weight on hye on loft caried, stinteth neuer till it come to this restyng place. Waters to the seaward euer ben they drawyng: thyng ẏ is lyght, blithely wyll

not

not sinke, but euer ascendeth, & vpward drawe-eth. Thus kind in euery thyng his kindely course and his being place shweth: Wherfore bee kind on this good will, anone as it were sprong, this blisse should thereon discend, her kind would they dwellieden togider, & so haue ye said your selfe. Certes (qd. she) thine heart sitteth wonder sore this blisse for to haue, thine heart is sore agreeued that it tarrieth so long, and if thou durstest, as me thinketh by thyne words, this blisse wouldest thou blame. But yet I say, thilke blisse is kindly good, and his kindly place in that will to vnbide. Neuer the later, there comming togider after kinds ordinaunce nat sodainly may betide, it must abide time, as kind yeueth him leue, for if a man, as this will medled gonne him shew, and thilke blisse in hast folowed, so lightly cõming should lightly cause going. longe time of thrusting causeth drinke to be the more delicious when it is atasted. How is it (qd. I then) that so many blisses see I all day at mine eye, in the first moment of a sight with such will accord. Yea, and yet other while with will assenteth, singularly by himselfe there reason sayleth, trauaile was none, seruice had no time. This is a queint manner thing, how such doyng commeth about. O (qd. she) that is thus, the earth kindely after seasons and times of the yeare, bringeth forth innumerable hearbs and trees both profitable & other, but such as mẽ might leaue though they were nought in nourishyng to mans kind seruen, or els such as tournen soone vnto mens confusion, in case that thereof they atast, commen forth out of the earth by their owne kind, withouten any mans cure or any businesse in trauaile: and the like hearbes that to mens liuelode necessarily seruen without, whych goodly in this life creatures mowen not enduren, & most been nourished to mankind, without great trauaile, great tilth, and long abiding time, cõmen not out of the earth, and it with seed tofore ordained such herbes to make spring and forth grow. Right so the parfite blisse, that we haue in meaning of during time to abide, may nat come so lightly, but with great trauaile and right busie tilth, and yet good seed to be sow, for oft the croppe sayleth of bad seed, be it neuer so well trauayled. And thilke blisse thou spoke of so lightly in comming, truly is nat necessary ne abidyng: and but it the better bee stamped, and the venomous ieuse out wronged, it is likely to enpoysonen all tho that thereof tasten. Certes, right bitter been the hearbes that shewen first the yeare of her own kind. Well the more is the harueste, that yeeldest many graines, tho long and fore it hath beene trauayled. What woldest thou demen, if a man would yeue three quarters of nobles of gold, that were a precious gift? Be certes (qd. I.) And what (qd. she) three quarters full of pearles? Certes (qd. I) that were a rich gift. And what (qd. she) of as mokell azure? (qd. I) a precious gift at full. Were not (qd. she) a noble gift of all these at ones? In good faith (qd. I) for wanting of English, naming of so noble a word, I cannot for preciousnesse yeue it a name: Rightfully (qd. she) hast thou deemed, and yet loue knit in vertue, passeth al the gold in this earth. Good will accordant to reason, with no manner property may bee counterwayled, all the azure in the worlde is not to account in respect of reason, loue that with good will and reason accordeth, with none earthly riches may not ben amended. This yeft hast thou yeuen I knowe it my selfe, and thy Margarite thilke gift hath receiued, in whych thyng to reward she hath her selfe bound. But thy gift, as I said, by no maner riches may be amended, wherefore wyth thyng that may nat be amended, thou shalt of thy Margarites rightwisenesse be rewarded. Right suffred yet neuer, but euery good deede sometime to be polde. All would thy Margarite with no reward thee quite. Right that neuer more dieth, thy mede in merite woll purcey. Certes, such suddaine blisse as thou first nempnest, right will hem reward, as the well is worthy, and though at thine eye it seemeth the reward the desert to passe, right can after sende such bitternesse euenly it to reward: so the suddain blisse by alwaies of reson in great goodnesse may not bee accompted, but blysse long, both long it abideth. and endlesse it woll last. See why thy will is endlesse, for if thou louedest euer, thy will is euer there tabide, and neuer more to chaunge: euen head of reward must ben done by right: then must needes thy grace and this blisse endlesse in toy to vnbide. Euenlych disease asketh euenlych toy, whych hastily thou shalt haue. I (qd. I) it sufficeth not then alone good will, be it neuer so well wyth reason medled, but if it be in good seruice long trauayled. And so through seruice should men come to the toy, and this me thinketh should be the weping tree, of whych ye first meued.



Very trouth (qd. she) hast thou now conceiued of these things in thyne heart, hastily shalte thou be able verye toye and parfite blysse to receyue. And nowe I wote well thou desirest to knowe the manner of braunches, that out of the tree should spring. Thereof lady (qd. I) heartely I you pray: For then leue I woll,

that right soone after I shall atast of the frut
that I so long haue desired. Thou hast heard
(qd she) in what wise this tree tofore this haue
I declared, as in ground & in stocke of weying.
First the ground should be thy free will full in
thine heart, and the stocke (as I said) should be
continuaunce in good seruice, by long time in
trauaile, till it were in greatnesse ryght well
woxen. And when this tree such greatnes hath
caught, as I haue rehersed, the braunches then
that the frut should foorth bring, speech must
they be needs in voice of prayer, in complay-
ning wise vsed. Out alas (qd. I tho) he is so-
rowfully wounded, that hideth his speech, and
spareth his complaints to make, what shall
I spede that care: but paine euen like to hell,
sore hath me assailed, and so ferre forth in paine
me throng, that I leue my tree is ser, and neuer
shal it frut forth bring. Certes, he is greatly
cased, that dare his priuy mone discouer to
a true fellow, that conning hath and myght,
wherethrough his plaint in any thing may be
amended. And mokel more is he loued, that with
heart of hardines dare complaine to his ladie,
what cares that hee suffreth, by hope of mer-
cy with grace to be auaunced. Truly I say for
me, sith I came this Margarite to serue, durst
I neuer me discouer of no manner disease, and
well the later hath mine heart hardied suche
things to done, for the great bounties & wor-
thy refreshments that she of her grace goodly,
without any desert on my halue oft hath mee
reckened, and nere her goodnesse the more with
grace and with mercy medled, whych passen
all deserts, trauis, and seruings, that I in any
degree might endite, I would wene I should
be without recouer in getting of this blisse for
euer. Thus haue I stilled my disease, thus
haue I couered my care, that I brenn in sorow-
full annoy, as gledes and coales waasten a fire
vnder dead asben. Well the hoter is the fire,
that with asben is ouerleine: right long this
wo haue I suffred. Lo (qd. Loue) how thou fa-
rest: me thinketh the palsie euill hath acomer-
red thy wits, as fast as thou highest forward,
anon suddainly backward thou mouest. Shal
nat yet all thy leaudnesse out of thy braines &
Dull den thy skilfull vnderstandings, thy will
hath thy wit so amaistred. Wost thou not well
(qd. she) but euery tree in his seasonable time of
bourioning, shew his blomes fro within, in
sign of what frut should out of him spring, els
the frut for that yare men halt delivered, be
the ground neuer so good. And though ỹ stocke
be mighty at the full, and the braunches seere,
and no burions shew, Farewell the gardiner,
he may pipe with an puy leafe, his frut is fay-
led. Wherfore thy braunches must burionen in
presence of thy lady, if thou desire any frut of
thy ladies grace, but beware of thy life, ỹ thou
no wo delay vse, as in asking of thynges that
stretchen into shame, for then might thou not
speed by no way that I can espie. Vertue will
not suffer villanye out of hymselfe to springe.
Thy words may not be queint, ne of subtell
manner vnderstanding. Freel witted people
supposen in such poesies to be beguiled in open
vnderstanding must euery word be vsed. Voice
without clere vnderstanding of sentence, sayth
Aristotle, right nought prunteth in heart. Thy
words then to abide in hart and cleaue in full
sentence of true meaning, platly must thou shew,
and euer be obedient her hests and her wils to
performe, and be thou set in such a wit to wete
by a looke euermore what she meaneth. And
he that list nat to speake, but stilly his disease
suffer, what wonder is it tho he neuer come
to his blisse? Who that trauaileth vnwist, and
coueiteth thyng vnknowe, vnweting he shall
be quited, and with vnknow thing rewarded.
Good lady (qd. I then) it hath oft be seene, that
weathers and stormes so hugely haue fall in
burioning time, and by pert durelle han beaten
off the springs so cleane, wherethrough ỹ frut
of thilke yeare hath sayled. It is a great grace
when burions han good wethers, their fruits
foorth to bring. Alas then after such stormes
how hard is it to auoid, till efte wedring and
yeares han maked her circuit cours all about,
ere any frut be able to be tasted, he is shent for
shame, that foole is rebuked of his speech. He
that is in fire brenning, sore smarteth for dis-
ease, Him thinketh full long er the water come
that should the fire quench. While men gon af-
ter a leche, the body is buried. Lo how seemely
this frut weyeth, me thinketh ỹ of tho fruits
may no man atast, for pure bitternes in sauor.
In this wise both frut & tree waasten away
togider, though mokell busie occupation haue
be spent to bring it so ferre foorth that it was
able to spring. A litle speech hath maked, that
all this labour is in idle. I not (qd. she) wherof
it serueth thy question to assoyle, me thynketh
thee nowe duller in wits, than when I wyth
thee first met, although a man be leaud, com-
monly for a foole he is not demed, but if he no
good woll learn: sots and fooles let lightly out
of mynd the good that men teacheth hem. I
said therfore thy stocke must be strong, and in
greatnes well harted, the tree is full feble, that
at the first dent sayleth: and although frute
sayleth one yere or two, yet shall suche a season
come one tyme or other, that shall bring out
frut that is nothing preterit, ne passed there
is nothing future ne comming, but all thyngs
togider in that place been present euerlasting

without

without any meuing, wherefore to GOD all thyng is as now: and though a thyng be nat in kindly nature of things as yet, & if it should be hereafter, yet euermore we shull say God it maketh be time present, and now for no future ne preterit in him may be found. Wherefore his weting and his before weting, is all one in vnderstanding. Then if weting and before weting of God putteth in necessitie to all thyngs which he wote or before wote ne thyng after eternitie, or els after any time he woll or doth of libertie, but all of necessitie, which thyng if thou wene it be ayenst reason, nat thorow necessitie, to be or nat to be, all thing that GOD wote or before wote, to be or nat to be, and yet nothing defendeth any thyng to bee wist, or to be before wist of him in our wils or our doings to be done, or els comming to be for free arbitrement. When thou hast these declarations well vnderstand, then shalt thou find it reasonable at proue, and that many thinges be nat thorow necessitie, but thorow libertie of will, saue necessitie of free will, as I tofore said: and as me thinketh all vtterly declared. Me thinketh lady (qd. I) so I should you nat displease, and euermore your reuerence to keepe, that these thyngs contrarien in any vnderstādyng, for ye saine sometime is thorow liberty of wil, and also thorow necessitie: of this haue I yet no sauour, without better declaration. What wonder (qd. she) is there in these things, sithen all day thou shalt see at thine eye, in manye thyngs receiuen in hemselfe reuers, thorowe diuers reasons, as thus. I pray thee (qd. she) whych things ben more reuers than commen and gone: For if I bid thee come to me, & thou come, after when I bid thee goe, and thou goe, thou reuersest fro thy first comming. That is soth (qd. I:) And yet (qd. she) in thy first alone by diuers reason was ful reuersing to vnderstād. As how (qd. I.) That shall I shew thee (qd. she) by ensample of thyngs that haue kindely mouing. Is there any thing that meueth more kindly than doth the heuens eie, which I clepe the Sunne. Soothly (qd. I) me semeth it most kindly to moue. Thou saiest soth (qd she.) Then if thou looke to the Sunne, in what part hee be vnder heauen, euermore he heigheth him in mouing fro thilke place, and heigheth meuing toward the ilke same place, to thilk place from which he goth, he heigheth comming, & without any ceasing to that place he heigheth, from which hee is chaunged and withdraw. But now in these things, after diuersitie of reason, reuers in one thynge may bee sey without repugnaunce. Wherfore in the same wise, without anye repugnaunce by my reasons tofore maked, all is one to beleeue, somethyng to be thorow necessity comming, for it is comming, and yet with no necessitie constrayned to bee comming, but with necessitie that commeth out of free will, as I haue said. Tho list me a little to speake, and gan stint my penne of my writing, and said in this wise. Truly lady, as me thinketh, I can alleadge authorities great that contrarien your sayings. Job sayeth of mans person, Thou hast put his tearm, which thou might nat passe. Then say I that no mā may short ne length the day, ordayned of his doyng, altho somtime to vs it semeth some mā to doe a thyng of free will, wherethrough his death he henteth. Nay forsooth (qd. she) it is nothing ayenst my saying, for God is nat beguiled, ne he seeth nothing wheder it shal come of libertie or els of necessitie, yet it is said to be ordayned at God immouable, whych at man, or it be done, may be chaunged. Such thyng also is, that Poule the Apostle sayeth of hem that toforne werne purposed to be Saints, as thus, whych that God before wist, and hath predestined, conformes of images of his sonne that he should been the first begeten, that is to say, here amongs many brethren, and whome he hath predestined, him he hath cleaped, and whom he hath cleaped, hem he hath iustified, and whō he hath iustified, hem he hath magnified. This purpose, after which they beene cleped Saints, or holy in the euerlasting present, where is neither time passed, ne time cōmyng, but euer it is onely present, and now as mokell a moment, as seuen thousand Winter, and so ayenward, withouten any meuing, is nothing liche temporel presence, for thing that there is euer present. Yet emongs you men, ere it be in your presence, it is moouable through liberty of arbitrement. And right as in the euerlastyng present, no manner thyng was, ne shall be, but onely is, and now here in your tēporell time somethyng was, and is, and shall be, but mouing stounds, and in this is no maner repugnaunce. Right so in the euerlastyng presence, nothyng may be chaunged: and in your temporell time, otherwhile it is prooued mouable by liberty of will, or it be do, withouten any inconuenience thereof to followe. In your temporell time is no such presence, as in the other, for your present is done, when passed and to come ginnen entre, which times here amongs you, euerich easily followeth other, but ẏ present euerlasting dureth in one head, withouten any imaginable changing, & euer is present and now. Truly the course of the planets, and ouerwhelmings of the Sun in daies and nights, with a new ginnyng of his circuit after it is ended, that is to sayne, one yere to follow another. These maken your transitorye

times, with chaunging of liues, and mutation of people. But right as your tempozell presence coueiteth euery place, and all thynges in euery of your times be contained, and as now both sey and wist to Gods very knowing. The (qd. I) me wondzeth why Poule spake these wozdes, by voice of signification in time passed, that God his saints before wist, hath predestined, hath cleaped, hath iustified, and hath magnified: me thinketh he should haue sayed tho wozds in time present, and that had beene moze accozdaunt to the euerlastynge present, than to haue spoke in preterit voyce of passed vnderstandyng. O (qd. Loue) by these wozdes I see well thou hast little vnderstanding of the euerlasting presence, oz els of my before spoken wozds, foz neuer a thing of tho thou hast nẽpned, was tofoze other, oz after other, but all at ones euenliche, at the God ben, and all togider in the euerlasting present, be now to vnderstãding, the eternall presence, as I saied, hath inclose togider in one, all times, in whyche close and one all things, that been in diuers times, and in diuers places tempozell, without posteriozitie oz priozitie, been closed therein perpetuall nowe, and maked to dwell in present sight. But there thou saiest that Poule should haue spoke thilke forsaid sentence be time present, and that most should haue been accozdant to the euerlasting presence, why gabbest thou to thy wozds? Soothly I say Poule mooued the wozds, by signification of time passed, to shew fully that thilke wozds were not put foz tempozall signification, foz all thilk time were not thilke Saints tempozallich bozne, which that Poule pronounced, GOD haue tofoze know, and haue cleaped thẽ magnified, wherthzough it may well be know, that Poul vsed tho wozds of passed signification, foz need and lacke of a wozd in mans bodily speech, betokening the euerlasting presence. And therefoze wozd is most semelich in likenes to euerlasting presence, he tooke his sentence foz things that here befozne ben passed, vtterly be immouable, ilike to the euerlasting presence. As thilke that beene, there neuer mowe not been present, so things of time passed, ne mowe in no wise not been passed: but all thinges in you tempozall, presence that passen in a little while, shullen been not present. So then in that it is moze similitude to the euerlasting presence, signification of time passed, that of time tempozall present, and so moze in accozdaunce. In this maner what thing of these that ben been thzough free arbitrement, oz els as necessary, holy writ pronounceth, after eternitie hee speaketh, in which presence is euerlasting sooth, & nothyng but soth immouable, that after time, in whych naught alway been your wils and your acts, and right as while they be not, it is not needeful hem to be: so ofte it is not needful, that sometime they should be. As how (qd. I) foz yet must I be lerned by some ensample. Of loue (qd. she) woll I nowe ensample make, sithen I know the head knot in that pelte. Lo, sometime thou writest no art, ne art then in no will to write, and right as while thou writest not, oz els wolt not write, it is not needful thee to write, oz els wilne to write.

And foz to make thee know vtterly, that things been otherwise in the euerlasting presence, than in tempozal time: see now my good child, foz somethyng is in the euerlasting presence, than in tempozall time, it was not in eternitie time, in eterne presence shal it not be. Then no reason defendeth, that something ne may be in time tempozel mouing, that in etern is immouable. Fozsoth it is no moze contrary ne reuers foz to be mouable in time tempozell, and mouable in eternitie, than not to be in any time, and to be alway in eternitie, & haue to be, oz els to come in time tempozell, and not haue be, ne nought commyng to bee in eternitye. Yet neuer the latter, I say not some thyng to bee neuer in tyme tempozell, that euer is eternitye, but all onely in some time not to be. Foz I say not thy loue to mozne in no tyme to be, but to day alone I denye ne it to be, and yet neuer the later, it is alway in eternitie.

Also (qd. I) it semeth to me, that commyng thyng, oz els passed, here in your tempozall time to be, in eternitie euer nowe, and present oweth not to be demed, and yet followeth not thilke thyng, that was, oz els shall be, in no manner there to been passed, oz els comming: then vtterly shull we deny, foz there without ceasing, it is in his present manner. O (qd. she) mine owne disciple, now gimmest thou able to haue the name of my seruaunt. Thy wit is clered, away is now errour of cloud in vnconning, away is blindenesse of loue, away is thoughtfull study of medling manners, hastily shalt thou entre into the ioy of me, that am thine owne maistres.

Thou hast (qd. she) in a few wozds well and clerely concluded mokell of my matter. And right as there is no reuers, ne contrariousnesse in tho doings, right so withoutẽ any repugnance it is said some thing to be mouable in time tẽpozell, and foz it be, that in eternitie dwelleth immouable, not afoze it be, oz after that it is, but without ceasing, foz right naught is there after time, that same is there euerlasting, that tempozallich sometime nis, and tofozne it be, it may not be, as I haue said. Now soothly (qd.

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I this haue I well vnderstand, so that now me thinketh, that prescience of God, and free arbitrement, withouten any repugnaunce accorden, and that maketh the strength of eternitie, whiche encloseth by presence, during all times, and all things that been, han been, and shull been in any time.

I would now (qd. I) a little vnderstand, sithen that all thyng thus beforne wote, whether thilke weting bee of tho thynges, or els thilke thyngs to been of Gods weting, and so of God nothing is: & if euery thing be through Gods weting, and therof take his being, then should GOD be maker and authour of bad werkes, and so he should not rightfully punish euill doyngs of mankind. (Qd. Loue) I shall tell thee this lesson to learne, myne owne true seruaunt, the noble Philosophicall Poete, in English, whych euermore him busieth & trauaileth right fore, my name to encrease, wherfore all that willen me good, owe to doe hym worship and reuerence both, truely his better ne his pere, in schoole of my rules coud I neuer find: He (qd. she) in a treatise that he made of my seruant Troylus, hath this matter touched, and at the full this question assoiled. Certainely his noble sayings can I not amend: in goodnesse of gentle manliche speech, wythout any manner of nicetie of straungers imagination, in wit and in good reason of sentence, he passeth all other makers. In the booke of Troylus, the answere to thy question mayest thou learne, neuer the later, yet may lightly thyne vnderstanding somedele been learned, if thou haue knowyng of these tofore said thynges, with that thou haue vnderstandyng, of two the last chapiters of this second booke, that is to say, good to be some thing, and bad to want all manner being, for bad is nothyng els, but absence of good, and that God in good maketh that good deeds been good, in euill he maketh that they ben but naught, that they been bad: for to nothyng is badnesse to be. I haue (qd. I tho) ynough knowing therein, me needeth of other things to heare, that is to say, how I shal come to my blisse so long desired.

N this matter tofore declared (qd. Loue) I haue well shewed, that euery man hath free arbitrement of thynges in his power to do or vndo what him liketh. Out of this ground must come the Spire, that by processe of time shall in greatnesse spred to haue braunches & blossomes, of waxing fruit in grace, of whych the tast and the sauour is endlesse blisse in ioy euer to onbide.

Now Ladye (qd. I) that tree to sette, faine would I learne. So thou shalt (qd. she) ere thou departe hence. The first thyng, thou must set thy werke on ground liker and good, accordaunt to thy sprungs. For if thou desire grapes, thou goest not to the Hasell, ne for to fetchen Roses, thou seekest not on Okes: and if thou shalt haue Honey soukles, thou leauest the fruit of the soure Docke. Wherfore if thou desire this blysse in parfite ioye, thou must set thy purpose there vertue followeth, and not to looke after the bodily goods, as I saied when thou were writyng in thy second booke. And for thou hast set thy selfe in so noble a place, and vtterly lowed in thyne heart the misgoyng of thy first purpose, this settelesse is the easier to spryng, and the more lighter thy soule in grace to be lifted. And truely, thy desire, that is to say, thy will, algates mote ben stedfast in this matter, without any chaungyng, for if it be stedfast, no man may it voide. Yes parde (qd. I) my will may been tourned by friends, and disease of manace, and threatening in leesing of my life, and of my lunmes, and in manye other wise, that now commeth not to mynde. And also it mote oft been out of thought: For no remembraunce may hold one thyng continuelly in heart, bee it neuer so lustye desired. Now see (qd. she) thou thy will shall follow, thy free will to bee grounded, continuelly to abide: It is thy free will that thou louest and hast loued, and yet shalt louen this Margarite pearle, and in thy will thou thinkest to holde it. Then is thy will knitte in loue, not to chaunge for no newe luste beside: This wyll teacheth thyne hart from all manner varying. But then, although thou bee threatened in death, or els in other wise, yet is it in thyne arbitrement to chuse, thy loue to voyd, or els to hold: and thilke arbitrement is in a maner a iudgement, betweene desire and thy heart. And if thou deeme to loue, thy good will fayleth, then art thou worthy no blisse, that good will should deserue: and if thou chuse continuaunce in thy good seruice, then thy will abideth, needs blisse following of thy good wil, must come by strength of thilke instrumente: for thy first will, that taught thyne heart to abide, and halt it from the eschange, with thy reason is accorded. Truly this manner of will thus shall abide, impossible it were to tourne, if thy hearte bee true, and if euery man diligently the meanyngs of his will consider, he shall well vnderstande, that good will knitte with reason, but in a false hearte neuer is voided: for power and might of keepyng this good will, is through libertie of arbitrement in heart, but good will to keepe may nat fayle.

Eke then if it faile, it sheweth it selfe, that good will in keeping is not there. And thus falle will, that putteth out the good, anone constraineth the heart to accord in louing of thy good will, and this accordaunce betweene false will and thyne heart, in falsitie been likened togither. Yet a little woll I say thee in good wil, thy good wils to raise and strength. Take heed to me (qd. she) how thy willes thou shalt vnderstand. Right as ye han in your body diuers members, and fiue sundry wittes, euerich apart to his owne doyng, whych thynges as instruments ye vsen, as your handes apart to handle, feet to goe, tongue to speake, eye to see: right so the soule hath in hym certayne sterynges and strengths, whyche he vseth as instruments to his certaine doynges. Reason is in the soule, whych he vseth thynges to know and to proue, and will, whych he vseth to wilne: And yet is neyther will ne reason all the soule, but euerych of hem is a thyng by himselfe in the soule. And right as euerich hath thus singular instruments by hemselfe, they han as well diuers aptes, and diuers manner vsings, and thilke aptes mowen in will been cleaped affections. Affection is an instrument of willing in his appetites. Wherfore mokell folke saine, if a reasonable creatures soule any thyng feruently wilneth, affectuously hee wilneth, and thus may will by reame of equiuocas, in three wayes been vnderstand: one is instrument of willyng, another is affection of this instrument, and the thirde is vse, that setteth it a worke. Instrumente of willyng is the like strength of the soule, which thee constraineth to wilne, right as reason is instrument of reasons, which ye vsen when ye looken. Affection of this instrument, is a thyng, by which ye be drawe desirously any thyng to wilne in couetous manner, all be it for the time out of your mind: as if it come in your thought thilke thyng to remember, anon ye been willyng thilke to doen, or els to haue. And thus is instrument will, and affection is will also, to wilne thyng as I saied: as for to wilne health, when will nothyng thereon thinketh: for anone as it commeth to memorie, it is in will, and so is affection to wilne sleepe, when it is out of mynde, but anone as it is remembred, will wilneth sleepe, when his time commeth of the doyng. For affection of will neuer accordeth to sickenesse, ne alway to wake. Right so in a true louers affection of willing instrumēt, is to wiln truth in his seruice, and this affection alway abideth, although he be sleeping or threatned, or els not thereon thinkyng, but anone as it commeth to mind, anone he is stedfast in that will to abide. Vse of this instrument forsooth is another thyng by himselfe, and that haue ye not, but when ye be doing, in willed thyng by affect or instrument of will, purposed or desired, and this manner of vsage in my seruice, wisely needeth to be ruled, from waiters with enuye closed, from speakers full of iangeling wordes, from proud folke and hautaine that lambes and innocents both scornen and dispisen. Thus in doing varieth the acts of willing eueriche from other, yet ben they cleped will, and ỹ name of will vtterly owen they to haue, as instrument of will is will, when ye turn into purpose of any thing to doen, be it to sit or to stand, or any such thing els. This instrument may been had, although affect and vsage bee left out of doyng, right as yee haue sight and reason, and yet alway vse yee greatest wisedome, in hem shall be be, and they in GOD. Nowe then, when all false folke be ashamed, whych weenen all bestialtie and perthly thing be sweeter and better to the body, than heuenly is to the soul: this is the grace and the fruit that I long haue desired, it dooth me good the sauour to smell. Christ now to thee I crye of mercy and of grace, and graunt of thy goodnesse to euery maner reader, ful vnderstanding in this leud pamphlet to haue, and let no man wene other cause in this werke, than is verily the sooth: for enuy is euer readye all innocents to shend, wherefore I would that good speech enuy euermore hinder. But no man wene this werke be sufficiently maked, for Gods werke passeth mans, no mans wit to parfite werke may by no way purvay the end: howe should I then, so leaude, aught wene of perfection any end to get? Neuer the later, grace, glorye, and laude, I yeelde and put with worshipfull reuerence, to the soothfast God in three, with vnitye closed, which that the heauie langour of my sickenesse hath tourned into myrthe of health to recouer: for right as I was sorrowed, through the glotton cloude of manyfolde sickly sorrow, so mirth ayen commyng, health hath me gladded and greatly comforted. I beseech and pray therefore, and I crie on Gods great pittie, and on his mokell mercye, that this present scourges of my flesh mowe make medicine and leech craft of my inner mennes health, so that my passed trespas and tenes through weepyng of myne eyes beene washe, and I voided from all manner disease, and no more to weepe hereafter, I now bee kept thorow Gods grace: so that Gods hand, whych mercyablye mee hath scourged, hereafter in good plite from thence mercyably mee keepe and defend. In this booke bee many priuye things wimpled and fold, vnneth shull leaud

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men the plites vnwinde, wherefore I praie to the Holy ghoste, lene of hys oyntmentes, mens wittes to cleere: and for Gods loue no man wonder, why or how this question cum to my minde, for my greate lustie desire was of this ladie to been enformed, my lewdnesse to amende. Certes I knowe not other mens wittes, what I shoulde aske, or in aunswere what I should say, I am so leude my selfe, that moste moze learnyng yet mee behoueth. I haue made therfore as I could, but not sufficiently as I would, and as matter paue me sentence, for my dull witte is hindred, by stepmother of forgetting, and with cloude of vnconnyng that stoppeth the light of my Margarite pearle, wherefore it may not shine on me as it should. I desire not onely a good reader, but also I coueite and pray a good booke amender, in correction of wordes and of sentence: and onely this mede I coueit for my trauayle, that euery inseer and hearer of this leude fantasie, deuout horisons and prayers, to GOD the gread iudge yelden, and praien for me, in that wise that in his dome, my sins now been released and forgeuen: he that praieth for other, for himselfe trauayleth. Also I pray that euery man parfitely mow knowe, through what intencion of heart this treatise haue I drawe. How was it the sightful Manna in desert, to children of Israell was spirituell meate: bodily also it was, for mens bodies it nourished: And yet neuer the later, Christ it signified. Right so a iewell betokeneth a gemme: and that is a stone vertuous or els a pearle. Margarite a woman betokeneth grace, learnyng, or wisedome of God, or els holy Church. If bread through vertue is made holy flesh, what is that our God saith? It is the spirite that queeth life, the flesh of nothyng it profiteth. Flesh is fleshly vnderstanding: Flesh without grace and loue, naught is worth. The letter sleeth the spirite queeth lifelich vnderstanding. Charitie is loue, and loue is charity, God graunt vs all therein to be frended. And thus the Testament of Loue is ended.

¶ Here endeth the Testament of Loue.

The lamentation of *Mary Magdalene.*

This treatise is taken out of S. Origen, wherein Mary Magdalene lamenteth the cruell death of her Sauiour Christ.

PLonged in the wawe of mortall distresse,
Alas for wo, to whom shall I complaine,
Or who shall deuoide this great heauinesse,
Fro me woful Mary, woful Magdaleine,
My lord is gon, alas who wrought this trein
This sodain chaunce perseth my hart so depe,
That nothing can I do, but waile and wepe.

My lord is gone ỹ here in graue was laied,
After his great passion and death cruell,
Who hath him thus again betraied?
Or what man here about can me tell
Where he is become, the Prince of Israell,
Jesus of Nazareth, my ghostly succour,
My parfite loue and hope of all honour.

What creature hath him hence caried?
Or how might this so sodainly befall?
I would I had here with him taried,
And so should I haue had my purpose all,
I bought ointments full precious and royall,
Wherewith I hoped his corps to anointed,
But he thus gone, my mind is disponcted.

While I therefore aduertise and behold,
This pitous chaunce here in my presence,
Full little marualle though my hart be cold,
Considring lo, my Lordes absence
Alas that I so full of negligence
Should be found, bicause I come so late,
All men may say I am infortunate.

Cause of my sorow you may vnderstand,
(Quia tulerunt dominum meum)
An other is, that I ne may fonde,
I wote nere, Vbi posuerunt eum,
Thus I must bewayle, Dolorem meum,
With hartie weping, I can no better deserue,
Till death approch my hart for to kerue.

My hart oppresst with sodaine auenture,
By feruent anguish is be wrapped so,

That long this lyfe I may not endure,
Soch is my paine, soch is my mortall wo,
Neuertheleſſe to what party ſhall I go,
In hope to find myne owne Turtill true,
My liues ioy, my ſouerain Lorde Ieſu.

Sith all my ioy that I call his preſence,
Is thus remoued, now I am full of mone,
Alas the while I made no prouidence,
For this miſhap, wherefore I ſigh and grone,
Succour to find to what place might I gon,
Fain I would to ſome man my hart breake,
I not to whom I may complaine or ſpeake.

Alone here I ſtand, full ſory and full ſad,
Which hoped to haue ſeene my lord and king,
Small cauſe haue I to be merie or glad,
Remembryng this bitterfull departing,
In this world is no creature liuing,
That was to me ſo good and gracious,
His loue alſo than gold more precious.

Full ſore I ſigh, without comfort again,
There is no cure to my ſaluacion,
His brennyng loue my hart ſo doth conſtrain,
Alas here is a wofull permutacion,
Whereof I find no ioy nor conſolacion,
Therefore my payne all onely to confeſſe,
With death I feare woll end my heauineſſe.

This wo and anguiſh is intollerable,
If I bide here life can I not ſuſtaine,
If I go hence my paines be vncurable,
Where him to find, I know no place certaine,
And thus I not of theſe things twaine,
Which I may take & which I may refuſe,
My hart is woũded hereon to think or muſe.

A while I ſhall ſtand in this mournyng,
In hope if any viſion would appere,
That of my loue might tell ſome good tidyng,
Which into ioy might chaunge my weppyng
I truſt in his grace & his mercy dere, (chere,
But at the leaſt though I therewith me kill,
I ſhall not ſpare to waile and wepe my fill.

And if that I die in ſoch auenture,
I can no more but welcome as my chaunce,
My bones ſhall reſt here in this ſepulture,
My lyfe, my death, is at his ordinaunce,
It ſhalbe told in euerlaſtyng remembraunce,
Thus to departe is to me no ſhame,
And alſo thereof I am nothyng to blame.

Hope againſt me hath her courſe itake,
There is no more, but thus ſhall I die,
I ſee right well my Lorde hath me forſake,
But in my conceipt, cauſe know I none why,
Though he be farre hence and nothyng nie,
Yet my wofull hart after hym doth ſeeke,
And cauſeth teares to ren doun my cheeke.

Thinkyng alas I haue loſt his preſence,
Which in this world was all my ſuſtenance,
I cry and call with harty diligence,
But there is no wight giueth attendance,
Me to certifie of myne enquitance,
Wherefore I will to all this world bewray,
How that my Lord is ſlaine and borne away.

Though I mourne it is no great wonder,
Sithe he is all my ioy in ſpeciall,
And now I thinke we be ſo farre aſonder,
That him to ſee I feare neuer I ſhall,
It helpeth no more after him to call,
Ne after him to enquire in any coſte,
Alas how is he thus gone and loſte?

The Iewes I thinke full of miſery,
Set in malice, by their buſie cure,
With force and might with gilefull trechery,
Hath entermined my Lordes ſepulture,
And borne away that precious figure,
Leauing of it nothing, if they haue doen ſo,
Marred I am alas what ſhall I do.

With their vengeaunce inſaciable,
Now haue they him entreated ſo,
That to reporte it is to lamentable,
They beate his body from toppe to the toe,
Neuer man was borne that felt ſoch woe,
They wounded him alas with all greuaunce,
The blood doun reiled in moſt habundaunce.

The bloody rowes ſtremed doune ouer all,
They him aſſayled ſo maliciouſly,
With their ſcourges and ſtrokes beaſtiall,
They ſpared not but ſmote inceſſantlie,
To ſatiſfie their malice they were full buſie,
They ſpit in his face they ſmote here & there,
He groned full ſore, and ſweate many a tere.

They crouned him with thornes ſharp & kene
The vaines rent, the blood ran doun a pace,
With blood ouercome with both his yen,
And bolne with ſtrokes was his bleſſed face,
They him entreated as men without grace,
They kneeled to him, & made many a ſcorne,
Like helhounds they haue him all to torne.

Upon a mighty croſſe in length and brede,
Theſe turmentours ſhewed their curſednеſſe,
They nailed him without pitie or drede,
His precious blood braſt out in largeneſſe,
They ſtrained him along as men mercileſſe,
The very ioints all, to mine apparence,

Riued

Riued a sonder for their great violence.

Al this I beholding with mine iyen twain,
Stode there beside with rufull attendaunce,
And euer me thought he being in that pain,
Loked on me with deadly countenaunce,
As he had said in his speciall remembraunce,
Farwel Magdalen depart must I needs hēs,
My hart is Tanquam cera liquescens.

Which rufull sight when I gan behold,
Out of my witte I almost destraught,
Tare my heere, my hands wrang and fold,
And of ẏ sight my hart drāke soch a draught,
That many a swouning there I caught,
I brused my body falling on the ground,
Whereof I fele many a greuous wound.

Then these wretches ful of al frowardnesse,
Gaue him to drinke Eisel tempred with gall,
Alas, that poison full of bitternesse,
My loues chere caused then to appall,
And yet thereof might he not drinke at all,
But spake these wordes as him thought best,
Father of heauen, Consummatum est.

Then kneeled I doune in paines outrage,
Clipping ẏ crosse within mine armes twain,
His blood distilled doune on my visage,
My clothes eke the droppes did distain,
To haue died for him I would full fain,
But what should it auayle if I did so,
Sith he is, Suspensus in patibulo.

Thus my Lord full dere was all disguised
With blood, pain, and wounds many one,
His veines brast, his ioynts all to riued,
Partyng a sonder the flesh fro the bone,
But I saw he hing not there alone,
For Cum iniquis deputatus est,
Not like a man but lyke a leprus beest.

A blind knight men called Longias,
With a speare aproched vnto my souerain,
Launsing his side full pitously alas,
That his precious hart he claue in twain,
The purple blood eke fro the harts vain,
Doune railed right fast in most rufull wise,
With christal water brought out of Paradise.

When I beheld this wofull passion,
I wote not how by sodain auenture,
My hart was peersed with very compassion,
That in me remayned no life of nature,
Strokes of death I felt without measure,
My deaths woūd I caught with wo opprest,
And brought to point as my hart shuld brest.

The woūd, hart, and blood of my darling,
Shal neuer slide fro my memoriall,
The bitter paines also of tourmenting,
Within my soule be grauen principall,
The speare alas that was so sharpe withall,
So thrilled my heart as to my felyng,
That body and soule were at departyng.

As soone as I might I releued vp againe,
My breth I coude not very well restore,
Felyng my selfe drowned in so great paine,
Both body & soule me thought wer all to tore,
Violent falles greeued me right sore,
I wept, I bledde, and with my selfe I fared,
As one that for his life nothing had cared.

I lokyng vp to that rufull Roode,
Saw first the visage pale of that figure,
But so pitous a sight spotted with bloode,
Saw neuer yet no liuyng creature,
So it exceeded the bounds of measure,
That mans mind with all his wits fiue,
Is nothing able that paine for to discriue.

Then gan I there min armes to vnbrace,
Up liftyng my handes full mourningly,
I sighed and sore sobbed in that place,
Both heuen & earth might haue herd me crie,
Weping, and said alas incessauntly,
Ah my sweet hart, my ghostly paramour,
Alas I may nat thy body socour.

O blessed lord, how fierse and how cruell,
These cursed wights now hath thee slaine,
Keruing alas thy body eueridell,
Woūd within woūd full bitter is thy paine,
Now wold that I might to thee attaine,
To nayle my body fast vnto thy tree,
So that of this payne thou might go free.

I can not report ne make no rehersaile,
Of my demening with the circumstaunce,
But well I wote the speare with euery naile,
Thirled my soule by inward resemblaunce,
Which neuer shall out of my remembraunce,
During my lyfe it wol cause me to waile,
As oft as I remembre that bataile.

Ah ye Iewes worse than dogges rabiate,
What moued you thus cruelly him to aray,
He neuer displeased you nor caused debate,
Your loue and true harts he coueyted aye,
He preched, he teched, he shewed ẏ right way,
Wherfore ye like tyrāts wood & wayward,
Now haue him thus slaine for his reward.

Ye ought to haue remēbred one thing special,
His fauour, his grace, and his magnificence,

He

He was your prince borne and Lord ouer all,
How be it ye toke him in small reuerence,
He was ful meke in suffrynge your offence,
Neuertheles ye deuoured him with one affet,
As hungry wolues doth the lambe innocent.

Where was your pite, o people mercilesse,
Arming your selfe with falsheed and treason,
On my lord ye haue shewed your woodnesse,
Like no men, but beestes without reason,
Your malice he suffred al for the season,
Your payne wol come thinke it not to slacke,
Man without mercy of mercie shall lacke.

O ye traitours & maintainers of madnesse,
Unto your foly I ascribe all my paine,
Ye haue me depriued of ioy and gladnesse,
So dealing with my Lord and soueraine,
Nothing shuld I need thus to complaine,
If he had liued in peace and tranquillite,
Whom ye haue slaine through your iniquite.

Farewel your noblenesse ꝑ tōtime did rain,
Farewel your worshipp, glory, and fame,
Hereafter to liue in hate and disdaine,
Marualle ye not for your trespace & blame,
Unto shame is tourned all your good name,
Upon you now woll wonder euery nation,
As people of most vile reputation.

These wicked wretches, these hounds of hell,
As I haue told playne here in this sentence,
Were not content my dere loue thus to quell,
But yet they must embesile his presence,
As I perceyue by couert violence,
They haue him conueyed to my displeasure,
For here is lafte but naked sepulture.

Wherfore of trouth & rightfull iudgement,
That their malice againe may be acquited,
After my verdite and auisement,
Of false murdre they shall be endited,
Of theft also which shall not be respited,
And in al hast they shal be hanged and drawe,
I wol my selfe plede this cause in the law.

Alas if I with trewe attendaunce,
Had still abidden with my lordes corse,
And kept it still with trewe perseueraunce,
Then had nat befal this wofull deuorse,
But as for my paine welcome and no force,
This shal be my songe where so euer I go,
Departing is ground of all my wo.

I see right well now in my paines smart,
There is no wound of so greuous dolour,
As is the wound of my carefull hart,
Sithe I haue lost thus my paramour,
Al sweetnesse is tourned in to sour,
Myrth to my heart nothing may conuey,
But he that beareth thereof both locke & key.

The ioy excellent of blessed paradise,
May me alas in no wise comforte,
Song of angel nothing may me suffise,
As in min harte now to make disporte,
Al I refuse but that I might resorte,
Unto my loue the well of goodlihed,
For whose longing I trowe I shall be deed.

Of painful labour and tourment corporall,
I make therof none exception,
Paines of hell I wol passe ouer all,
My loue to find in mine affection,
So great to him is my delectacion,
A thousand times martred would I bee,
His blessed body ones if I might see.

About this world so large in all compasse,
I shal not spare to renne my life during,
My feet also shall not rest in one place,
Til of my loue I may heare some tiding,
For whose absence my hands now I wring,
To thinke on him cease shal neuer my mind,
O gentil Jesu where shall I thee find.

Jerusalem I wol serch place fro place,
Sion, the vale of Josaphath also,
And if I find him not in al this space,
By mount Oliuet to Bethany wol I go,
These wayes wol I wander and many mo,
Nazareth, Bethleem, Mountana Iude,
No trauaile shall me paine him for to see.

His blessed face if I might see and finde,
Serch I would euery coste and countrey,
The fardest part of Egipt or hote Inde,
Sulde be to me but a litle iourney,
How is he thus gone or taken away,
If I knew the full trouth and certente,
Yet from this care released might I be.

Into wildernesse I thinke best to go,
Sith I can no more tydings of him here,
There may I my life lede to and fro,
There may I dwel, and to no man apere,
To towne ne village woll I come nere,
Alone in woods, in rockes, and in caues deepe,
I may at mine own wil both waile and weep.

Mine eyen twaine withouten variaunce
Shall neuer cease, I promise faithfully
There to weepe with great aboundaunce.
Bitter teares reming incessauntly,
The which teares medled full petously,
With the very blood euer shall renne also,

Ex=

Expressing of mine hart the greeuous wo.

Worldly fode & sustenaunce I desire none,
Soch liuing as I find soch woll I take,
Rootes that growen on the craggy stone,
Shall me suffice with water of the lake,
Then thus may I say for my lords sake,
Fuerunt mihi lachrime meæ,
In deserto panes, die ac nocte.

My body to clothe it maketh no force,
A mourning mantel shalbe sufficient,
The greuous woundes of his pitous corse,
Shal be to me a full royall garnement,
He departed thus I am best content,
His crosse with nailes and scourges withall,
Shal be my thought and paine speciall.

Thus wol I liue as I haue here told,
If I may any long tyme endure,
But I fere death is ouer me so bold,
That of my purpose I can not be sure,
My paynes encrease without measure,
For of long lyfe who can lay any reason,
All thing is mortal and hath but a season.

I sigh ful sore and it is ferre yet,
Mine herte I feele now bledeth inwardly,
The blody teares I may in no wise let,
Sith of my paine I find no remedie,
I thanke God of all if I now die,
His will performed I hold me content,
My soule let him haue that hath it me lent.

For longer to endure it is intollerable,
My wofull harte is inflamed so huge,
That no sorow to myne is comparable,
Sith of my mind I finde no refuge,
Yet I him require as rightful iuge,
To deuoid fro me the inwarde sorow,
Lest I liue not to the next morow.

Within mine hart is impressed full sore,
His royal forme, his shape, his semelines,
His porte, his chere, his goodnes euermore,
His noble persone with all gentilnes,
He is the well of all partitnes,
The very redemer of all mankind,
Him loue I best with hart, soule, and mind.

In his absence my paynes full bitter be,
Right well I may it fele now inwardly,
No wonder is though they hurte or slee me,
They cause me to cric so rufully,
Mine hart oppressed is so wonderfully,
Onely for him which so is bright of blee,
Alas I trowe I shall him neuer see.

My ioy is translate full farre in exile,
My mirth is chaunged in to paynes cold,
My lyfe I thinke endureth but a while,
Anguish and payne is that I behold,
Wherfore my hands thus I wring & fold,
In to this graue I loke, I call, I pray,
Death remaineth, and life is borne away.

Now must I walke & wander here & there,
Got wot to what partes I shall me dresse,
With quaking hart, weeping many a tere,
To seeke out my loue and all my sweetnes,
I wolde he wist what mortall heuines
About mine hart reneweth more and more,
Then wold he nat keepe pite long in store,

Without him I may not long endure,
His loue so sore worketh within my brest,
And euer I wepe before this sepulture,
Sighing full sore as mine harte should brest,
During my lyfe I shall obtayne no rest,
But mourne and wepe where that euer I go,
Making complaint of al my mortall wo.

Fast I cric but there is no audience,
My comming hider was him for to please,
My soule oppressed is here with his absence,
Alas he list not to set mine harte in ease,
Wherefore to payne my selfe with all disease,
I shal not spare till he take me to grace,
Or els I shall serue here in this place,

Ones if I might with him speake,
It were al my ioy, with parfite pleasaunce,
So that I might to him my herte breake,
I shuld anone deuoid al my greuaunce,
For he is the blisse of very recreaunce,
But now alas I can nothing do so,
For in steed of ioy naught haue I but wo.

His noble corse within mine harts rote,
Deepe is graued which shall neuer slake,
Now is he gone to what place I ne wote,
I mourne, I wepe, and al is for his sake,
Sith he is past, here a vowe I make,
With hartely promise, & thereto I me bind,
Neuer to cease till I may him find.

Unto his mother I thinke for to go,
Of her haply some comfort may I take,
But one thing yet me feareth and no mo,
If I any mencion of him make,
Of my wordes she wold trimble and quake,
And who coud her blame she hauing but one,
The sonne borne away, the mother wol mone.

Sorowes many hath she suffred trewly,
Sith that she first conceiued him and bare,

And

And seuen things there be most specially,
That drowneth her hert in sorrow and care,
Yet lo, in no wise may they compare,
With this one now, the which if she knew,
She wold her paines euerichone renew.

Great was her sorrow by mennes saying,
Whan in the temple Simeon Justus,
Shewing to her, these words prophesying,
Tuam animam pertansibit gladius,
Also whan Herode that tyrant furious,
Her childe pursued in euery place,
For his life went neither mercy ne grace.

She mourned when she knew him gone,
Full long she sought or she him found ayen,
Whan he went to death his crosse him vpon,
It was to her sight a rewfull paine,
Whã he hong therõ, betweene theues twaine
And the speare vnto his herte thrust right,
She swouned, & to the ground there pight.

Whã deed and bloody in her lappe lay
His blessed body, both hands and fete all tore,
She cried out and said, now wel away,
Thus araide was neuer man before,
Whan haste was made his body to be bore
Vnto sepulture, here to remaine,
Unnethes for wo she coude her sustaine.

The sorrows seuen, like swerds euery one,
His mothers herte woũded fro syde to syde,
But if she knew her sonne thus gone,
Out of this world she shuld with death ride,
For care she coude no lenger here abide,
Hauing no more toy nor consolacioun,
Than I here standing in this stacioun.

Wherefore her to see I dare nat presume,
Fro her presence I wol my selfe refraine,
Yet had I leuer to die and consume,
Whã his mother should haue any more paine,
Neuertheles her soone I would see full faine,
His presence was very toy and sweetnes,
His absence is but sorrow and heauines.

There is no more, sith I may him nat mete,
Whom I desire aboue all other thing,
Nede I must take the sour with the swete,
For of his noble coste I here no tiding,
Full oft I cry, and my hands wring,
Myne herte alas relenteth all in paine,
Which will brast both senew and baine.

Alas how vnhappie was this woful hour,
Wherein is thus mispended my seruice,
For mine intent and eke my true labour,
To none effect may come in any wise,
Alas I thinke if he doe me despise,
And list not to take my simple obseruaunce,
There is no more, but death is my finaunce.

I haue him called, Sed non respondet mihi,
Wherfore my mirth is tourned to mourning,
O dere Lord Quid mali feci tibi,
That me to comfort I find no erthly thing,
Alas, haue compassion of my crying,
Vt fro me, Faciem tuam abscondis,
There is no more, but Consumere me vis.

Within myne herte is grounded thy figure,
That all this worlds horrible tourment,
May it not aswage, it is so without measure,
It is so brenning, it is so feruent,
Remember Lord I haue bin diligent,
Euer thee to please onely and no mo,
Myne herte is with thee where so euer I go.

Therefore my dere darling Trahe me post te,
And let me not stand thus desolate,
Quia non est, qui consoletur me,
Myne herte for thee is disconsolate,
My paines also nothing me moderate,
Now if it list the to speake with me aliue,
Com in hast, for my herte asonder will riue.

To thee I proffer lo my pore seruice,
Thee for to please after mine owne entent,
I offer here, as in deuout sacrifice,
My boxe replete with pretious oyntment,
Myne eyen twaine, weeping sufficient,
Myne herte with anguish fulfilled is alas,
My soule eke redy for loue about to pas.

Naught els haue I thee to please or pay,
For if mine herte were gold or pretious stone,
It should be thine without any delay,
With hertely there thou shuld haue it anone,
Why suffrest thou me then stand alone,
Thou haste I trow my weeping in disdaine,
Or els thou knowest nat what is my paine.

If thou withdraw thy noble daliaunce,
For ought that euer I displeased thee,
Thou knowst right wel it is but ignoraunce,
And of no knowledge for certainte,
If I haue offended Lord forgiue it me,
Glad I am for to make full repentaunce,
Of all thing that hath bin to thy grieuaunce.

Myne herte alas swelleth within my brest
So sore oppressed with anguish & with paine,
That all to peeces forsooth it woll brest.
But if I see thy blessed coste againe,
For life ne death I can nat me refraine,
If thou make delay thou maist be sure,

Myne

Mine hart woll leape into this sepulture.

Alas my lord, why farest thou thus with me,
My tribulation yet haue in mind,
Where is thy mercy? where is thy pite?
Which euer I trusted in thee to find,
Somtime thou were to me both good & kind,
Let it please thee my prayer to accept,
Which with teares I haue there bewept.

On me thou oughtest to haue very routh,
Sith for thee is all this mourning,
For sith I to thee yplighted first my trouth,
I neuer varied with discording,
That knowest thou best, my owne darling,
Why constrainest thou me thus to waile?
My wo forsooth can thee nothing auaile.

I haue endured without variaunce,
Right as thou knowest, thy louer iust & trew,
With hert & thought aye at thine ordinaunce,
Like to the saphire alway in one hew,
I neuer chaunged thee for no new,
Why withdrawest thou my presence,
Sith all my thought is for thine absence.

With hert intier, sweet Lord I crie to thee,
Encline thine eares to my petition,
And come, Velociter exaudi me,
Remember mine harts disposition,
It may not endure in this condition,
Therfore out of these paines, Libera me,
And where thou art, Pone me iuxta te.

Let me behold O Iesu thy blissed face,
Thy faire glorious angellike visage,
Bow thine eares to my complaint, alas,
For to conuey me out of this rage,
Alas my lord, take fro me this dommage,
And to my desire for mercy condiscend,
For none but thou may my greuance amend.

Now yet good Lord, I thee beseech & pray,
As thou raised my brother Lazarous
From death to life, the fourth day,
Came ayen in body and soule precious:
As great a thing maist thou shew vnto vs,
Of thy selfe, by power of thy godhead,
As thou did of him, lying in graue dead.

Mine hart is wounded with thy charite,
It brenneth, it flameth incessauntly,
Come my deare Lord, Ad adiuuandum me,
Now be not long, my paine to multiplie,
Least in the meane time I depart and die:
In thy grace I put both hope and confidence,
To do as it pleaseth thy high magnificence.

Floods of death, and tribulation,
Into my soule I feele entred full deepe,
Alas that here is no consolation,
Euer I waile, euer I mourne and weepe,
And sorow hath wounded mine hert ful deepe,
O deare loue, no maruaile though I die,
Sagittæ tuæ infixæ sunt mihi.

Wandring in this place, as in wildernesse,
No comfort haue I, ne yet assurance,
Desolate of ioy, replete with faintnesse,
No answere receiuing of mine enquirance,
Mine heart also greued with displeasance,
Wherefore I may say, O Deus, Deus,
Non est dolor sicut dolor meus.

Mine hart expresseth, Quod dilexi multum,
I may not endure though I would faine,
For now Solum superest sepulchrum,
I know it right well by my huge paine,
Thus for loue I may not like sustaine,
But O God, I muse what ayleth thee,
Quod sic repente præcipitas me.

Alas, I see it will none otherwise be,
Now must I take my leaue for euermore,
This bitter paine hath almost discomfite me,
My loues corse I can in no wise restore,
Alas to this wo that euer I was bore,
Here at this tombe now must I die & starue,
Death is about my heart for to carue.

My testament I woll begin to make,
To God the father my soule I commend,
To Iesu my loue, that died for my sake,
My heart and all both I giue and send,
In whose loue my life maketh end,
My body also, to this monument,
I here bequeath both bore and ointment.

Of all my wils, lo now I make the last,
Right in this place, within this sepulture,
I woll be buried when I am dead and past,
And vpon my graue I wol haue this scripture:
Here within resteth a ghostly creature,
Christs true louer, Mary Magdalaine,
Whose hart for loue brake in peeces twaine.

Ye vertuous women, tender of nature,
Full of pitie and of compassion,
Resort I pray you vnto my sepulture,
To sing my dirige with great deuotion,
Shew your charitie in this condition,
Sing with pitie, and let your harts weepe,
Remembring I am dead and layed to sleepe.

Then when ye begin to part me fro,
And ended haue your mourning obseruaunce,

Remember wherefoeuer that ye go,
Alway to ſearch and make due enqueraunce
After my loue, mine harts ſuſtenaunce,
In euery towne and in euery village,
If ye may here of this noble image.

And if it happe by any grace at laſt,
That ye my true loue find in any coſt,
Say that his Magdaleine is dead and paſt,
For his pure loue hath yeelded vp the ghoſt,
Say that of all thing I loued him moſt,
And that I might not this death eſchew,
My paines ſo ſore did euer renew.

And in token of loue perpetuall,
When I am buried in this place preſent,
Take out mine hart, the very roote and all,
And cloſe it within this boxe of ointment,
To my deare loue make thereof a preſent,
Kneeling downe with wordes lamentable,
Do your meſſage, ſpeake faire and tretable.

Say that to him my ſelfe I commend
A thouſand times, with hart ſo free,
This poore token ſay to him I ſend,
Pleaſeth his goodneſſe to take it in gree,
It is his owne of right, it is his fee,
Which he aſked, when he ſaid long before,
Giue me thy heart, and I deſire no more.

Adue my lord, my loue for faire of face,
Adue my turtle doue, ſo freſh of hew,
Adue my mirth, adue all my ſollace,
Adue alas my ſauiour Lord Jeſu,
Adue the gentilleſt that euer I knew.
Adue my moſt excellent paramour,
Fairer than roſe, ſweeter than lilly flour.

Adue my hope of all pleaſure eternall,
My life, my wealth, and my proſperitie,
Mine heart of gold, my perle orientall,
Mine adamant of perfite charitie,
My cheefe refuge, and my felicitie,
My comfort, and all my recreatioun,
Farewell my perpetuall ſaluatioun.

Farewell mine Emperour Celeſtiall,
Moſt beautifull prince of all mankind,
Adue my lord, of heart moſt liberall,
Farewell my ſweeteſt, both ſoule and mind,
So louing a ſpouſe ſhall I neuer find,
Adue my ſouerain, and very gentilman,
Farewell dere hart, as hertely as I can.

Thy wordes eloquent flowing in ſweetneſſe,
Shall no more alas my mind recomfort,
Wherfore my life muſt end in bitterneſſe,
For in this world ſhall I neuer reſort
To thee, which was mine heauenly diſport,
I ſee alas it will none other be,
Now farewell the ground of all dignite.

Adue the faireſt that euer was boxe,
Alas I may nat ſee your bleſſed face,
Now welaway that I ſhall ſee no more
Thy bleſſed viſage, ſo replete with grace,
Wherein is printed my perfite ſollace,
Adue mine hearts roote and all for euer,
Now farwell, I muſt from thee diſcuer.

My ſoule for anguiſh is now full thruſty,
I faint right ſore for heauineſſe,
My lord, my ſpouſe, Cur me dereliquiſti?
Sith I for thee ſuffer all this diſtreſſe,
What cauſeth thee to ſeeme thus mercileſſe,
Sith it thee pleaſeth of me to make an end,
(In manus tuas) my ſpirit I commend.

¶ Finis.

The Prologue to the *Remedie of Loue.*

Seeing the manifolde inconuenience
Falling by vnbrideled proſperitie,
Which is not tempred with morall prudence,
Nothing more wealthy than youths freeltie,
Moued I am, both of right and equitie,
To youths wele ſomewhat to write,
Whereby he may himſelfe ſafecondite.

Firſt I note, as thing moſt noyous,
Unto youth a greeuous maladie,
Among vs called loue encombrous,
Vexing yong people ſtraungelie,
Oft by force cauſeth hem to die,
Age is eke turmented by loue,
Vneath the girdle, and not aboue.

Wherfore this werk, which is right labrous
For age me need nat in hond to take,
To youth me oweth to be obſequious,
Now I begin thus to worke for his ſake,
Which may the feruence of loue aſlake
To the louer, as a mitigatiue,
To him that is none a preſeruatiue.

That mighty lord which me gouerneth,
Youth I meane, meaſure if I pace
In euery matter which him concerneth,

First,as is behouefull,I woll aske grace,
And forthwithall in this same place,
Ere I begin,I woll kneele and say
These few words,and him of helpe pray.

Flouring youth,which hast auauntage
In strength of body,in lust and beaute,
Also a excelling hast aboue age
In many a singular commodite,
Howbeit,one thing he hath beyond thee,
To thy most profite and greatest auaile,
Which lhuld the cõduit,I mean sad counsaile.

And yet good lord,of a presumption,
I nill deprave thy might and deitie,
I liue but vnder thy protection,
I am thy subiect,I weare thy liuerie,
For thou art ground of my prosperitie,
And freshest floure of all my garland,
My singular aid,as I well vnderstand.

But as he that oweth his lord best seruise,
And entire faith,his honour to support,
Right so I speake,and in none other wise,
I knowledge my selfe one of the least sort
Of thy seruaunts,to our elders comfort,
Draw sad counsaile to thee if thou list,
Thee and thy power,who may then resist.

Fie on age,vnder words few,
And his erronious opinion,
What speketh of him,which saith most vntrue,
All youth to be of ill disposition,
Damneth vs all without exception,
And for a colerable auauntage,
He saieth in him resteth counsaile sage.

Well may sad counsaile in him rest,
But yet his deeds ben ferre therefro,
He may say with our parish priest,
☞ Do as I say,and not as I do,
For I my selfe know one or two,
Well striken in age,for neighbourhed
Woll to their neighbours wiues bed.

He will in presence of the yong man
Her clippe and kisse,ye,and doune lay,
To bleare his eye,thus he saieth than,
☞ O suffer yet old Yozell to play,
Now haue I doen that I can or may,
Thus he saieth her husband to queme,
That he nor no man should not misdeme.

In word nor deed nedeth him not be coy,
It is impossible that he doe amisse,
If the yong man speake,anon he saieth boy,
To rebuke age,beseemeth thee not iwis,
Thus his old face aye his warrant is,
All is in him sleight and subtiltee,
And ferre from reason I tell thee.

And shortly age is not aboue me,
Age is impotent,and of no resistence,
Age vnweldie may not fight nor flee,
What were age without my defence
(Sad cõsail saist thou giueth him assistence)
Reason is freshest where that I am,
Wherefore in thy saying thou art too blame.

Sith reason to me is rather accompanied
Than vnto age,which is the opinion,
Of euery wise man not to be denied,
And sith sad counsaile proceedeth of reason,
Sad counsaile in me hath his cheefe mansion,
This is no nay,but what is the end
Of this thy suasion,what doest entend.

Age to compare vnto thine excellence,
I nill presume him so to dignifie,
Ye be not egall,howbeit experience
Him auauntageth,for she most certainly
Him teacheth what thing to him is contrary,
And oft to foresee it,and warely eschew
Which thou neuer assaidest yet nor knew.

Experience maketh a man most certaine ☜
Of any thing yearthly,and of necessite,
Sad counsaile requireth certaintie plaine,
So ferre to moue thus whereto need we,
But to my purpose,as thou commaundest me,
Shortly mine entent is thus,and none other,
Vnder thy license to counsaile my brother.

How shuldest thou giue any cõsaile so yong,
Lacking experience vnto thine owne speach,
I report me,I wote well as for thy tong
Will serue thee right wel,but then for to teach,
I doubt me lest that thy wit woll not reach,
Youth & experience thou saist be not conuert,
How shouldest thou then teach well vnexpert.

Scripture witnesseth,ỹ God will oft shitte ☜
Fro the hie witted man, & shew it to the child,
To him I meane that of his owne witte
Presumeth not,but is debonaire and mild,
By counsaile I entend vertue for to bild,
Which of mine elders part haue I borrowed,
And part of experience,which I haue forowed.

Well then,if it be as thou lettest fare,
Shew forth thy doctrine,be not agast,
I woll thee support,looke thou not spare,
Maugre age,though he frete or gnast,
To aske age counsaile herein,were but wast,
Boldely begin,go forth to the procesle,
Feare not sith thou art of such surenesle.

Graunt mercie lord, sith it thee doeth like
To license me, now I woll and dare boldly
Assaile my purpose, with scriptures autentike,
My werke woll I ground, underset, & fortefie,
Inspire my beginning, O thou wood furie,
Alecto, with thy susters, and in especiall
To the mother of iclousie Juno I call.

Explicit Prologus.

The Remedie of Loue.

This booke drawn for the most part out of the Prouerbes of Salomon, is a warning to take heed of the deceitfull companie of women.

THis werke who so shall see or rede,
Of any incongruitie doe mee not impeche,
Ordinately behoueth me first to procede
In deduction thereof, in manner as the leche
His patients sikneße oweth first for to seche,
The which known, medicin he should applie,
And shortly as he can, then shape a remedie.

Right so by counsaile, willing thee to exhort,
O yong man prosperous, which doth abound
In thy floures of lust belongeth on thee sort,
Ye first to consider what is root and ground
Of thy mischeefe, which is plainly found,
Woman farced with fraud and deceit,
To thy confusion most allectiue bait.

Flie the miswoman, least she thee deceiue,
Thus saith Salomon, which tauzt was fully
The falshed of womẽ in his daies to conceiue,
The lips of a strumpet ben sweeter than hony,
Her throte he saith soupled with oile of flatery,
Howbeit, the end and effect of all
Bitterer is than any wormwood or gall.

Flie the miswoman, louing thy life,
Ware the straungers bland eloquence,
Straunge I call her that is not thy wife,
Of her beautie haue no concupiscence,
Her countenaunce pretending benevolence,
Beware her signes, and eye so amiable,
Hold it for erme, they ben deceiuable.

Lo an ensample what women be
In their signes and countenaunce shortly,
I woll shew thee how louers three
Loued one woman right entirely,
Ech of them knew others maladie,
Wherefore was all their daily labour,
Who coud approch next in her fauour.

At sundry seasons, as fortune requireth,
Seuerally they came to see her welfare,
But ones it happened, loue them so fireth,
To see their Lady, they all would not spare,
Of others comming none of them were ware,
Till all they mette, whereas they in place,
Of her Lady saw the desired face.

To supper set, full smally they eat,
Full sober and demure in countenaunce,
For there taried none of hem for any meat,
But on his Lady to giue attendaunce,
And in secret wise some signifiaunce
Of loue to haue, which perceiuing she,
Fetely executed thus her propertie.

In due season, as she alway espied
Euery thing to execute conueniently,
Her one louer first friendly she cied,
The second she offred the cup courtesly,
The third she gaue token secretly,
Underneath the bord she trade on his foot,
Through his entrailes tikled the hart root.

By your leaue, might I here aske a question
Of you my maisters, that sewe loues trace,
To you likely belongeth the solution,
Which of these three stood now in grace?
Clerely to answere ye would aske long space,
The matter is doubtfull and opinable,
To acertaine you I woll my selfe enable.

Of the foresaied three my selfe was one,
No man can answere it better than I,
Hartely of vs beloued was there none,
But Wattes packe we bare all by and by,
Which at last I my selfe gan aspie.
In time as me thought then I left the daunce,
O thoughtfull hart, great is thy greuaunce.

Hence fro me hence, that me for to endite,
Halpe aye here afore, O ye muses nine,
Whilom ye were wont to be mine aid & light,
My penne to direct, my braine to illumine,
No lenger alas may I sewe your doctrine,
The fresh lustie metres, that I wont to make
Haue been here afore, I vtterly forsake.

Come hither thou Hermes, & ye furies all,
Which fer ben vnder vs, nigh the nether pole,

Where

where Pluto reigneth, O king infernall,
Send out thine arpies, send anguish and dole,
Miserie and wo, leaue ye me not sole,
Of right be present must paine & eke turment,
The pale death beseemeth not to be absent.

To me now I call all this lothsome sort,
My paines encrease, my sorowes to augment,
For worthie I am to be bare of all comfort,
Thus sith I haue consumed and mispent
Not onely my daies, but my fiue fold talent,
That my lord cõmitted me, I cannot recõpẽce,
I may not too dercly abie my negligence.

By the path of penaunce yet woll I reuert
To the well of grace, mercy there to fetch,
☞ Despisest not God the meeke contrite hart
Of the cock crow, alas ꝑ I would not retch,
And yet it is not late in the second wetch,
Mercy shall I purchase by incessaunt crying,
The meries of our lord euer shall I sing.

But well maist thou waile wicked woman,
That thou shuldest deceiue thus any innocent,
And in recompence of my sinne, so as I can,
To all men wol I make & leue this monumẽt,
In shewing part of thy falshed is mine entent,
For all were too much, I cannot well I wote,
The cause sheweth plainly he ꝑ thus wrote.

☞ If all the yearth were parchment scribable,
Speedie for the hand, and all manner wood
Wer hewed and proportioned to pennes able,
All water inke, in damme or in flood,
Euery man being a parfit Scribe and good,
The curstednesse yet and deceit of women
Could not be shewed by the meane of pen.

I flie all odious resemblaunces,
The deuils brond call women I might,
Whereby man is encensed to mischaunces,
Or a stinking rose that faire is in sight,
Or deadly empoyson, like the sugar white,
☞ Which by his sweetnesse causeth man to tast,
And sodainly sleeth & bringeth him to his last.

It is not my manner to vse such language,
But this my doctrine, as I may lawfully,
I woll holly ground with authoritie sage,
Willing both wisedome, and vertue edifie,
☞ Wine and women into apostasie,
Cause wisemen to fall, what is that to say,
Of wisedome cause them to forget the way.

Wherefore the wiseman doeth thee aduise,
In whose words can be found no leasing,
With the straunger to sit in no wise,
Which is not thy wife, fall not in clipping
With her, but beware eke of her kissing,
Keepe with her in wine no altercation,
Least that thine hart fall by inclination.

May a man thinkest hide and safe lay
Fire in his bosome, without empairement,
And brenning of his clothes? or whider he may
Walke on hote coles, his feet not brent?
As who saieth nay, and whereby is ment
This forsaied prouerbe and similitude,
But that thou ridde thee plainly to denude

From the flatterers forgetting her gide,
The gide of her youth, I meane shamefastnes,
Which should cause her maidenhead to abide,
Her gods behest eke she full recheles,
Not retching, committeth it to forgetfulnes,
Neither God ne shame in her hauing place,
Needs must such a woman lacke grace.

And all that neigh her in way of sinne
To tourne, of grace shall lacke the influence,
The pathes of life no more to come in,
Wherefore first friend thee with Sapience,
Remembring God, and after with Prudence,
To thine owne weale that they thee keepe,
Unto thine hart least her words creepe.

In his booke where I take my most ground,
And in his prouerbes, sage Salomon
Telleth a tale, which is plainly found
In the fifth chapiter, whider in deed don,
Or meekely feined to our instruction,
Let clerkes determine, but this am I sure,
Much like thing I haue had in vre.

At my window saieth he I looked out,
Fair yong people, where I saw many,
Among hem all, as I looked about,
To a yong man fortuned I lent mine eye,
Estraunged from his mind it was likely,
By the street at a corner nigh his own hous,
He went about with eye right curious.

When that the day his light gan withdraw,
And the night approched in the twilight,
How a woman came and met him I saw,
Talking with him vnder shade of the night,
Now blessed be God (qd. she) of his might,
Which hath fulfilled mine hearts desire,
Allaked my paines, which were hote as fire.

And yet mine authour, as it is skill
To follow, I must tell her arrayment,
She was full nice, soules like to spill,
As nice in countenaunce yet as in garment,
For iangling she was of rest impatient,
Wandring still, in no place she stode,

But restlesse now, and now out she yode.

Now in the house, now in the strete,
Now at a corner she standeth in await,
Incessauntly busie her pray for to gete,
To bring to the lure whom she doeth lait.
Now where I left, vnto my matter strait
I woll tourne againe, how she him mette,
Sweetly kissed, and friendly hem grette.

With wordes of curtesie many and diuerse,
Right as in part I haue before told,
Now as I can, I purpose to reherse,
How she flattering laied with visage bold,
I haue made vowes and offerings manifold
For thy sake, O mine hart, O my loue dere,
This day I thanke God all performed were.

Therefore I came out, & made this asart,
Very desirous your welfare to see,
Now I haue seene you, pleased is mine hart,
In faith shall none haue my loue but ye,
As true as I am to you, be to me,
I pray you hartely dere hart come home,
No man should be to me so welcome.

And in good faith, the sooth for to say,
Your comming to me ran in my thought,
Herke in your eare, my bed fresh and gay,
I haue behanged with tapettes new bought,
From Egipt, and from far countries brought,
Steined with many a lustie fresh hue,
Exceeding gold or Iasper in value.

My chamber is strowed with mirre & insence,
With sote sauoring aloes, & with sinamome,
Breathing an Aromatike redolence,
Surmounting Olibane, in any mans dome,
Ye shall betweene my breasts rest if ye come,
Let vs haue our desired halsing,
For we may safe be till in the morning.

Mine husband is not at home, he is went
Forth in his iourney, a farre way hence,
A bagge with money he hath with him hent,
As him thought needfull for his expence,
Unto my word giue faith and credence,
Now is the Moone yong, and of light dull,
Ere he come home, it woll be at the full.

Thus craftely hath she him besette
With her line roddes, panter, and snare,
The selie soule caught in her nette,
Of her sugred mouth alas nothing ware,
Thus is he left graceless and bare
Of helpe, comfort, and ghostly succour,
And furthermore, as saieth mine authour,

As a beast led to his death, doeth pant,
This yong man followeth her in that stound,
And as a wanton Lambe full ignorant,
How he is pulled and drawen to be bound,
Unto the time he hath his deaths wound,
And like a bird that hasteth to the gin,
Not knowing the perill of his life therein.

Now gentle sonne, saith Salomon, take hede
My wordes in thy breast keepe and make fast,
Let her not thy mind in her waies misledе,
Be not deceiued, lese not thy tast,
Many hath she wounded, many doune cast,
Many strong by her hath lost their breath,
Her waies, waies of hell leading to death.

And in this little narration precedent,
The womans manifold guilt I attend,
The yong man alas how she hath shent,
Deceiued her husband, her owne nere friend,
In these both, her God she doeth offend,
To breake her spousall, to her is of no weight,
Furdermore to shew womans craft & sleight.

A woman at her doore sate on a stall,
To see folke passe by streets of the cite,
With eye and countenaunce eke she gan call,
If there be any pretie one come nere to me,
Come hither ye pigesnye, ye little babe,
At last she saied to a yong man hartelesse,
Of her deceit vnware and defenceless:

Much sweeter she saith, & more acceptable
Is drinke, when it is stollen priuely,
Than when it is taken in forme auowable:
Bread hid and gotten ieoperdously,
Must needs be sweet, and semblably,
Venison stolne is aye the sweeter,
The further the narrower set the better.

And who this woman (saith Salomon) festes,
The yong man woteth not who she doth fede,
Of the darke deepnesse of hell ben her gestes,
Beware yong man, therefore I thee rede,
And how be it cheesly for thy good spede,
This werk to compile I haue take in charge,
I must of pitie my charitie enlarge.

With the selie man which is thus begiled,
Her husband I meane, I woll wepe and waile
His painfull infortune, whereby reuiled
Causeless he is, neuer to counaile,
Euery man yong and old woll him assaile
With wordes of occasion, with the loth name,
And alas good soule, he nothing to blame.

But she that coud so ill do and wold,
Hers be the blame for her demerite,

And

And leaue that opprobrious name cokold,
To apropet to him as in dispite,
Ransake yet we would if we might,
Of this worde the true Ortographie,
The very discent and Ethimologie.

The well and ground of the first invencion,
To know the ortographie we must derive,
Which is coke and cold, in composicion,
By reason, as nigh as I can contrive,
Then how it is written we know beliue,
But yet lo, by what reason and ground,
Was it of these two wordes compound.

As of one cause to give very iudgement,
Themilogie let vs first behold:
Eche letter an hole word doeth representent,
As C, put for colde, and O, for old,
K. is for knaue, thus diuers men hold,
The first parte of this name we haue found,
Let vs ethimologise the second.

As the first finderment I am sure,
L, for calot, for of, we haue O,
L. for leude, D, for demeanure,
The craft of the enuentour ye may see lo,
How one name signifieth persones two,
A colde old knaue, cokold himselfe wenyng,
And ebe a calot of leude demeaning.

The second cause of thimposicion,
Of this forsaid name of ielousie,
To be ielouse is greatest occasion
To be cokold, that men can aspie,
And though the passion be very furie,
And of continuell feruence and heete,
The pacient aye suffreth cold on his feete.

And who that is ielous, and aye in a drede,
Is full of Melancolie and gallic ire,
His wiues nose (if she misse trede,)
He woll cut off, ye and conspire
His death who that woll her desire:
Which she perceiuing brasteth his gall,
And anone his great woodnesse doth fall.

As soone as she hath knit him that knot,
Now is he tame that was so ramagious,
Mekely sitteth he doune and taketh his lot,
Layed been now his lookes so furious,
And he but late as a cocke bataylous,
Hote in his quarell, to auenge him bold,
Now is he called both coke and cold.

This saiyng, to all curtesie dissonant,
Which seemeth that it of malice grewe,
In this rude treatise I woll not plant,
As parcell thereof, but onely to shewe,
The opinion of the tarratife shrewe,
Which in ill saiyng is euer merie,
No man as I thereof so werie.

But I as parcell of this my booke,
Woll graffe in some sadde counsaile whereby,
The wedded man, if he daigne to looke
In it, the better shall mowe him gie,
And prouide for his saied infortunie,
Which as I haue saied, with him complaine
I woll, as parcener of his great paine.

As most expedient to his weale,
I would all ielousie were abiect,
If he be ielous, that he it conceale,
And in his labour be circumspect,
To know her wayes if they seeme suspect,
And not for to breake, for one word broken,
She woll not misse but she woll be wroken.

Forbid her not, that thou noldest haue don,
For looke what thyng she is forbod,
To that of all things she is most prone,
Namely if it be ill and no good,
Till it be executed she is nigh wood,
Soch is a woman, and soch is her feat,
Her craft by craft, labour to defeat.

If thou hereafter now a single man,
Shouldest be ielous if thou haddest a wife,
Wedde not but if thou can trust woman,
For els shouldest lede a carefull life,
That thou most lothest should be full rife,
Yet I nill gainsay Matrimonie,
But Melius est nubere quam vri.

That is to say, better is in Wedlocke,
A wife to take, as the church doeth kenne,
Than to been vnder the fleshes yoke,
In fleshly lust alway for to brenne.
But as I saied, for all ielous menne,
So they liue chaste, I hold it lasse ill,
That they wedde not than them self spill.

The single man which is yet to wedde,
And not the wedded man, thus I rede,
To warne him now he is too farre spedde,
It is too late him to forbedde,
But let him take as for his owne need,
Soch counsaile as is him before told,
These words folowyng ebe to behold.

Thy water to keepe ỹ wiseman doth teach,
That thou in no wise let it haue issue,
At a narow rifte, way it woll seach,
And semblably the woman vntrue,
To giue her free walke in al wise eschue,
If she at large, not at thine hand walke,

She woll thee shame, thou shalt it not balke.

Wedded or single, thus saith the wiseman,
Her that both day and night euermore,
Lithe in thy bosome, wife or yet lemman,
Loue not to hote, least thou repent sore,
Least she thee bring into some ill lore,
Thy wife not to loue yet I nill support,
But that thou dote not, thus I thee exhort.

Lo if thou loue her, loue eke thine honestie,
Be she not idell, for what woll betide,
If she sit idle, of very necessitie,
Her mind woll search ferre and eke wide,
Namely if she be not accompanide,
How accompanied, not with yong men,
But with maidens I meane or women.

Maiden seruants be right conuenient,
In house to helpe to doe her seruice,
In whom she may vse her commaundement,
In the season at her owne deuice:
To teach hem good, yeue her thine aduice,
To make them huswiues, thus businesse
May yet refraine her from idlenesse.

But bide not her that thou wolt haue do,
Of thine entent that might be letting,
But craftely encourage her thereto
By other meanes, as by commending,
And not too moch, but duely menging
Both prayse and blame, and in thy reason
First paise wisely the place and season.

Of faithfull will and hart full tender,
One thing I call into remembraunce
Again which, though my wit be slender,
After my power and suffisaunce,
I purpose to make a purueyaunce,
Sith women of nature been vnchaungeable,
Freale, not ware, also disceiuable.

Be it that thy wife be excellently good,
That none be better of disposicion,
In processe of time she might turne her mood,
By some misse liuers instigacion,
Diuers men to thilke occupacion,
Aplien daily, minde and eke hart,
From her goodnesse women to peruart.

If thou aspie any suspect person,
Draw to thy wife, beware in all wise
To him nor her of thy suspeccion
Breake not one worde, though thine harte a-
Kindle no fire, no smoke woll arise, (grise,
Though he be of a corrupt entent,
She peraventure is not of assent.

Explicit.

The complaint of *Mars and Venus.*

Gladeth yee louers in the morowe graie,
Lo Venus risen emong you Rowes rede,
And floures freshe honour yee this daie,
For whē ỹ sunne vprist then wold they spredе
But ye louers that lie in any dredе,
Flieth least wicked tongues you aspie,
Lo yonde the Sunne, the candell of ielousie.

With teares blew, & with a wounded hart
Taketh your leue, & with saint John to borow
Apeseth somewhat of your paines smart,
Time cōmeth eft, that cessen shall your sorow,
The glad night is worth an heauy morow,
Saint Valentine, a foule thus heard I sing,
Upon thy day, or Sunne gan vp spring.

Yet sang this foule, I rede you all awake,
And ye that haue not chosen in humble wise,
Without repenting cheseth your make,
Yet at the least, renoueleth your seruice:
And ye that haue full chosen as I deuise,
Confermeth it perpetually to dure,
And patiently taketh your aventure.

And for the worshipe of this high feast,
Yet woll I in my briddes wise sing,
The sentence of the complaint at the least,
That wofull Mars made at the departing
Fro fresh Venus in a morowning,
When Phebus with his firie torches rede,
Ransaked hath euery louer in his dredе.

Whilome the three heauens lorde aboue,
As well by heauenlich reuolucion,
As by desert hath wonne Venus his loue,
And she hath take him in subiection,
And as a maistresse taught him his lesson,
Commaunding him neuer in her seruice,
He were so bold no louer to dispise.

For she forbade him ielousie at all,
And cruelty, and boste, and tyrannie,
She made him at her lust so humble & thrall,
That when she dained to cast on him her ye,
He tooke in patience to liue or die,
And thus she bridleth him in her maner,
With nothing, but with scorning of her chere.

Who reigneth now in blisse but Venus,
That hath this worthi knight in gouernaūce

Who

Who singeth now but Mars ỳ serueth thus,
The fayre Uenus, causer of pleasaunce,
He bint him to perpetuel obeysaunce,
And she binte her to loue him for euer,
But so be that his trespace it discouer.

Thus be they knit, & reignen as in heuen,
By loking most, as it fell on a tide,
That by her both assent was set a steuen,
That Mars shal entre as fast as he may glide
In to her next palais to abide,
Walking his course till she had him ytake,
And he prayed her to hast her for his sake.

Then said he thus, mine herts lady sweete,
Ye know well my mischiefe in that place,
For slikerly till that I with you meete,
My lyfe stante there in auenture and grace,
But when I see the beaute of your face,
There is no drede of death may do me smart,
For all your luste is ease to mine hart.

She hath so great cõpassion of her knight,
That dwelleth in solitude till she come,
For it stode so, that ilke time no wight,
Counsailed him, ne said to him welcome,
That nigh her wit for sorow was ouercome
Wherfore she spedde as fast in her way,
Almost in one day as he did in tway.

The great ioy that was betwix hem two,
When they be mette, there may no tonge tell,
There is no more but vnto bedde they go,
And thus in ioy and blisse I let hem dwell,
This worthy Mars ỳ is of knighthood well,
The floure of fairnesse happeth in his armes,
And Uenus killeth Mars the God of armes.

Soiourned hath this Mars, of which I rede
In chambre amidde the palais priuely,
A certaine time, till him fell a drede,
Through Phebus that was cõmen hastely,
Within the palais yates sturdely,
With torch in hond of which ỳ stremes bright
On Uenus chambre, knocketen full light.

The chãbre there as lay this fresh queene,
Depainted was with white boles grete,
And by the light she knew that shon so shene,
That Phebus came to bren hẽ with his hete,
This silly Uenus ny dreint in teares were,
Enbraseth Mars, and said alas I die,
The torch is come, ỳ al this world woll wrie.

Up sterte Mars, him list not to sleepe,
When he his lady herde so complaine,
But for his nature was not for to weepe,
In stede of teares from his eyen twaine,
The firie sparcles sprongen out for paine,
And hente his hauberke that lay him beside,
Flie wold he nought, ne might himself hide.

He throweth on his helme of huge weight,
And girt him with his swerde, & in his honde
His mighty speare as he was wont to feight,
He shaketh so, that it almost to wonde,
Full heuy was he to walken ouer londe,
He may not hold with Uenus company,
But bad her flie least Phebus her espy.

O woful Mars alas, what maist thou fain
That in the palais of thy disturbaunce,
Art left behind in perill to be slain,
And yet there to is double thy penaunce,
For she that hath thine hert in gouernaunce,
Is passed halfe the stremes of thine eyen,
ỳ thou nere swift, wel maist thou wepe & crien.

Now flieth Uenus in to Cilinius tour,
With void corse for feare of Phebus light,
Alas and there hath she no socour,
For she ne found ne sey no maner wight,
And eke as there she had but littel might,
Wherefore her seluen for to hide and saue,
Within the gate she fledde in to a caue.

Darke was this caue, & smoking as the hell
Nat but two paas within the yate it stood,
A naturel day in darke I let her dwell,
Now wol I speake of Mars furious & wood,
For sorow he wold haue seene his hert blood,
Sith ỳ he might haue done her no companie,
He ne rought not a mite for to die.

So feble he went for hete and for his wo,
That nigh he swelt, he might vnneth endure,
He passeth but a sterre in daies two,
But neuertheles, for all his heauy armure,
He soloweth her that is his liues cure,
For whole departing he tooke greater yre,
Than for all his brenning in the fire.

After he walketh softly a paas,
Complayning that it pitie was to here,
He saide, O lady bright Uenus alas,
That euer so wide a compas is my sphere,
Alas, when shall I mete you hert dere,
This twelue dayes of April I endure,
Through ielous Phebus this misaventure.

Now God helpe sely Uenus alone,
But as God wold it happed for to be,
That while ỳ weping Uenus made her mone
Cilinius riding in his chyuauche,
Fro Uenus Ualanus might this palais see,
And Uenus he salueth, and maketh chere,

And

And her receiueth as his frende full dere.

Mars dwelleth forth in his aduersite,
Complayning euer in her departing,
And what his cõplaint was remembreth me,
And therefore in this lusty morowning,
As I best can, I woll it same and sing,
And after that I woll my leaue take,
And God yeue euery wight ioy of his make.

The complaint of *Mars.*

The order of complaynt requireth skilfully,
That if a wight shall playne pitously,
There mote be cause wherfore that men playne,
Or men may deeme he plaineth folyly,
And causeles, alas that am not I,
Wherfore the ground & cause of all my paine,
So as my troubled witte may it attaine,
I wol reherse, not for to haue redresse,
But to declare my ground of heuinesse.

The first time alas, that I was wrought,
And for certaine effects hider brought,
By him that lordeth each intelligence,
I yaue my trewe seruice and my thought,
For euermo, how dere I haue it bought,
To her that is of so great excellence,
That what wight ẏ sheweth first her offence,
When she is wroth & taketh of him no cure,
He may not long in ioy of loue endure.

This is no fained mater that I tell,
My lady is the very sours and well
Of beaute, luste, freedome, and gentilnesse,
Of riche array, how deere men it sell,
Of all disport in which men freendly dwell,
Of loue and play, and of benigne humblesse,
Of sowne of instruments of al sweetnesse,
And thereto so well fortuned and thewed,
That thrugh ẏ world her goodnes is shewed

What wonder is then though that I be set
My seruice on soch one that may me knet
To wele or wo, sith it lithe in her might,
Therfore mine hert for euer I to her hette,
Ne trewly for my death shall I not lette,
To ben her trewest seruaunt and her knight,
I flatter nat, that may wete euery wight,
For this day in her seruice shall I dye,
But grace be, I see her neuer with eye.

To whom shall I plaine of my distresse,
Who may me help, who may my hert redresse?
Shall I complaine vnto my lady free,
Nay certes, for she hath soch beauinesse,
For feare and eke for wo, that as I gesse,
In littel time it would her bane bee,
But were she safe, it were no force of mee,
Alas that euer louers mote endure,
For loue so many perilous auenture.

For though so be that louers be as trewe,
As any metal that is forged newe,
In many a case hem tideth oft sorowe,
Somtime her ladies woll nat on hem rewe,
Somtime if that ielousie it knewe,
They might lightly lay her heed to borow,
Somtime enuious folke with tõges horow,
Deprauen hem alas, whom may they please,
But he be false, no louer hath his ease.

But what auaileth soch a long sermoun,
Of auentures of loue vp and doun,
I wol retourne and speaken of my paine,
The point is this of my distruction,
My right ladie, my saluacioun,
Is in affray, and not to whom to plaine,
O herte sweete, O lady soueraine,
For your disease I ought wel swoun & swelt,
Though I none other harme ne drede felt.

To what fine made the God that sit so hie,
Beneth him loue other companie,
And straineth folke to loue mauger her heed,
And then her ioy for aught I can espie,
Ne lasteth not the twinckling of an eye,
And some haue neuer ioy till they be deed,
What meaneth this, what is this mistheed,
Wherto constraineth he his folke so fast,
Thing to desire but it should last.

And though he made a louer loue a thing,
And maketh it seeme stedfast and during,
Yet putteth he in it soch misauenture,
That rest nis there in his yeuing,
And that is wonder that so iust a king,
Doth such hardnesse to his creature,
Thus whether loue breake or els dure,
Algates he that hath with loue to done,
Hath after wo, then chaunged is the Moone.

It seemeth he hath to louers enmite,
And like a fisher, as men may al day se,
Baited his angle hoke with some pleasaunce,
Till many a fish is wood till that he be
Ceased therwith, and then at erst hath he
All his desire, and therwith all mischaunce,
And though the line breke he hath penaunce,
For with that hoke he wounded is so sore,
That he his wages hath for euermore.

The

The broche of Thebes was of soch kinde,
So full of rubies and of stones of Inde,
That euery wight that set on it an eye,
He wende anone to worthy out of his mind,
So sore the beaute would his hert bind,
Till it he had, him thought he must die,
And when that it was his then should he drie,
Soch wo for drede aye while that he it had,
That welnigh for the feare he should mad.

And when it was fro his possession,
Then had he double wo and passion,
That he so faire a iewell hath forgo,
But yet this broche, as in conclusion,
Was not the cause of his confusion,
But he that wrought it enfortuned it so,
That euery wight that had it shold haue wo,
And therfore in the worcher was the vice,
And in the coueitour that was so nice.

So fareth it by louers, and by me,
For though my lady haue so great beaute,
That I was mad till I had gette her grace,
She was not cause of mine aduersite,
But he that wrought her, as mote I thee,
That put soch a beaute in her face,
That made me coueiten and purchace
Mine owne death, him wite I, that I die,
And mine vnwit that euer I clambe so hie.

But to you hardy knights of renowne,
Sith that ye be of my deuision owne,
Al be I not worthy to so great a name,
Yet saine these clerkes I am your patrone,
Therefore ye ought haue some compassion
Of my disease, and take it nat a game,
The proudest of you may be made full tame,
Wherefore I pray you of your gentillesse,
That ye complaine for mine heauinesse.

And ye my ladies that ben true and stable,
By way of kind ye ought to ben able,
To haue pite of folke that been in paine,
Now haue ye cause to cloth you in sable,
Sith that your empyre the honorable,
Is desolate, wel ought ye to plaine,
Now should your holy teares fall and raine,
Alas your honour and your empyre,
Nigh deed for drede, ne can her not chenice.

Complaineth eke ye louers all in fere,
For her that with vnfained humble chere,
Was euer redy to do you socour,
Complaineth her that euer hath be you dere,
Complaineth beaute, freedome, and manere,
Complaineth her that endeth your labour,
Complaineth thilke ensample of all honour,
That neuer did but gentilnesse,
Kytheth therfore in her some kindnesse.

The complaint of Venus.

THere nys so high comfort to my pleasaunce,
When that I am in any heauinesse,
As to haue layser of remembraunce,
Upon the manhood and the worthinesse,
Upon the trouth, and on the stedfastnesse,
Of him whose I am al while I may dure,
There ought to blame me no creature,
For euery wight praiseth his gentillesse.

In him is bonte, wisedome, & gouernaunce,
Wel more than any mans witte can gesse,
For grace hath wolde so forthy him auance,
That of knighthood he his parfite richesse,
Honour honoureth him for his noblesse,
Therto so well hath fourmed him nature,
That I am his for euer I him ensure,
For euery wight praiseth his gentillesse.

And nat withstanding all his sufficiaunce,
His gentil herte is of so great humblesse,
To me in worde, in werke, & in countenaunce,
And me to serue is all his besinesse,
That I am sette in very sikernesse,
Thus ought I blisse well mine auentour,
Sith that him list me serue and honour,
For euery wight praiseth his gentillesse.

Now certes, loue, it is right conenable
That men ful dere abie thy noble things,
As wake a bedde, and fasten at the table,
Weping to laugh & singe in complainings,
And downe to cast visage and lookings,
Often to chaunge visage and countenaunce,
Play in sleeping, and dremen at the daunce,
All the teuers of any glad feeling.

Iealousie be hanged by a cable,
She wold al know through her espying,
There doth no wight nothing so reasonable,
That all nis harme in her imagining,
Thus dere abought is loue in yeuing,
Which oft he yeueth without ordinaunce,
As sorow ynough, and littel of plesaunce,
All the teuers of any glad feeling.

A little time his yeft is agreable,
But full accombrous is the vsing,
For subtel iealousie the disceiuable,
Full often time causeth disturbing,

Thus

Thus ben we euer in dzede and suffring,
In no certaine, we languisben in penaunce,
And haue wel ofte many an hard mischaunce,
All the reuers of any glad feling.

But certes loue, I say not in soch wise,
That foz to scape out of your lace I ment,
Foz I so long haue been in your seruice,
That foz to lete of will I neuer assent,
No foyce though iclousie me tourment,
Suffiseth me to see him when I may,
And therfoze to my ending day,
To loue him best, shall me neuer repent.

And certes loue, when I me well aduise,
Of any estate that man may repzesent,
Thē haue ye made me thzough your frāchise,
Cheke the best that euer in earth went,
Now loue well hert, & looke thou neuer stent,
And lette the iealous put it in assay,
That foz no paine woll I not say nay,
To loue him best, shall I neuer repent.

Herte to thee it ought ynough suffice,
That loue so high a grace to you sent,
To chose the wozthiest in all wise,
And most agreable vnto mine entent,
Secke no fercher, neither way ne went.
Sith ye haue suffisaunce vnto my pay,
Thus wol I end this cōplayning oz this lay,
To loue him best, shall I neuer repent.

¶ Lemoy.

Pzinces receiueth this cōplaining in gree,
Unto your excellent benignite,
Direct after my litell suffisaunce,
Foz elde, that in my spirite dulleth mee,
Hath of enditing all the subtelte
Welnigh berafte out of my remembzaunce:
And eke to me it is a great penaunce,
Sith rime in English hath soch scarcite,
To folow wozde by wozd the curiosite,
Of Granson flour, of hem ỹ make in Fraūce.

Explicit.

The letter of Cupide.

This letter was made by Thomas Occleue of the office of the priuy Seale, Chaucers scholler; and was by him termed, A Treatise of the conuersation of men and women in the little Iland of Albion: which gate him such hatred among the gentlewomen of the Court, that he was inforced to recant in that booke of his, called *Plancias proprius.*

Cupide, vnto whose commaundement,
The gentill kinrede of goddes on hie,
And people infernall been obedient,
And all moztall folke seruen busely,
Of the goddesse sonne Cythera onely,
To all tho that to our deite,
Been subiects, hertely greeting send we.

In generall we woll that ye know,
That ladies of honour and of reuerence,
And other gentilwomen hauen sowe
Soch seed of complaint in our audience,
Of men that do hem outrage and offence,
That it our eares grieueth foz to here,
So pitous is the effect of this matere.

Passing all londes, on the litell yle
That cleped is Albion, they most complaine,
They say that there is crop and rote of guile,
So con tho men dissimule and faine,
Nothing standing dzopes in her eyen twaine,
When that her hertes feeleth no distresse,
To blinden women with her doublenesse.

Her wozdes spoken be so sighingly,
With so pitous chere and countenaunce,
That euery wight that meaneth trewly,
Deemeth they in herte haue such greuaunce,
They say so impoztable is her penaunce,
That but her lady lust to shew hem grace,
They right anone must sterue in the place.

Ah lady mine, they say, I you ensure,
As doth me grace, and I shall euer be
(While ye that my life may last and endure)
To you as humble and lowe in eche degre,
As possible is, and keepe all things in as secre,
Right as your selfe list that I do,
And els mine herte mote bzast in two.

Ful harde it is to know a mans herte,
Foz outward may no man the trouth deeme,
When wozd out of mouth may none sterte,
But it by reson seemed euery wight to queme,
So it is said of herte as it would seme,
O faithfull woman full of innocence,
Thou art disceiued by false apparence.

By pzocesse moueth ofte womans pite,
Wening all thing were as these men sey,
They graunt hem grace of her benignite,
Foz that men should not foz her sake dey,
And with good hert sette hem in the wey
Of blissfull loue, keepe it if they conne,
And thus otherwhile women bethe ywonne.

And

And when this man ỹ pan hath by the sticke,
And fully is in his possessioun,
With that women kepeth he no moze to dele,
After if he may find in the toun,
Any women his blind affectioun
Unto bestow, tuell mote he preue,
A man foz al his othes is hard to beleue.

And foz that euery false man hath a make,
As vnto euery wight is light to know,
When this traitour this womā hath forsake,
He fast spedeth him vnto his felow,
Till he be there his herte is on a low,
His false disceit may him not suffise,
But of his traison telleth all the wise.

Is this a faire auaunt, is this honour,
A man himselfe accuse thus and diffame,
Is it good to confesse himself a traitour?
And bring a woman to sclandzous name,
And tell how he her body hath do shame?
No worthip may he thus to him conquer,
But great disclaunder vnto him and her.

To her nay, yet was it no repzefe,
Foz all foz vertue was that she wzought,
But he that bzewed hath all this mischefe,
That spake so faire, & falsly inward thought,
His be the sclaunder, as it by reson ought,
And vnto her thanke perpetuell,
That in soch a need helpe can so well.

Although thzough mens sleght & subtiltie,
A sely simple and innocent woman
Betraied is, no wonder sith the citie
Of Troie, as the stozie tell can,
Betrayed was thzough the disceit of man,
And set on fyze, and all downe ouerthzowne,
And finally destroied as men knowne.

Betray nat men cities great, and kings,
What wight is it that can shape remedy
Ayenst these falsely purposed things,
Who can by crafte soch crastes espy
But man, whose witte is euer redy taply
To thing that sowning is to falshede?
Women bethe ware of false men I rede.

And farthermoze haue these men in vsage,
That where they nat likely been to speed,
Soch as they ben, with a double vilage,
They pzocuren foz to pursewe her need,
He prayeth him in his cause to proceed,
And largely guerdoneth he his trauaile,
Litel wote women how men hem assaile.

Another wzetch vnto his felow saith,
Thou filthest faire, she that she hath fired,
Is false, inconstaunt, and hath no faith,
She foz the rode of folke is so desired,
And as an hozse fro day to day she is hired,
That when thou twinnest fro her companie,
Commeth another, and blered is thine ye.

Now pzicke on fast, and ride thy iourney,
While thou art there, foz she behind thy backe
So liberall is, she woll nothing withsey,
But smartly of another take a smacke,
Thus fare these women all the packe,
Who so hem trusteth hanged mote he bee,
Euer they desire chaunge and noueltee.

Wherof pzoceedeth this, but of enuie?
Foz he himselfe her ne winne may,
He speaketh her repzefe and villanie,
As mans blabbing tonge is wont alway,
Thus diuers men full oft make assay,
Foz to distourbe folke in sondzy wise,
Foz they may not obtaine her empzise.

Many one eke would foz no good,
That hath in loue his time spent and sped,
Wen wist that his lady his asking withstood,
Ere that he were of her plainly refused,
Oz waste and vaine all that he had mused,
Wherefoze he can none other remedie,
But on his lady shapeth him to lie.

Euery woman he saith is light to gete,
Can none say nay, if she be well ysought,
Who so may leiser haue with her to trete,
Of his purpose shall he fayle nought,
But he on madnesse be so depe bzought,
That he shende all with open homelinesse,
That louen women, they doten as I gesse.

To slaūder womē thus what may pzofite,
To gentillesse namely, that hem arme should
In defence of women, and hem delite,
As that the ozdze of gentillesse wold,
If that a man list gentill to be hold,
He must all eschewe that thereto is contrarie,
A sclaundzous tonge is his great aduersarie.

A foule vice is, of tonge to be light,
Foz who so moch clappeth gabbeth oft,
The tonge of man so swift is and so wight,
That when it is reised vp on loft,
Reason is shewed so slowly and soft,
That it him neuer ouertake may,
Lozd so these men been trusty in assay.

Al be it that men find one woman nice,
Inconstaunt, reckelesse, and variable,
Deignous, proude, fulfilled of malice,
Without faith, oz loue, and disceiuable,

Slie, quaint, false, in all vntrust coulpable,
Wicked, feirse, or full of cruelte,
Yet followeth it not that soch all women be.

When the high God aūgels fourmed had,
Among hem all, were there none
That founden was malicious and bad:
Yet all men wote there were many one,
That for her pride fill fro heuen anone,
Should me for thē yeue al angels proud name
Nay, he that that susteineth is to blame.

Of twelue Apostels, one a traitour was,
The remenant yet good were and trew:
So if it hap men find percaas,
O woman false, soch, good is to eschew,
And deme not al ý they therfore be vntrewe.
☞ I see well mens owne falsenesse,
Hem causeth women to trust the lesse.

O euery man ought haue an herte tendre,
Unto a woman, and deeme her honorable,
Where his shape be thicke or slendre,
Or he be good or badde, it is no fable:
☞ Euery wight wote, that wit hath resonable,
That of a woman he discended is,
Then is it shame of her to speake amisse.

A wicked tree good fruite may none foorth
For soch the fruite is as is the tree, (bring,
Take heed of whō thou toke thy beginning,
Let thy mother be mirrour vnto thee,
Honour her, if thou wolte honoured bee,
Dispise her then not in no manere,
Lest that thereby thy wickednesse appere.

An old prouerbe sayd is in English,
☞ That bird or foule is full dishonest,
What that he be, and hold full churlish,
That vseth to defoule his owne nest:
Men to say well of women it is the best,
And naught to dispise hem ne deprave,
If they woll her honour keepe or saue,

The ladies euer complaine hem on clerkes,
That they haue made bookes of her diffame,
In which they dispise women & her werkes,
And speake of hem great reprofe and shame,
And causeles yeue hem a wicked name,
Thus they dispised be on euery side,
Disclaundred and blowen on full wide.

Tho sory bookes maken mencion,
How women betraide in especiall,
Adam, Dauid, Sampson, and Salomon,
And many one mo, who may reherse hem all,
The treason that they haue do and shall.
The world her malice may not comprehend,
As clerkes saine, for it hath none end.

Ouide in his boke called Remedie
Of loue, great reprofe of women writeth,
Wherein I trowe he did great folie,
And euery wight ý in soch case him deliteth,
A clerkes custome is when he enditeth,
Of women, be it prose, rime, or vers,
Say they be wicked, all know he the revers.

And ý boke scholers lerned in her childhede,
For they of women beware should in age,
And to loue hem euer be in drede,
Sith to discerne is set all her corage,
They say, of perel mē should cast thauātage,
Namely of soch as men haue in bewrapped,
For many a man by women hath mishapped.

No charge is what so these clerkes saine,
Of all her writing I doe no cure,
All her labour and trauayle is in vaine,
For betweene me and my lady nature,
Shall not be suffred, while ý world may dure
Thus these clerkes by her cruell tyranne,
On selie women kithen her maistrie.

Whilom for many of hem were in my cheine
Tied, and now for vnweldie age,
And vnlust, may not to loue atteine,
And saine now that loue is but very dotage,
Thus for they hemselfe lacken courage,
They folke excite by her wicked sawes,
For to rebell ayenst me, and my lawes.

But mauger hem that blame women most
Such is the force of mine impression,
That sodainly I can fell her boste,
And all her wrong imagination,
It shall not be in her election,
The foulest slutte in all the toune to refuse,
If that me lust, for all that they con muse.

But her in harte as brenningly desire,
As though she were a duchesse or a queene,
So can I folkes hartes set on fire,
And as me list send hem ioy or teene,
They that to women be whet so kene,
Wy sharpe perling strokes how they smite,
Shul fele and know, how they kerue & bite.

Parde this clerke, this subtill Ouide,
And many another disceiued haue be,
Of women, as it is know full wide,
What no men more, and that is great deintie,
So excellent a clerke as was he,
And other mo that couden full well preach,
Betrapped were, for aught ý they could teach,

And

And trusteth well that it is no maruaile,
For women knowen plainly her entent,
They wist how softly they could assaile
Hem, and what falsbede they in hart mente,
And thus they clerkes in her dawnger hente,
With o venime another is destroied,
And thus these clerkes oft were anoied.

These ladies ne these gentiles neuertheless,
Were none of tho that wrought in this wise,
But such as were vertuelesse,
They quitten thus these old clerkes wise,
To clerkes ielse ought suffise,
Then to dispraue women generally,
For worship shall they none gette thereby.

If that these men, that louers hem pretē,
To women were faithfull, good, and true,
And dredde hem to disceiue, or to offend,
Women to loue hem would not eschue,
But euery day hath man an harte newe,
It on one abide can no while,
What force is it such a wight to beguile.

Men beare eke women vpon hond,
That lightly and without any paine
They wonē be, they can no wight withstond,
That his disease list to hem complaine,
They be so freele, they may hem not refraine,
But who so liketh hem, may lightly haue,
So be her hartes easie into graue.

To maister Iohan de Meone, as I suppose
Then it was a leude occupacioun,
In making of the Romante of the rose,
So many a sigh imaginacioun,
And perilles for to rollen vp and doun,
The long processe, so many a slight cautell,
For to disceiue a selie damosell.

Nought can I say, ne my wit comprehend,
That art pain, and subtiltie should faile,
For to conquere, and sone make an end,
When men a feble place shall assaile,
And sone also to vanquish a battaile,
Of which no wight may make resistence,
Ne harte hath none to make any defence.

Then mote folow of necessitee,
Sith art asketh so great engine and paine,
A woman to disceiue what so she bee,
Of constaunce be they not so baraine,
As that some of these clarkes saine,
But they be as women ought to bee,
Sadde, constant, and fulfilled of pitee.

How frendly was Medea to Iason,
In conquering of the Fleee of gold,
How fally quit he her true affection,
By whom victory he gate as he wold,
How may this man for shame be so bold
To falsen her, that fro his death and shame
Him kept, and gate him so great price a name.

Of Troie also the traitour Eneas,
The faithlesse wretch, how he him forswore
To Dido, that queene of Sartage was,
That him relcued of his smertes sore,
What gentillesse might she haue do more,
Then she with harte vnfeined to him bidde,
And what mischiefe to her therof after betide.

In my legend of natures may men find,
Who so liketh therein for to rede,
That of he ne beheest may man bind,
Of reprouable shame haue they no drede,
In mans harte trouth hath no stede,
The soile is naught, there may no troth grow,
To women namely it is not vnknow.

Clerkes saine also there is no malice,
Unto womans wicked crabbidnesse,
O woman, how shalt thou thy self cheuice,
Sith men of thee such harme witnesse,
Beth ware women of her fikelnesse,
Kepe thine owne, what men clappe or crake,
And some of hem shall smart I vndertake.

Malice of women what is it to drede,
They slea no man, destroy no cities,
Ne oppresse folke, ne outrede,
Betray Empires, Realmes, or Duchees,
Ne bireuen men her lands ne her mees,
Enpoison folke, ne houses set on fire,
Ne false contracts make for no hire.

Trust, parfite loue, entire charitee,
Feruent will, and entalented corage,
All thewes good, as sitteth well to bee,
Haue women euer of custome and vsage,
And well they conne mans ire all wage,
With soft words, discrete & benigne, (signe.
What they be inward, they shew outward by

Womans harte vnto no crueltie
Enclined is, but they be charitable,
Pitous, deuote ful of humilitie,
Shamefast, debonaire, and amiable,
Dredefull, and of wordes measurable,
What women these haue not parauenture,
Followeth not the way of her nature.

Men saine our first mother natheleslle,
Made all mankind lese his libertee,
And naked it of ioy doubtlesse,
For Goddes heste disobeied she,

When she presumed to taste of the tree
That God forbad that she eate therof should,
And ne had the deuill be, no more she would.

The enuious swelling, that ỹ fend our foe,
Had into man in harte for his wealth,
Sent a serpent, and made her for to goe,
To disceiue Eue: & thus was mans wealth
Biraft him by the fende in a stealth,
The woman not knowing of that disceipt,
God wote full ferre was it from her conceipt.

Wherfore I say, this good woman Eue,
Our father Adam disceiued nought,
There may no man for disceipt it preue,
Properly, but that she in harte and thought,
Had it compassed first or she it wrought,
And for soth was not her impression,
Wen may it call no disceipt of her, by reason.

Ne no wight disceiueth, but he purpose,
The fende this disceipt cast, and nothing she:
Then is it wrong to deeme or suppose,
That of his harme she should the cause be,
Wite the fende, and his be the maugre,
And excused haue her innocence,
Saue only that she brake obedience.

And touching this, full fewe men there be,
Uuneths any dare I safely say,
Fro day to day, as men may all day see,
But that the heste of God they disobay,
Haue this in mind sirs I you pray,
If that ye be discrete and reasonable,
Ye woll her hold the more excusable.

And wher men say, in man is stedfastnesse,
And woman is of her courage vnstable:
Who may of Adam beare soth a witnesse?
Telleth me this, was he not chaungeable?
They both weren in o case semblable,
Saue willyng the fende disceiued Eue,
And so did she not Adam, by your leue.

Yet was this sinne happy to mankind,
The fende disceiued was for all his sleight,
For aught he coud him in his sleights wind:
For his trespace, came fro heauen on height
God, to discharge man of his weight,
Flesh and blood tooke of a virgine,
And suffred death, him to deliuer of pine.

And God, to whō there may nothing hid be,
If he in woman knowen had soth malice,
As men recorde of hem in generaltee,
Of our Ladie of life reperatrice,
Nolde haue be borne, but that she of vice
Was voide, and full of vertue well he wist,
Endowed, of her to be borne him list.

Her heaped vertue hath soth excellence,
That all to leane is mans faculte,
To declare it, and therefore in suspence,
Her due praysing put needs must be,
But thus I say, verely that she
Next God, best frende is that to man longeth,
The key of mercie by her girdle hongeth.

And of mercy hath euery man soth need,
That resting that, farewell the ioy of man,
And of her power now taketh right good heed
She mercie may well, and purchase can,
Displeaseth her not, honoureth that woman,
And other women all for her sake,
And but ye doe, your sorow shall awake.

In any booke also where can ye find,
That of the werkes of death or of life
Of Jesu, spelleth or maketh any mind,
That women him forsoke, for woo or strife?
Where was there any wight so ententife
About him, as woman? proued none,
The Apostles him forsoken euerichone.

Women forsoke him not, for all the sayeth
Of holy church in woman left onely,
This is no lees, for thus holy writ sayeth,
Looke and ye shall so finde it hardly:
And therefore I may well preue thereby,
That in woman reigneth stable constaunce,
And in men is the chaunge of variaunce.

Thus precious gēme of martirs, Margarite,
That of thy blood dredest none effusion,
Thou louer true, thou maiden manfuete,
Thou constant woman in thy passion,
Ouercame the fendes temptacion,
And many a wight conuerted thy doctrine,
Unto the faith of holy God thou virgine.

But vnderstādeth this, I onely cōmend her
By encheson of her virginitie, (nought
Trusteth it came neuer in my thought,
For euer werre I yenst chastitie,
And euer shall, but lo this meueth me,
Her louing harte, and constant to her lay,
Driue out of remembraunce I ne may.

Now holdeth this for ferme, and for no lie,
That this true and iust commendacion
Of women, tel I for no flatterie,
Ne because of pride or elacion,
But only lo, for this entencion,
To yeue hem courage of perseueraunce,
In vertue, and her honour to auaunce.

The

The moze vertue, the lasse is the pride,
Uertue so digne is and so noble in kind,
That vice and he woll not in fere abide,
He putteth vices cleane out of his mind,
He flieth fro hem, he leaueth hem behind,
O woman that of vertue art hostresse,
Great is thy honour and thy wozthinesse.

Then woll I thus conclude and define,
We you commaund our ministers echone,
That ready ye be our hestes to encline,
That of these false men our rebell fone,
Ye do punishment and that anone,
Voide hem our court, & banish hem foz euer,
So that therein moze come they neuer.

Fulfilled be it, ceasing all delaie,
Looke there be none excusacion,
Written in the lustie moneth of Maie,
In our paleis where many a million
Of louers true haue habitacion,
The yere of grace ioyfull and iocond,
A thousand foure hundzed and second.

Explicit.

A Ballade in commendacion of our Ladie.

A Thousand stories could I more rehearce,
Of olde Poetes, touching this matter,
How that Cupide ỹ harts ganse pearce,
Of his seruauntes setting hem in fere,
Lo here of loue the guerdone and greuaunce,
That euer with wo her seruaunts do auaũce.

Wherfoze now plainly I wol my stile dresse,
Of one to speake, at need that woll not faile,
Alas foz dole I ne can ne may expresse,
Her passing prise, and that is no mernaile,
O winde of grace, now blowe vnto my saile,
O auriate licour of Cleo foz to write,
My penne enspire of that I woll endite.

Alas, vnwozthie I am and vnable,
To loue soch one, all women surmounting,
But she be benigne to me and merciable,
That is of pitie the well and eke the spring,
Wherefoze of her in laude and in praising,
So as I can, suppozted by her grace,
Right thus I say, kneeling before her face.

O sterre of sterres with thy streames clere,
Sterre of the sea, to shipmen light and gide,
O lustie liuing most pleasaunt to appere,
Whose bright beams ỹ clouds may not hide,
O way of life to hem that go oz ride,
Hauen after tempest surest vp to riue,
On me haue mercy foz thy ioyes fiue.

O rightfull rule, O bote of holinesse,
And lightsome line of pitie foz to plain,
Originall beginning of grace & all goodnesse,
And cleanest conduct of vertue most souerain,
Mother of mercy, our trouble to restrain,
Chamber and closet clennest of chastitie,
And named herbzough of the deitie.

O closet garden all void of weedes wicke,
Cristallin welle, of cleerenesse clere consigned,
Fructified olive of olies faire and thicke,
And redolent Cedze most dere wozthy digned,
Remẽber on sinners that to thee be assigned,
Oz wicked fendes her wzath on hem wzeche,
Lanterne of light thou her liues leche.

Paradise of pleasaũce, gladsome to al good,
Benigne bzaũchelet of the Pine tree,
Umarie enuermayled, refresher of our blood,
Licour ayen al langour, ỹ palled may not bee,
Blisfull blomie blosome, biding in bountee,
Thy mantell of mercy on our misery spzede,
And er wo away wzap vs vnder thy wede.

O rodie rosier, flouring without spine,
Fountain all filthlesse, as birell currant clere,
Sum dzop of thy gracefull dewe to vs pzopine,
O light without nebule, shining in thy sphere,
Medicine to mischeues, pucell without pere,
Flãbe doun the dolefull light of thine influẽce,
Remẽbzing thy seruants foz thy magnificẽce.

Of all chzisten pzotectrice and tuttle,
Retourne of exiled put in the pzoscription,
To hem that erren in the pathe of her sequele,
To werie fozwandzed, tent and pauilion,
To faint and to fresh the pausacion,
Unto vnrestie, both rest and remedie,
Fruitfull to all tho that in her affie.

To hem that reumen thou art itenerarie,
O blisfull bzaute to knights of thy warre,
To werie werkmen she is diourne denarie,
Mede vnto mariners that haue sayled farre,
Laureate croune streming as a starre,
To hem that put hem in palastre foz thy sake,
Cours of her cõquest, thou white as any lake.

O mirth of martyzs, sweter than Sitole,
Of Confessours also richest donatise,

Unto virgines eternall Lauriole,
Afore all woman hauing prerogatife,
Mother and maide, both widow and wife,
Of all the world is none but thou alone,
Now lith thou may, be succour to my mone.

O trustie turtle true fastest of all true,
O curteisie columbe, replete of all meknesse,
O Nightingale with thy notes newe,
O Popiniay pured with all clennesse,
O laureroke of loue, lighting with sweetnesse,
Phebus awaiting till on thy brest he light,
Under thy wing at domesday vs dight.

O rubie rubified in the passion
Of thy sonne, vs haue emong in mind,
O stedfast diametre of duracion,
That fewe feres any time might thou find,
For none to him was founden halfe so kind,
O hardie hart, O louing creature,
What was it but loue that made ẏ so endure.

Semely saphire, depe loupe & blew ewage,
Stable as the loupe ewage of pitee,
This is to say the freshest of visage,
Thou lovest vnchaunged hem ẏ serven thee,
And if offence or varying in hem bee,
Thou art aie redie vpon her wo to rue,
And hem receivest with hart full true.

O goodly gladded when that Gabriell,
With ioy thee grette, that may not be nõbred,
Or halfe the blisse who coude write or tell,
When the holy ghost to thee was obumbred,
Wherthrough fendes were bitterly encõbred
O wemlesse maide embelished in his birth,
That man and angell thereof hadden mirth.

Lo here the blosme and the budde of glory,
Of which the prophet so long spake before,
Lo here the same that was in memory,
Of Esaie, so long or she was borne,
Lo here of Dauid the delicious corne,
Lo here the ground of life in to builde,
Becomming man our raunsome for to yelde.

O glorious viole and vite inviolate,
O firie Titan, perling with thy bemes,
Whose vertuous brightnes was in brest bibrat
That al the world embelished with ẏ leames,
Conservatrice of kings, dukes, and realmes,
Of Isaies seede sweet Sunamite,
Welcure my mourning mine own Margarite.

O soueraignest sought out of Sion,
Cockle with gold dewe from aboue berained,
Dew bush vnbrent fireleste fire set on,
Flaming with fervẽce not with heat pained,
During daisie that no weather stained,
Fleece vndefouled of Gentilest Gedion,
And fructifying fayrest the yerd of Aaron.

The mighty arche, probatike pisine,
Laughing auroze, and of peace olive,
Columpne and base, vp bearing from abime,
Why nere I conning here to discrive,
Chosen of Ioseph, whom he tooke to wive,
Unknowing him, childing by miracle,
And of our manly figure the tabernacle.

I haue none English cõvenient and digne,
Whe hearts heale lady thee with to honour,
Iuorie cleane, therefore I will resigne
Into thine hand, till thou list succour,
To helpe my making both florish and sour,
Then should I shew in loue how I brend,
In songs making, thy name to commend.

For if I could before thine excellence,
Singen in loue I would what I fele,
And euer standen Lady in thy presence,
To shew in open how I loue you wele,
And lith although your heart be made of stele,
To you withouten any discevraunce,
I'ay en vous toute ma fiance.

Where might I loue euer better beset,
Than in this Lilie liking to behold,
That lace of loue, the bond so well thou knit,
That I may see thee or mine heart cold,
And or I passe out my daies old,
Tofore singing euermore vtterly,
Your yen two wol slea me sodainly.

For loue I langour, blissed be soch sickness,
Sith it is for you my hartily suffisaunce,
I can not els say in my destresse,
So faire one hath mine heart in gouernaũce,
And after that I begin on esperaunce,
With feble entune, though it thine hert perce,
Yet for thy sake this letter I do reherce.

God wote on muslike I can not, but I gesse,
Alas why so, that I might say or sing,
So lone I you mine own soveraun maistresse,
And euer shall without departing,
Mirrour of beautie, for you out should I ring,
In remembraunce eke of your yen clere,
Thus ferre from you my soveraine Lady dere.

So would God your loue would me so,
Sith for your sake I sing day by day,
Heart why nilt thou breake at two,
Sith with my lady dwell I ne may,
Thus many a roundell and many a virelay,
In fresh English, when I me laiser find,

I doe record, on you to haue mind.

Now lady mine, sith I you loue and drede,
And you vnchaunged euer find in o degree,
whose grace ne may flie fro your womãhede,
Disdaineth not for to remember on me,
Mine hart bleedeth for may not you see,
And sith ye wote my meaning desirous,
Plores pour moy s'il vous plaist amoureus.

What marualle is though I in paine be,
I am departed from you my soueraine,
Fortune alas, dont vient la destenie,
That in no wise I can ne may attaine
To see the beautie of your eyen twain,
Wherefore I say, for tristesse doeth me grame,
Tant me fait mal departir de ma dame.

why nere my willing brought to such esploit,
That I might say for ioy of your presence,
Or a mon cœur ce quæ voulloit,
Or a mon cœur, the highest excellence
That euer had wight, & sith mine aduertence
Is in you, reweth on my paines smart,
I am so sore wounded to the hart.

To liue well merry two louers were pfere,
So may I say withouten any blame,
If any man too wild were,
I coud him teach for to be tame,
Let him go loue, and see where it be game,
For I am bridled vnto soberneste,
For her that is of women cheefe princesse.

But euer whẽ thoght my hart shuld enbrace,
Then vnto me is best remedie,
When I looke on your goodly fresh face,
So merrie a mirrour coud I neuer espie,
And if I coud, I would it magnifie,
For neuer none was so faire ifound,
To reken hem all, and allo Rosamound.

And finally, with mouth and will present
Of double eye without repentaunce,
Mine hart I yeue you Lady in this entent,
That ye shall holly therof haue gouernaunce,
Taking my leaue with harts obeysaunce,
(Salue regina) singing last of all,
To be our helpe when we to thee call.

All our loue is but idlenesse, (taine,
Saue your loue alone, who might thereto at-
Who so woll haue a name of gentillesse,
I counsaile him in loue that he not laine,
Thou sweet Lady, refute in euery paine,
Whose mercy most to me auaileth,
To gie by grace, when that fortune faileth.

Nought may be told withouten any fable,
Your high renome, your womanly beaute,
Your gouernaunce to all worship able,
Putteth euery hart in ease in his degree,
O violet, O floure delitee,
Sith I am for you so amerous,
Estreignes moy de cœur ioyeus.

With feruent hart my brest hath brost on fire,
L'ardant espoer en mon cœur point est mort,
D'auoir l'amour de celle que ie desire,
I meane you sweet most pleasaunt of port,
Et ie say bien que ce n'est pas mon tort,
That for you sing, so as I may for mone
For your departing, alone I liue alone.

Though I might, I would none other chese,
In your seruice I would been founden sadde,
Therefore I loue no labour that ye lese,
when in longing forest ye be stadde,
Looke vp you louers, and be right gladde
Ayenst saint Valentines day,
For I haue chese that neuer forsake I may.

Explicit.

❧ Iohn Gower vnto the noble *King Henrie the fourth.*

Noble worthie king Henrie the fearth,
In whom the gladde fortune is befall,
The people to gouern here vpon yearth,
God hath thee chosen in comfort of vs all,
The worship of this lãd, which was doun fall,
Now stant vpright thrugh grace of thy good-
Which euery man is hold for to bliesse. (nesse,

The high God of his iustice alone,
The right which longeth to thy regalie,
Declared hath to stand in thy persone,
And more than God may no man iustifie,
Thy title is know vpon thine auncestrie,
The lands folke hath eke thy right affirmed,
So stant thy reigne, of God & man confirmed.

There is no man may say in otherwise,
That God himself ne hath the right declared,
whereof the land is bound to thy seruise,
which for defaut of helpe hath long cared,
But now there is no mans hart spared,
To loue and serue, and worth thy pleasaunce,
And all this is thrugh Gods purueiaunce.

In all thing which is of God begonne,
There followeth grace, if it be well gouerned,
Thus tellen they which old bookes conne,
Wherof my lord I wote well thou art lerned,
Aske of thy God, so shalt thou not be warned
Of no request, which is reasonable,
For God vnto the good is fauourable.

King Salomon, which had at his asking,
Of God what thing him was leuest craue,
He chase wisedome vnto gouerning
Of Gods folke, the which he would saue,
And as he chase, it fill him for to haue,
For through his wit while that his reign last,
He gate him peace and rest into his last.

But Alexander, as telleth his storie,
Vnto the God besought in other way,
Of all the world to win the victorie,
So that vnder his sword it might obay,
In warre he had all that he would pray,
The mighty God behight him that beheest
The world wan, and had it of conquest.

But though it fill at thilke time so,
That Alexander his asking hath atcheued,
This sinfull world was all Paynem tho,
Was none which hath the high God beleued,
No wonder was though thilk world was gre-
Though a tirant his purpose might win, (ued,
All was vengeaunce and infortune of sin.

But now the faith of Christ is come aplace
Emong the princes in this yearth here,
It sitte hem well to doe pitie and grace,
But yet it must be tempored in manere,
For they finden cause in the mattere,
Upon the point, what afterward betide,
The law of right shall not be laied aside.

So may a king of warre the voyage
Ordaine and take, as he thereto is hold,
To claime and aske his rightfull heritage
In all places where it is withhold,
But otherwise if God himselfe wold,
Affirme loue and peace betweene the kings,
Peace is the best aboue all earthly things.

Good is to eschew warre, and natheles,
A king may make warre vpon his right,
For of battaile the finall end is pees,
Thus stant the law, that a worthy knight
Upon his trouth may go to the fight,
But if so were that he might chese,
Better is the peace, of which may no mã lese.

To stere peace ought euerich on liue,
First for to sette his liege lord in rest,
And eke these other men that they ne striue,
For so this land may stand at best,
What king that would be the worthiest,
The more he might our deadly warre cease,
The more he should his worthinesse encrease.

Peace is the chiefe of all the worlds welth,
And to the heauen it leadeth eke the way,
Peace is of soule and life the mans health,
Of pestilence, and doth the warre away,
My liege lord take heed of that I say,
If warre may be left, take peace on hand,
Which may not be without gods sand.

With peace stant euery creature in rest,
Without peace there may no life be glad,
Aboue all other good peace is the best,
Peace hath himselfe when warre is al bestad,
The peace is safe, the warre is euer drad,
Peace is of all charitie the kay,
Which hath the life and soule for to way.

My liege lord, if that thee list to seech
The soth ensãples what ỹ war hath wrought
Thou shalt well here of wise mens speech,
That deadly warre turneth into nought,
For if these old bookes be well ysought,
Ther mist thou se what thing ỹ war hath do,
Both of conquest and conquerour also.

For vaine honour, or for the worlds good,
They that whilome the strong warres made,
Wher be they now, bethink well in thy mood.
The day is gone, the night is derke and sade,
Her crueltie which made hem then glade,
They sorrowen now, & yet haue nauzt ỹ more,
The blood is shad, which no man may restore.

The warre is mother of the wrongs all,
It sleeth the priest in holy church at masse,
Forlith the maid, and doth her flour to fall,
The warre maketh the great citie lasse,
And doth the law his rules ouerpasse,
Ther is nothing wherof mischefe may grow,
Which is not caused of the warre I trow.

The war bringeth in pouerty at his heeles,
Whereof the commen people is sore greued,
The war hath set his cart on thilke wheeles,
Where that fortune may nat be beleued:
For when men wene best to haue atcheued,
Full oft it is all new to begin,
The warre hath nothing liker, tho he win.

For thy, my worthy prince in Christs halue,
As for a part, whose faith thou hast be gude,
Ley to this old sore a new salue,
And do the warre away, what so betide,

Pur-

Purchase peace and set it by thy side,
And suffer nat thy people be deuoured,
So shal thy name euer after stand honoured.

If any man be now, or euer was,
Ayen the peace thy prcuy counsailour,
Let God be of thy counsaile in this caas,
And put away the cruell warriour,
For God which is of man the creatour,
He would not men slough his creature,
Without cause of deadly forfaiture.

Where needeth most, behoueth most to looke,
My lord, how so thy wars be without,
Of time passed, who that heed tooke,
Good were at home to see right well about,
For euermore, the worst is for to dout,
But if thou mightest parfite peace attaine,
There should be no cause for to plaine.

About a king good counsaile is to preise,
Aboue all other things most vailable,
But yet a king within himselfe shall peise,
And seene the things that be reasonable,
And therevpon he shall his wits stable,
Among the men to set peace in euin,
For loue of him which is the king of heuin.

A, well is him that shed neuer blood,
But if it were in cause of rightwisenesse,
For if a king the perill vnderstood,
What is to slee the people, then I gesse,
The deadly warres and the heauinesse,
Whereof peace distourbed is full oft,
Should at some time cease and were soft.

O king, fulfilled of grace and knighthode,
Remember vpon this point for Christes sake,
If peace be profered vnto thy manhode,
Thine honour saue, let it not be forsake,
Though thou ỹ warres darst wel vndertake,
After reason yet temper thy courage,
For like to peace there is none auauntage.

My worthy lord, thinke well how so befall
Of thilke lore, as holy bookes saine,
Christ is the head, and we be members all,
As well the subiect as the soueraigne,
So sit it well, that charitie be plaine,
Which vnto God himselfe most accordeth,
So as the lore of Christs word recordeth.

In the old law or Christ himselfe was bore,
Among the ten commaundements I rede,
How that manslaughter should be forbore,
Such was the wil that time of the godhede,
But afterward whē Christ toke his manhede
Peace was the first thing he let do crie
Ayenst the worlds rancour and enuie.

And or Christ went out of this earth here,
And sighed to heuin, he made his testament,
Where he bequeath to his disciples there,
And paue his peace, which is the foundement
Of charite, without whose assent,
The worlds peace may neuer well be tried,
Ne loue kept, ne law iustified.

The Iews with ỹ painims hadden werre,
But they among themselfe stode euer in peace,
Why should then our peace stand out of erre,
Which Christ hath chose vnto his own encrese,
For Christ is more than was Moyses,
And Christ hath set the parfite of the law,
The which should in no wise be withdraw.

To peue vs peace, was cause why Christ dide,
Without peace, may nothing stond auailed,
But now a man may see on euery side,
How Christs faith is euery day assailed,
With paintms destroyed and so batailed,
That for defaut of helpe and of defence,
Unneth hath Christ his due reuerence.

The right faith to keepe of holy church,
The first point is named of knighthode,
And euery man is hold for to worch
Upon the point that stant to his manhode:
But now alas, the fame is spred so brode,
That euery man this thing complaineth,
And yet is there no man that helpe ordaineth.

The worlds cause is waited ouer all,
There be the warres ready to the full,
But Christs owne cause in speciall,
There ben the swerds and the speares dull,
And with the sentence of the Popes bull,
As for to done the folke paine obay,
The church is tourned all another way.

It is wonder aboue any mans wit,
Without war how Christs faith was won,
And we that be vpon this earth yet,
Ne keepe it not as it was first begon,
To euery creature vnder the sonne,
Christ bad himselfe that we should preach,
And to the folke his Euangely teach.

More light it is to keep than to make,
But that we founden made tofore hond,
We keepe not, but let it lightly slake,
The peace of Christ hath al to broke his bōd,
We rest our selfe, and suffren euery lond
To slee each other, as thing vndefended,
So stant the war, and peace is not amended.

But

But though the head of holy church aboue
Ne do not all his hole businesse,
Among the people to set peace and loue,
These kings oughten of her right wisenesse
Her owne cause among hemselfe redresse.
Tho Peters ship as now hath lost his stere,
I lithe in hem the barge for to stere.

If holy church after the dutie
Of Christs word ne be nat all auised
To make peace, accord, and vnitie
Among the kings that be now deuised,
Yet nathcles the law stand assised
Of mans wit to be so reasonable,
Without that to stand himselfe stable.

Of holy church we ben children all,
And euery child is hold for to bow
Unto the mother, how that euer it fall,
Or els he must reason disallow,
And for that cause a knight shall first auow,
The right of holy church to defend,
That no man shall the priuiledge offend.

Thus were it good to set all in euin
The worlds princes and the prelats both,
For loue of him which is the king of heuin,
And if men should algate worken wroth,
The sarazins, which vnto Christ ben loth,
Let men be armed ayenst hem to fight,
So may the knight his deed of armes right.

Upon iii. points stant Christs peace oppressed,
First holy church in her selfe deuided,
Which ought of reason first to be redressed,
But yet so high a cause is not decided,
And thus when humble patience is prided,
The remenaunt which that they should rule,
No wonder is though it stand out of rule.

Of that the head is sicke, the limmes aken,
These reigns that to Christs peace belongen,
For worlds good these deadly wars maken,
Which helpelesse, as in ballaunce hongen,
The head aboue hem hath nat vndertongen
To set peace, but euery man fleech other,
And in this wise hath charitie no brother.

The two defauts bringen in the third,
Of miscreants that seene how we debate,
Betweene the two they fallen in amid,
Where now all day they find an open gate,
Lo, thus the deadly warre stant algate,
But euer I hope of king Henries grace,
That he it is which shall the peace embrace.

My worthy noble prince and king annoint,
Whom God hath of his grace so preserued,
Behold and see the world vpon this point,
As for thy part, that Christs peace be serued,
So shall thy high mede be deserued,
To him which all shall quite at last,
For this life here may no while last.

See Alexander, Hector, and Julius,
See Machabeus, Dauid, and Josue,
See Charlemaine, Godefray, and Arthus,
Fulfilled of warre and of mortalite,
Her fame abitte, but all is but vanite,
For death, which hath the warres vnder foot,
Hath made an end, of which there is no boot.

So many a man the soth wete and know,
That peace is good for euery king to haue,
The fortune of the warre is euer vnknow,
But where peace is, there is ỹ marches saue,
That now is vp, to morrow is vnder graue,
The mightie God hath all grace in hand,
Without him men may not long stand.

At the tennes to win or lese a chase,
May no like wete or that the ball be ronne,
Al stant in God, what thing mẽ shal purchase,
The end is in him or that it be begonne,
Men saine the woll when it is well sponne,
Doth that the cloth is strong and profitable,
And els it may neuer be durable.

The worlds chaunces vpon auenture
Ben euer set, but thilke chaunce of pees
Is so behouely to the creature,
That is aboue all other peerlees,
But it may not beget nathelees
Among the men to last any while,
But where the hert is plaine without guile.

The peace is as it were a sacrament
To forze the God, I shall with words plaine,
Without any double entendement
Be treated for the trouth cannot faine,
But if the men within himselfe ben vaine,
The substaunce of the peace may not be trew,
But euery day it chaungeth vpon new.

But who that is of charitie parfite,
He voideth all sleights ferre away,
And set his word vpon the same plite,
Where that his hert hath found a siker way,
And thus when conscience is truly way,
And that these ben handled with the wise,
It shall abide, and stand in all wise.

The Apostle saith, Ther may no like be good
Which is not grounded vpon charitie,
For charitie ne shed neuer blood,
So hath the warre as there no propertie,

For

For thilke vertue which is laid pitie,
With charitie so ferforth is acquainted,
That in her may no falle semblant be painted.

Cassodore, whose writing is authorised,
Saith: Where that pitie reigneth, is grace,
Thrugh which ỹ peace hath al his welth assi-
So that of warre he dredeth no manace, (sed,
Where pitie dwelleth in the same place,
There may no deadly crueltie soiourne,
Wherof that mercy should his way tourne.

To see what pitie forthwith mercy doth,
The cronique is at Rome in thilke empire
Of Constantine, which is a tale sooth,
When him was leuer his owne death desire,
Than do the yong children to martire,
Of crueltie he left the quarele,
Pitie he wrought, and pitie was his hele.

For thilke mans pitie which he dede,
God was pitous, and made him hole at all,
Siluester came, and in the same stede
Yaue him baptisme first in speciall,
Which did away the sinne origin all,
And all his lepre it hath so purified,
That his pitie for euer is magnified.

Pitie was cause why this Emperour
Was hole in body and in soule both,
And Rome also was set in thilke honour
Of Christs faith, so that they leue or loth,
Which hadden be with Christ tofore wroth,
Receiued were vnto Christs lore,
Thus shall pitie be praised euermore.

My worthy liege lord, Henry by name,
Which England hast to gouerne and right,
Wen ought well thy pitie to proclaime,
Which openliche in all the worlds sight
It sheweth, with the helpe of God almight,
To yeue vs peace, which lõg hath be debated,
Whereof thy prise shall neuer be abated.

My lord, in whome hath euer yet be found
Pitie, without spot of violence,
Keepe thilke peace alway within bound,
Which God hath planted in thy conscience,
So shall the cronique of thy patience
Among the saints be taken into memorie,
To the legend of perdurable glorie.

And to thine earthly prise, so as I can,
Which euery man is hold to commend,
I Gower, which am all thy liege man,
This letter vnto thine excellence I send,
As I which euer vnto my liues end
Woll pray for the state of thy persone,
In worship of thy sceptre and thy throne.

Not onely to my king, of peace I write,
But to these other princes Christen all,
That ech of hem his owne hart endite,
And leale the warre or more mischeefe fall,
Set eke the rightfull puppe vpon his stall,
Keepe charitie, and draw pitie to hand,
Maintaine law, and so the peace shall stand.

Explicit carmen, de pacis commendatione quod ad laudem & memoriam serenissimi principis domini regis Henrici Quarti, suus humilis orator Iohannes Gower composuit.

Electus Christi, pie rex Henrice fuisti
Qui bene venisti, cum propria regna petisti
Tu mala vicisti que bonis bona restituisti
Et populo tristi, noua gaudia contribuisti
Est mihi spes lata, quod adhuc per te reno-
Succedent fata veteri probitate beata (uata
Est tibi nam grata, gratia sponte data.
Henrici quarti, primus regni fuit annus
Quo mihi defecit visus ad acta mea,
Omnia tẽpus habẽt: finẽ natura ministrat
Quem virtute sua frangere nemo potest,
Vltra posse nihil quãuis mihi velle remansit
Amplius vt scribam non mihi posse manet,
Dũ potui scripsi, sed nũc quia curua senec-
Turbauit sensus scripta relinquo scolis (tus
Scribat qui veniet post me discretior alter
Ammodo nãque manus & mea penna silẽt
Hoc tamen in fine verborũ queso meorum
Prospera quod statuat regna futura Deus.

Explicit.

¶ A saying of Dan John.

THere be foure thinges that maketh man a foole,
Honour first putteth him in outrage,
And alder next, solitarie and soole,
The second is vnweldy crooked age,
Women also bring men in dotage,
And mighty wine in many diuers wise
Distempren folke which been holden wise.

¶ Yet of the same.

THere ben foure things causing great foly
Honour first, and vnwildy age,
Women and wine I dare eke specifie,

Make

Make wise men fallen in dotage,
Wherefore by counsaile of Philosophers sage,
In great honour learne this of me,
With thine estate haue humilite.

Balade de bon consail.

IF it befall that God thee list visite
With any tourment or aduersite,
Thanke first the lord, and thy selfe to quite,
Upon sufferaunce and humilite
Found thou thy quarell, what euer that it be:
Make thy defence, & thou shalt haue no losse,
The remembrance of Christ and of his crosse.

Explicit.

Of the Cuckow and the Nightingale.

Chaucer dreameth that hee heareth the Cuckow and the Nightingale contend for excellencie in singing.

THE God of loue, and benedicite,
How mightie and howe great a lord is he,
For he can make of low herts hie,
And of high low, and like for to die,
And hard harts he can maken free.

He can make within a little stound
Of sicke folke hole, fresh, and sound,
And of hole he can make seeke,
He can bind and vnbinden eke
That he woll haue bounden or vnbound.

To tell his might my wit may not suffice,
For he can make of wise folke full nice,
For he may do all that he woll deuice,
And lithy folke to distropen vice,
And proud herts he can make agrise.

Shortly all that euer he woll he may,
Against him dare no wight say nay,
For he can glad and greue whom him liketh,
And who that he woll, he lougheth or siketh,
And most his might he shedeth euer in May.

For euery true gentle heart free,
That with him is or thinketh for to be,
Againe May now shall haue some stering,
Or to ioy or els to some mourning,
In no season so much, as thinketh me.

For when they may here the birds sing,
And see the floures and the leaues spring,
That bringeth into her remembraunce
A manner ease, medled with greuaunce,
And lustie thoughts full of great longing.

And of that longing commeth heuinesse,
And thereof groweth oft great sicknesse,
And for lacke of that that they desire,
And thus in May ben harts set on fire,
So that they bremen forth in great distresse.

I speake this of feeling truly,
If I be old and vnlusty,
yet I haue felt of the sicknesse through May
Both hote and cold, and axes euery day,
How fore iwis there wote no wight but I.

I am so shaken with the feuers white,
Of all this May sleepe I but a lite,
And also it is not like to me,
That any heart should sleepie be,
In whom that loue his firie dart woll smite.

But as I lay this other night waking,
I thought how louers had a tokening,
And among hem it was a commune tale,
That it were good to here the Nightingale,
Rather than the leud Cuckow sing.

And then I thought anon as it was day,
I would go some where to assay
If that I might a Nightingale here,
For yet had I none heard of all that yere,
And it was tho the third night of May.

And anone as I the day aspide,
No lenger would I in my bed abide,
But vnto a wood that was fast by,
I went forth alone boldely,
And held the way downe by a brooke side.

Till I came to a laund of white and green,
So faire one had I neuer in been,
The ground was green, ypoudred with daisie
The floures and the greues like hie,
All greene and white, was nothing els seene.

There sate I downe among the faire floures,
And saw the birds trip out of her boures,
There as they rested hem all the night,
They were so ioyfull of the dayes light,
They began of May for to done houres.

They coud that seruice all by rote,
There was many a louely note,
Some song loud as they had plained,
And some in other manner voice yfained,

And

And some all out with the full throte.

They proyned hem, & made hem right gay,
And daunceden and lepten on the spray,
And euermore two and two in fere,
Right so as they had chosen hem to yere
In Fuerere vpon saint Valentines day.

And the riuer that I sate vpon,
It made such a noise as it ron,
Accordaunt with the birds armony,
Me thought it was the best melody
That might ben yheard of any mon.

And for delite, I wote neuer how
I fell in such a slomber and a swow,
Nat all asleepe, ne fully waking,
And in that swow me thought I heard sing
The sorrie bird the leaud cuckow.

And that was on a tree right fast by,
But who was then euill apaid but I:
Now God (qd. I) that died on the crois,
Yeue sorrow on thee, and on thy leaud vois,
Full little ioy haue I now of thy crie.

And as I with the cuckow thus gan chide,
I heard in the next bush beside,
A nightingale so lustely sing,
That with her clere voice she made ring
Through all the greene wood wide.

Ah, good nightingale (qd. I then)
A little hast thou ben too long hen,
For here hath ben the leaud cuckow,
And songen songs rather than hast thou,
I pray to God euill fire her bren.

But now I woll you tell a wonder thing,
As long as I lay in that swouning,
Me thought I wist what the birds ment,
And what they said, & what was her entent,
And of her speech I had good knowing.

There heard I the nightingale say,
Now good cuckow go somewhere away,
And let vs that can singen dwellen here,
For euery wight eschueth thee to here,
Thy songs be so clenge in good fay.

What (qd. she) what may thee aylen now,
It thinketh me, I sing as well as thou,
For my song is both true and plaine,
And though I cannot crakell so in vaine,
As thou dost in thy throte, I wot neuer how.

And euery wight may vnderstand me,
But nightingale so may they not done thee,
For thou hast many a nice queint cry,
I haue thee heard saine, ocy, ocy,
How might I know what that should be?

Ah foole (qd. she) wost thou not what it is,
When that I say, ocy, ocy, ywis,
Then meane I that I would wonder faine,
That all they were shamefully yslaine,
That meanen ought againe loue amis.

And also I would that all tho were dede,
That thinke not in loue her life to lede,
For who so ỹ wol not the God of loue serue,
I dare well say he is worthy to sterue,
And for that skill, ocy, ocy, I grede.

Eye (qd. the cuckow) this is a queint law,
That euery wight shall loue or be to draw,
But I forsake all such companie,
For mine entent is not for to die,
Ne neuer while I liue on loues yoke to draw.

For louers ben the folke that ben on liue,
That most disease haue, and most vnthriue,
And most endure sorrow, wo, and care,
And least feelen of welfare,
What needeth it ayenst trouth to striue.

What (qd. she) thou art out of thy mind,
How might thou in thy churlenesse find
To speake of loues seruaunts in this wise,
For in this world is none so good seruise
To euery wight that gentle is of kind.

For thereof truly commeth all goodnesse,
All honour, and all gentlenesse,
Worship, ease, and all hearts lust,
Parfite ioy, and full assured trust,
Iolitie, pleasaunce, and freshnesse,

Lowlyhead, largesse, and curtesie,
Semelyhead, and true companie,
Drede of shame for to done amis:
For he that truly loues seruaunt is,
Were lother be shamed than to die.

And that this is sooth that I sey,
In that beleeue I will liue and dey,
And cuckow so I rede that thou do ywis:
Then (qd. he) let me neuer haue blisse,
If euer I vnto that counsaile obey.

Nightingale thou speakest wonder faire,
But for all that is the sooth contraire,
For loue is in yong folke but rage,
And in old folke a great dotage,
Who most it vseth, most shall enpaire.

For thereof commeth disease and heuinesse,
Sorow & care, and many a great sickenesse,
Despite, debate, anger, and enuie,
Despayring, shame, vntrust, and ielousie,
Pride, mischeefe, pouertie, and woodnesse.

Louing is an office of despaire,
And one thing is therein that is not faire,
For who that getteth of loue a little blisse,
But if he be alway therewith twis,
He may full soone of age haue his haire.

And Nightingale therefore hold thee nie,
For leue me well, for all thy queint crie,
If thou be ferre or long fro thy make,
Thou shalt be as other that been forsake,
And then thou shalt hoten as doe I.

Fie (qd. she) on thy name and on thee,
The god of Loue ne let thee neuer ithee,
For thou art worse a thousandfold thã wood,
For many one is full worthy and full good,
That had be naught ne had loue ibee.

For euermore loue his seruants amendeth,
And from all euill taches hem defendeth,
And maketh hem to brenne right in a fire,
In trouth and in worshipfull desire,
And whẽ him liketh, ioy inough hem sendeth.

Thou Nightingale he saied, be still,
For loue hath no reason, but it is will,
For oft time vntrue folke he easeth,
And true folke so bitterly he displeaseth,
That for default of courage he let hem spill.

Then tooke I of the Nightingale keepe,
How she cast a sigh out of her deepe,
And saied, alas that euer I was boze,
I can for tene not say one word more,
And right with ẏ word she brast out to weepe.

Alas (qd. she) my hart will to breake,
To hearen thus this leaud bird speake
Of loue, and of his worshipfull seruise,
Now God of loue thou helpe me in some wise,
That I may on this Cuckow been awreake.

Me thought then he stert vp anone,
And glad was I that he was agone,
And euermore the Cuckow as he flay,
Saied farewell, farewell Popingay,
As though he had scorned me alone.

And then came the Nigtingale to mee,
And saied, friend forsooth I thanke thee,
That thou hast liked me to rescow,
And one auow to loue make I now,
That all this May I will thy singer be.

I thanked her, and was right well apaied:
Ye (qd. she) and be thou not dismayed,
Tho thou haue herd the Cuckow erst thã me,
For if I liue, it shall amended be
The next May, if I be not afraied.

And one thing I will rede thee also,
Ne leue thou not the Cuckow, ne his loues so,
For all that he hath saied is strong leasing:
Nay (qd. I) thereto shall nothing me bring,
For loue and it hath doe me much wo.

Ye, vse (qd. she) this medicine
Euery day this May or thou dine,
Go looke vpon the fresh Daisie,
And though thou be for wo in point to die,
That shall full greatly lessen thee of thy pine.

And looke alway that thou be good and trew,
And I will sing one of the songs new
For loue of thee, as loud as I may crie:
And then she began this song full hie,
I shrew all hem that been of loue vntrue.

And when she had song it to the end,
Now farewell (qd. she) for I mote wend,
And god of loue, that can right well, and may,
As much ioy send thee this day,
As any yet louer he euer send.

Thus taketh ẏ Nightingale her leaue of me,
I pray to God alway with her be,
And ioy of loue he send her euermore,
And shilde vs fro the Cuckow and his lore,
For there is not so false a bird as he.

Forth she flew the gentle Nightingale
To all the birds that were in that dale,
And gate hem all into a place in fere,
And besoughten hem that they would here
Her disease, and thus began her tale.

The Cuckow, well it is not for to hide
How the Cuckow and I fast haue chide,
Euer sithen it was day light,
I pray you all that ye doe me right
On that foule false vnkind bridde.

Then spake o bird for all, by one assent,
This matter asketh good auisement,
For we been birdes here in fere,
And sooth it is, the Cuckow is not here,
And therefore we will haue a parliment.

And thereat shall the Egle be, our Lord,
And other peres that been of record,

And

And the Cuckow ſhall be after ſent,
There ſhall be yeue the iudgement,
Or els we ſhall finally make accord.

And this ſhall be without nay
The morrow after ſaint Valentines day,
Under a Maple that is faire and grene,
Before the chamber window of the quene,
At Woodſtocke vpon the grene lay.

She thanked hem, and then her leaue toke
And into an Hauthorne by that broke,
And there ſhe ſate and ſong vpon that tree,
Terme of life loue hath withhold me,
So loud that I with that ſong awoke.

Explicit.

Loud book with thy foule rudenelle,
Sith thou haſte neyther beautie ne eloquence,
Who hath thee cauſed or yeue thee hardineſſe,
For to appeare in my Ladies preſence,
I am full liker thou knoweſt her benevolence,
Full agreeable to all her abying,
For of all good ſhe is the beſt liuing.

Alas that thou ne haddeſt worthineſſe,
To ſhew to her ſome pleaſaunt ſentence,
Sith that ſhe hath through her gentilleſſe
Accepted the ſeruaunt to her digne reuerence,
O, me repenteth that I ne had ſcience
And leiſer als, to make thee more ſtoriſhing,
For of all good ſhe is the beſt liuing.

Beſeech her meekely with all lowlineſſe,
Though I be ferre from her in abſence,
To thinke on my trouth to her ſtedfaſtneſſe,
And to abridge of my ſorrowes the violence,
Which cauſed is, whereof knoweth your ſapience,
She like among to notifie me her liking,
For of all good ſhe is the beſt liuing.

Lenuoye.

Vroye of gladneſſe, and day of Luſtineſſe,
Lucerne a night with heauenly influence
Illumined, root of beautie and goodneſſe,
Sulpires which I effunde in ſilence,
Of grace I beſeech alledge let your writing,
Now of all good, ſith ye be beſt liuing.

Explicit.

Scogan vnto the Lords and *Gentlemen of the Kings houſe.*

In the written copies the title hereof is thus: Here followeth a morall ballade to the Prince, the Duke of Clarence, the Duke of Bedford, the Duke of Gloceſter, the kings ſonnes; by Henry Scogan, at a ſupper among the Marchants in the Vintry at London, in the houſe of Lewis Iohn.

Y noble ſonnes and eke my lordes dere,
I your father called vnwoorthely,
Send vnto you this litle treatiſe here,
Written with mine owne hand full rudely,
Although it be that I not reuerently
Haue written to your eſtates, I you pray
Mine vnconning taketh benignely
For Gods ſake, and herken what I ſay.

I complain me ſore when I remember me
The ſuddaine age that is vpon me fall,
But more I complain my miſpent iuuentute,
The which is impoſſible ayen for to call,
But certainly the moſt complaint of all,
Is to thinke, that I haue be ſo nice,
That I ne would vertues to me call
In all my youth, but vices aye cherice.

Of which I aſke mercy of the Lord,
That art almighty God in maieſtie,
Beſeking to make ſo euen accord
Betwixt thee and my ſoule, that vanitie,
Worldly luſt, ne blind proſperitie,
Haue no lordſhip ouer my fleſh ſo frele,
Thou Lord of reſt and parfite vnitie,
Put fro me vice, and kepe my ſoule hele.

And yeue me might while I haue life a ſpace,
Me to confirme fully to thy pleaſaunce,
Shew to me the abundaunce of thy grace,
And in good werks graunt me perſeuerance,
Of all my youth forget the ignorance,
Yeue me good will to ſerue thee aye to queme,
Set all my life after thine ordinaunce,
And able me to mercy or thou deme.

My lordes dere, why I this complaint write
To you, whom I loue moſt entirely,
Is for to warne you as I can endite,
That time loſt in youth folily,
Greueth a wight bodily and ghoſtly,

I meane him that to lust and vice entend,
Wherefore lords I pray you specially,
Your youth in vertue shapeth to dispend.

☞ Plant the root of youth in such a wise,
That in vertue your growing be alway,
Looke alway goodnesse be in your exercise,
That shall you mighty make at each assay,
The fiend to withstand at each affray,
Passeth wisely this perilous pilgrimage,
Thinke on this word, and werke it every day,
That shall you yeue a parfite floured age.

Taketh also hede how ꝑ these noble clerkes
Writen in her bookes of great sapience,
Saying that faith is ded withouten werkes,
And right so is estate with negligence
Of vertue, and therefore with diligence
☞ Shapeth of vertue so to plant the root,
That ye thereof haue full experience
To worship of your life and soules boot.

☞ Taketh also hede, that lordship ne estate
Without vertue may not long endure,
Thinketh eke how vices and vertue at debate
Haue ben & shall while the world may dure,
And euer the vicious by auenture
Is ouerthrow, and thinketh euermore
That God is Lord of all vertue, and figure
Of all goodnesse, and therfore follow his lore.

My maister Chaucer, God his soule saue,
That in his language was so curious,
He said that the father which is dead & graue,
Biqueth nothing his vertue with his hous
Unto his children, and therefore labourous
Ought ye be, beseeking God of grace
To yeue you might for to be vertuous,
Throgh which ye mist haue part of his place.

☞ Here may ye see that vertuous noblesse
Commeth not to you by way of auncestrie,
But it commeth by lefull busines
Of honest life, and not by slogardzie,
Wherefore in youth I rede you edifie
The house of vertue in such a manere,
That in your age may you keepe and gie
Fro the tempest of worlds wawes here.

☞ Thinketh how betwixe vertue and estate
There is a parfite blessed Mariage,
Uertue is cause of peace, vice of debate
In mans soule, the which be full of courage,
Cherisheth then vertue, vices to outrage,
Dziueth hem away, let hem haue no wonning
In your soules, leseth not the heritage
Which God hath yeue to vertuous liuing.

Take heed also how men of poore degree ☞
Throgh vertue haue be set in great honour,
And euer haue liued in great prosperitie
Throgh cherisshing of vertuous labour,
Thinketh also how many a gouernour
Called to estate, hath be set full low
Throgh misusing of right and of errour,
And therfore I counsaile you vertue to know.

Thus by your ancestors ye may nothing claim
As that my maister Chaucer saieth expresse,
But tẽporal thing, ꝑ men may hurt or maime,
Then is God stocke of vertuous noblesse,
And sith that he is lord of blessednesse,
And made vs all, and for vs all deide,
Followeth him in vertue with full busines,
And of this thing herke how my maister seide.

The first stocke, father of gentilnesse,
What man that claimeth gentill for to be,
Must follow his trace, and all his wits dzesse,
Uertue to looke, and vices for to flie,
For vnto vertue longeth dignitie,
And not the reuers safely dare I deme,
All weare he mitre, corowne, or Diademe.

The first stocke was full of rightwisenesse,
True of his word, sobre, pitous, and free,
Cleane of his ghost, and loued busines
Ayenst the vice of sloth in honeste,
And but his heire loue vertue, as did he,
He is not gentill though he rich seme,
All weare he mitre, croune, or Diademe.

Uice may be an heire to old richesse,
But there may no man, all men may see, ☞
Biqueth his heire his vertuous noblesse,
That is appropried vnto no degree,
But to the first father of Maieste,
That maketh his heires hem ꝑ cã him queme,
All weare he mitre, croune, or Diademe.

Lo, heare this noble Poete of Bzittaine
How lightly in vertuous sentence
The losse on youth of vertue can complaine,
Therefore I pray you with your diligence,
For your profite and Gods reuerence
Temperth fully vertue in your mind,
That when ye come to your iudges presence,
Ye be not vertuelesse then behind.

Many lords haue a manner now adaies,
Though one shew him a vertuous mattere,
Her feruent youth is of so false alaies,
That of that art they haue no ioy to here,
But as a ship that is without a stere,
Dziueth vp and down without gouernaunce,
Wening that caime would last yere by yere,

Right

Right so fare they for very ignoraunce.

For very shame know they not by reason,
That after an eb there cometh a flood ful rage,
In the same wise whē youth passeth his season
Commeth crooked and vnweldie palled age,
And sone after comen the Kalends of dotage,
And if ẏ her youth haue no vertue prouided,
All men woll say fie on her vassalage,
Thus hath her sloth fro worship hem deuided.

Boecius the clerk, as men may rede and see,
Saieth in his booke of Consolation,
What man desireth of Vine or tree,
Plenteous fruit in reaping season,
Must euer eschue to doe oppression
Unto the root, while it is yong and grene,
Thus may ye see well by that inclusion,
That youth vertulesse doeth much tene.

Now seeth there ayenst how vertuous noblenesse,
Rooted in youth with good perseueraunce,
Driueth away all vices and wretchednesse,
As slogardrie, riot, and distaunce,
Seeth eke how vertue causeth suffisaunce,
Seeth eke how vertue voideth all vice,
And who so hath vertue, hath all habūdaunce
Of wele, as ferre as reason can deuise.

Take heed of Tullius Hostilius,
That fro pouert came to high degree
Through vertue, redeth eke of Julius
The conquerour, how poore a man was he,
Yet through his vertue and humilite,
Of many countrey had he in gouernaunce,
Thus vertue bringeth a man to great degree,
Ech wight that lust to do him entendaunce.

Rede here ayenst now of Nero vertulees,
Taketh heed also of proud Balthasare,
They hated vertue, equitie, and pees,
And looke how Antiochus fill fro his chare,
That he his skin and bones all to tare,
Look what mischance they had for her vices,
Who so woll not by these signes beware,
I dare well say infortunate and nice is.

I can no more now say, but hereby may ye see,
How vertue causeth parfite sikernesse,
And vices exilen all prosperitee,
The best is ech man to chose as I gesse,
Doeth as you list, I me excuse expresse,
I would be right sorrie if that ye mischese,
God confirme you in vertuous noblesse,
So that through negligence ye not it lese.

Explicit.

Sometime the world so stedfast was and stable,
That mans word was an obligatioun,
And now it is so false and deceiuable,
That word and deed as in conclusioun
Is nothing like, for tourned is vp so doun
All the world, through mede and fikelnesse,
That all is lost, for lacke of stedfastnesse.

What maketh the world to be so variable,
But lust, that men haue in dissension,
For emong vs a man is hold vnable,
But if he can by some collusion
Doe his neighbour wrong and oppression:
What causeth this but wilfull wretchednesse,
That all is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse.

Trouth is put downe, reason is hold fable,
Vertue hath now no domination,
Pitie is exiled, no man is merciable,
Through couetise is blent discretion,
The world hath made a permutation,
Fro right to wrong, fro trouth to fikelnesse,
That all is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse.

Lenuoye.

Prince desire to be honourable,
Cherish thy folke, and hate extortion,
Suffer nothing that may be reprouable
To thine estate, doen in thy region,
Shew forth the yerd of castigation,
Drede God, do law, loue trouth & worthinesse,
And wed thy folke ayen to stedfastnesse.

Explicit.

Good counsaile of Chaucer.

Flie fro the prease, & dwell with soothfastnesse,
Suffise vnto thy good though it be small,
For horde hath hate, and climbing tikelnesse,
Prease hath enuie, and wele is blent ouer all,
Sauour no more than thee behoue shall,
Rede well thy selfe that other folke canst rede,
And trouth thee shall deliuer, it is no drede.

Paine thee not ech crooked to redresse
In trust of her that tourneth as a ball,
Great rest standeth in little businesse,
Beware also to spurne againe a nall,
Striue not as doeth a crocke with a wall,

Deme thy selfe that demest others dede,
And trouth thee shall deliuer it is no drede.

That thee is sent receiue in buxomenesse,
The wrastling of this world asketh a fall,
Here is no home, here is but wildernesse,
Forth pilgrime, forth beast out of thy stall,
Looke vp on high, and thanke God of all,
Weiue thy lusts, and let thy ghost thee lede,
And trouth thee shall deliuer, it is no drede.

Explicit.

A Balade of the village *without paynting.*

Plaintife to Fortune.

THis wretched worldes transmutation,
As wele and wo, now poor, and now honour,
Without order or due discretion,
Gouerned is by Fortunes errour,
But natheles the lacke of her fauour
Ne may not doe me sing, though that I die,
I'ay tout pardu mon temps & labour,
For finally fortune I defie.

Yet is me left the sight of my reasoun,
To know friend fro foe in thy mirrour,
So much hath yet thy tourning vp & doun
Itaught me to knowen in an hour,
But truly no force of thy reddour
To him that ouer himselfe hath maistrie,
My suffisaunce shall be my succour,
For finally fortune I defie.

O Socrates thou stedfast champion,
She might neuer be thy turmentour,
Thou neuer dredest her oppression,
Ne in her chere found thou no fauour,
Thou knew the deceit of her colour,
And that her most worship is for to lie,
I know her eke a false dissimulour,
For finally fortune I defie.

The answere of Fortune.

No man is wretched, but himselfe it wene,
Ne that hath in himselfe suffisaunce,
Why saiest thou then I am to thee so kene,
That hast thy selfe out of my gouernance?
Say thus, graunt mercy of thine habundance
ỳ thou hast lent or this, thou shalt not strine,
What wost thou yet how I thee woll auance,
And eke thou hast thy best friend aliue.

I haue thee taught deuision betwene
Friend of effect, and friend of countenaunce,
Thee needeth not the gall of an Hine,
That cureth eyen darke for her pennaunce,
Now seest thou clere that were in ignoraunce
Yet holt thine anker, & yet thou maiest arriue
There bounty beareth ỳ key of my substaunce,
And eke thou hast thy best friend aliue.

How many haue I refused to sustene,
Sith I haue thee fostred in thy pleasaunce,
Wolt thou then make a statute on thy quene,
That I shall be aye at thine ordinaunce,
Thou borne art in my reigne of variaunce,
About the whele with other must thou drive,
My lore is bet, then wicke is thy greuaunce,
And eke thou hast thy best friend alive.

The answere to Fortune.

Thy lore I dampne, it is aduersitie,
My frend maist thou not reue blind goddesse,
That I thy friends know, I thanke it thee,
Take hem againe, let hem go lie a presse,
The niggards in keeping her richesse,
Pronostike is, thou wolt her toure assaile,
Wicke appetite commeth aye before sickenesse,
In generall this rule may not faile.

Fortune.

Thou pinchest at my mutabilitie,
For I thee lent a droppe of my richesse,
And now me liketh to withdraw me,
Why shouldest thou my royaltie oppresse,
The sea may ebbe and flow more and lesse,
The welken hath might to shene, rain, & haile,
Right so must I kithe my brotilnesse,
In generall this rule may not faile.

The Plaintife.

Lo, the execution of the maiestie,
That all purueigheth of his rightwisenesse,
That same thing fortune clepen ye,
Ye blind beasts full of leaudnesse,
The heauen hath propertie of sikernesse,
This world hath euer restlesse trauaile,
The last day is end of mine entresse,
In generall this rule may not faile.

The enuoye of Fortune.

Princes I pray you of your gentilnesse

Let

Let not this man and me thus crie and plain,
And I shall quite you this business,
And if ye liste releue him of his pain,
Pray ye his best frende of his noblesse,
That to some better state he may attain.

Lenuoy.

O broke been the statutes hie in heauen,
That create were eternally tendure,
Sithe that I see the bright Goddes seuen,
Howe wepe and waile, and passion endure,
As may in yearthy a mortall creature:
Alas, fro whens may this thing procede,
Of which errour I die almost for drede.

By word eterne whilom was it shape,
That fro the fifth cercle in no manere,
Ne might of teares doune escape,
But now so weepeth Uenus in her sphere,
That with her teares she wol drench vs here,
Alas Scogan this is for thine offence,
Thou causest this deluge of pestilence.

Hast thou not saied in blaspheme of ỹ goddis,
Through pride, or through thy gret rekelnes,
Such things as in the law of loue forbode is,
That for thy lady saw not thy distresse,
Therfore thou paue her vp at Highelmesse?
Alas Scogan of olde folke ne yong,
Was neuer erst Scogan blamed for his tong.

Thou drew in scorne Cupide eke to record,
Of thilke rebell word that thou hast spoken,
For which he wol no longer be thy Lord,
And Scogan, though his bow be not broken,
He woll not with his arowes be wroken
On thee ne me, ne none of our figure,
We shall of him haue neither hurte ne cure.

Now certes frend I drede of thine vnhape,
Lest for thy gilte the wrech of loue procede
On all hem that been hore and round of shape,
That be so likely folke to spede,
Then we shall of our labour haue our mede,
But well I wot thou wolt answere and say,
Lo old Grisell list to renne and play.

Nay Scogan say not so for I me excuse,
God helpe me so, in no time doubtles,
Ne thinke I neuer of sleepe wake my muse,
That rusteth in my sheath still in pees,
While I was yong I put her forth in prees,
But all shall passe that men prise or time,
That euery man his tourne as for his time.

Scogan thou kneelest at the stremes hedde
Of grace, of all honour, and of worthinesse,
In thende of which I am dull as dedde,
Forgotten in solitarie wildernesse,
Yet Scogan thinke on Tullius kindnesse,
Wynd thy frende there it may fructifie,
Farewel, and looke thou neuer eft loue defie.

Explicit.

O forth King, rule thee by Sapience,
Bishop be able to minister doctrine,
Lorde to true counsaile yeue audience,
Womanhode to chastitie euer encline,
Knight let thy deedes worthip determine,
Be rightous Judge in sauing thy name,
Rich do almose, lest thou lese blisse with shame.

People obey your king and the lawe,
Age be ruled by good religion,
True seruāt be dredful & kepe thee vnder awe,
And thou poore, fie on presumpcion,
Inobedience to youth is vtter destruction,
Remember you how God hath set you so,
And doe your part as ye be ordeined to.

Th. Occleue to his empty purse.

T O you my purse and to none other wight,
Complayne I, for ye be my Ladie dere,
I am sorie now that ye be light,
For certes ye now make me heauie chere,
Me were as leefe laid vpon a bere,
For which vnto your mercy thus I crie,
Be heauie againe or els mote I die.

Now vouchsafe this day or it be night,
That I of you the blisful sowne may here,
Or see your colour like the sunne bright,
That of yelonesse had neuer pere,
Ye be my life, ye be my hertes stere,
Queene of comfort and of good companie,
Be heauy againe, or els mote I die.

Now purse that art to me my liues light,
And sauiour, as downe in this world here,
Out of this towne helpe me by your might,
Sith that you woll not be my treasure,
For I am shaue as nere as any frere,
But I pray vnto your curtesie,
Be heauy againe, or els mote I die.

Explicit.

¶ Occleue vnto the King.

O Conquerour of Brutes Albion,
Which that by lyne and free election,
Been very king, this to you I send,
And ye that may all harmes amend,
Haue minde vpon my supplicacion.

Explicit.

A Ballade of good counsaile, translated out of Latine verses into English, by Dan Iohn Lidgate, cleped the monke of Burie.

Consider well euery circumstaunce,
Of what estate euer thou bee,
Riche, stronge, or mighty of puissance,
Prudent or wise, discrete or besie,
The dome of folkes in soch thou may nat flie,
What euer thou doest trust well this,
A wicked tonge woll alway deme amis.

For in thy porte or in apparaile,
If thou be cladde and honestly be saine,
Anone the people of malice woll not faile,
Without aduice or reason for to sain,
That thine array is made or wrought in vain
Suffer hem speake, and trust right wel this,
A wicked tonge wol alway deme amis.

Thou will to kings be equipolent,
With great lordes euin and peregall,
And if thou be torne and all to rent,
Then woll they say, and iangle ouer all,
Thou art a slougarde that neuer thriue shall,
Suffre hem speke, and trust right well this,
A wicked tonge woll alway deme amis.

If it befall that thou take a wife,
They woll falsly say in their entent,
Thou art likely euer to liue in strife,
Voide of all rest, without aledgement,
Wifes ben maistres, this is their iudgement,
Suffren al their spech, & trust right wel this,
A wicked tonge woll alway deme amis.

If thou be faire and excellent of beaute,
Yet woll they say that thou art amourous,
If thou be foule and vglie on to see,
They woll affirme that thou art vicious,
The people of language is so dispitous,
Suffre all their spech, & trust right well this,
A wicked tonge woll alway deme amis.

If so be that of parfitenesse,
Thou hast vowed to liue in chastitee,
Then woll folke, of thy person expresse,
Thou art impotent tengendre in thy degree,
And thus where thou be chaste or deslauie,
Suffre hem speake, and trust right well this,
A wicked tonge woll alway deme amis.

If thou be fatte other corpolent,
Then wol they sain thou art a great gloton,
A deuourer, or els vinolent,
If thou be leane or megre of fashion,
Call thee a nigard in their opinion,
Suffre them speake, and trust right wel this,
A wicked tonge woll alway deme amis.

If thou be rich, some woll yeue thee laude,
And say it commeth of prudent gouernaunce,
And some wol saine it commeth of fraude,
Other by sleght, or false cheuisaunce,
To sain the worst, folke haue so gret plesafice,
What suffre hem say, and trust right well this
A wicked tonge woll alway deme amis.

If thou be sadde or sobre of countenaunce,
Men woll sain thou thinkest some treason,
And if thou be glad of daliaunce,
Men woll deme it desolucion,
And call faire speach adulacion,
Yet let hem speake, and trust right well this,
A wicked tonge wol alway deme amis.

Who that is holy by perfection,
Men of malice woll clip him ypocrite,
And who is mery of clene entention,
Men sain in riot he doth him delite, (white,
Some mourne in blacke, some loue in clothes
Suffre men speake, and trust right well this,
A wicked tonge woll alway deme amis.

Honest aray men deme it pompe and pride,
And who goeth poore, men cal him a waster,
And who goeth still men marke him on ẏ side,
Seine that he is a spie or agiler:
Who wasteth not, men saine he hath treasour,
Whereof conclude and trust right well this,
A wicked tonge will alway deme amis.

Who speketh moch mē clepeth him prudēt,
Who that debateth, mē sain that he is hardie,
And who saieth litel with great sentement,
Some folke yet wol wite him of folie.
Trouth is put downe, and vp goth flatterie,
And who ẏ list plainly know the cause of this,
A wicked tonge woll alway deme amis.

For

For though a man were as pacient,
As was Dauid throw his humilite,
Or with Salomon in wisedome as prudent,
Or in knighthode egall with Iosue,
Or manly proued, as Iudas Machabe,
Yet for al that, trust right well this,
A wicked tonge woll alway deme amis.

And though a man had the prowesse
Of worthy Hector, Troies champioun,
The loue of Troylus, or the kindnesse,
Or of Cesar the famous high renoun,
With all Alexaunders dominacioun,
Yet for all that trust right well this,
A wicked tonge woll alway deme amis.

Or though a man of high or low degree,
Of Tullius had the lugred eloquence,
Or of Seneca the moralitee,
Or of Caton forsight and prouidence,
The cõquest of Charles, Artures magnificẽce,
Yet for all that trust right well this,
A wicked tonge woll alway deeme amis.

Touching of women, the parfit Innocence
Though that they had, of Hester ỹ nobleneſſe,
Or of Grisilde, the humble pacience,
Or of Judith, the prouid stableneſſe,
Or Polixenes virginall clennesse,
Yet dare I seine, and trust right wel this,
Some wicked tong would deme of thẽ amis.

The wifely trouth of Penelope
Though they it had in her possession,
Helenes beautie, the kindnesse of Medee,
The loue vnfayned of Martia Caton,
Or Alcestes trewe affection,
Yet dare I saine and trust right well this,
A wicked tonge wol alway deme amis.

Than sooth it is that no man may eschew
The swerde of tonges, but it will kerue & bite,
Full hard it is a man for to remew,
Out of their daunger him for to aquite,
Wo to the tonges that hem selfe delite,
To hinder or slaũder, & set their study in this,
And their pleasaunces to deme alway amis.

Most noble princes, cherishers of vertue,
Remembreth you of high discretion,
The first vertue most pleasing to Ieſu,
(By the writing and sentence of Caton)
Is a good tonge in his opinion,
Thastile the reuerse of wisedome do this,
Voideth your hearing frõ al that deme amis.

A Ballade in the Praise and *commendacion of maſter Geffray Chaucer for his golden eloquence.*

Maister Geffray Chaucer, that now lithe in graue,
The noble Rhetorician, and Poet of great Britaine,
That worthy was, the laurer of Poetry to haue
For this his labour, and the palme to attaine,
Which first made to distil, and reine,
The gold dewe dropes, of speech and eloquẽce,
Into English tonge, through his excellence.

Explicit.

Here followeth certaine workes of Geffray Chaucer, annexed to *the impreſsion printed in the yeare*, 1561. *With an addition of ſome things of Chaucers* writing, neuer before this time printed, 1602. All collected and adioyned to his former workes by Iohn Stowe.

A ballade made by Chaucer, teaching what is gentilnes, or whom is worthy to be called gentill.

The first stocke Father of gentilnes,
What man desireth gentil for to bee,
Must followe his trace, and all his wittes dreis,
Vertue to loue, and vices for to flee,
For vnto vertue longeth dignitee,
And not the reuers fally dare I deme,
All weare he miter crowne or diademe.

This first stocke was full of rightwisnes,
Trew of his worde, sober, pitous and free,
Clene of his goste and loued besinesse,
Against the vice of slouth in honeste,
And but his eyre loue vertue as did he,
He is not gentill though he rich seme,
All weare he miter, crowne or diademe.

Vicesse may well be eyre to old richesse,
But there may no man, as men may well see,
Bequethe his eyre his vertues noblenesse,
That

That is appropried vnto no degree,
But to the first father in maieſtee,
That maketh his eyres them that him queme
All weare he miter, crowne or diademe.

Explicit.

A Prouerbe againſt couetiſe and negligence.

What ſhall theſe clothes manifold
Lo this hote ſomers day,
After great heate commeth cold,
No man caſt his pilch away.
Of al this world ỹ large cõpaſſe,
It will not in mine armes twaine,
Who ſo mokel woll enbrace,
Litell thereof he ſhall diſtraine.

Explicit.

A ballade which Chaucer made againſt women vnconſtaunt.

Madame for your new fangleneſſe,
Many a ſeruaunt haue ye put out of your grace,
I take my leue of your vnſtedfaſtneſſe,
For well I wote, while ye to liue haue ſpace,
Ye can not loue full halfe yere in a place,
To newe things, your luſt is euer kene,
In ſtede of blew, thus may ye weare all grene.

Right as a mirrour ỹ nothing may enpreſſe,
But lightly as it cometh, ſo mote it paſſe,
So fares your loue, your works bear witnes
There is no faith may your harte enbrace,
But as a wedercock, that turneth his face
With euery winde, ye fare, and that is ſeene,
In ſtede of blew, thus may ye weare all grene.

Ye might be ſhrined for your brothilneſſe,
Better then Dalyda Creſſeide, or Candace,
For euer in chaũging ſtondeth your ſikernes,
That catche may no wight, from your hert a(race,
If ye loſe one, ye can wel twein purchace
Al light for ſomar, ye wot well what I meene,
In ſtede of blew, thus may ye were all grene.

Explicit.

Here followeth a ballade which Chaucer made in the praiſe, or rather diſprayſe, of women for their doublenes.

This world is full of variaunce,
In euery thing who taketh hede
That faith & truſt, & all conſtance,
Exiled been this is no drede,
And ſaue onely in womanhed,
I can ſee no ſekernes,
But for all that, yet as I rede,
Be ware alway of doublenes.

Alſo that freſhe lomer floures
White and rede, blewe and greene,
Been ſodenly, with winter ſhours,
Made feinte and fade, without wene:
That truſt is none as ye may ſeene,
In no thing, nor no ſtedfaſtnes,
Except in women, thus I meene,
Yet aye beware of doublenes.

The croked Mone, this is no tale,
Some while iſchene and bright of hewe,
And after that full derke and pale,
And euery moneth chaungeth newe,
That who the veray ſoth knewe,
All things is bilt on brotlenes,
Saue that women aye be trewe,
Yet aye beware of doublenes.

The luſty freſhe ſommers day,
And Phebus with his beames clere,
Towards night they drawe away
And none lenger luſt appere,
That in this preſent life now here,
Nothing abideth in his fairenes,
Saue women aye be found intere,
And deuoide of doublenes.

The ſea eke, with his ſterne wawes,
Ebbe day floweth new againe,
And by concours of his lawes
The ebbe floweth in certeine:
After grete drought, there commeth a raine,
That farewel here all ſtabelnes,
Saue that women be hole and plaine,
Yet aye beware of doublenes.

Fortunes whele goeth round about,
A thouſand times, day and night,
Whoſe courſe ſtandeth euer in doubt,
For to tranſmew, ſhe is ſo light,
For which aduerteth in your ſight,
The vntruſt of worldy ſikelnes,
Saue women, which of kindly right,
Ne hath no teche of doublenes.

What man may the wind reſtraine,
Or hold a ſnake by the taile,
Or a ſlipper ele conſtraine,
That it will voide, without faile,

Or who can driue so a naile,
To make sure new fonglenes,
Saue women that can gie their saile,
To row their boote with doublenes.

At euery hauen they can ariue,
Where as they wote is good passage,
Of innocence they can not striue,
With wawes nor no rockes rage,
So happy is their lodemanage,
With needle and stone their course to dresse,
That Salomon was not so sage,
To find in them no doublenes.

Therefore who so them accuse,
Of any double entencion,
To speake, rowne, other to muse,
To pinch at their condicion,
All is but false collusion,
I dare right well the sothe expresse,
They haue no better protection,
But shrowd them vnder doublenes.

So well fortuned is their chaunce,
The dice to turne vp so doune,
With sise and sincke they can auaunce,
And then by reuolucion,
They set a fell conclusion,
Of lombes, as in soothfastnes,
Though clerkes make mencion,
Their kinde is fret with doublenes.

Sampson had experience,
That women were full trew ifound,
When Dalyda of innocence,
With sheeres gan his heere to round,
To speake also of Rosamound,
And Cleopatris faithfulnes,
The stories plainly will confound,
Men that apeche their doublenes.

Single thing ne is not praised,
Nor of old is of no renoun,
In balaunce when they be peised,
For lacke of waight they be bore doun,
And for this cause of iust reason.
These women al of rightwisenes,
Of choise and free election,
Moste loue eschaunge & doublenes.

Lenuoye.

O Ye women which been enclined,
By influence of your nature,
To been as pure as gold ryned,
In your truth for to endure,
Arme your selfe in strong armure,
Least men assaile your sikernes,
Set on your brest your selfe to assure,
A mighty shield of doublenes.

Explicit.

¶ This worke folowing was compiled by Chaucer, and it is called the craft of louers.

MOral is a similitude who liste
their balades sewe,
The craft of Loues curious
arguments,
For some been false and some
been founden trewe,
And some bin double of entendements,
Thus louers with their morall documents,
And eloquent langage they can examplifie,
The craft of loue what it doth signifie.

Who list vnto this balades haue inspectiō,
Thinke that loues lordships excellente,
Is remedy for disease and correction,
To wofull harte and body impotent,
Suppose the maker that he be negligent,
In his compilyng holde him excusable,
Because his spirites be sory and lamentable.

Most souerain lady surmounting your noble-
O intenuate Ienipre & daisie delicious (nes,
My trust, mine helth, my cordiall foundres,
O Medicine sanatife to sores langorous,
O comfortable creature of louers amorous,
O excellent herber of louely countenaunce,
Be regester my loue in your remembraunce.

Certes sir your peinted eloquence,
So gay, so freshe and eke so talcatife,
It doth transcend the wit of dame Prudence,
For to declare your thought or to discriue,
So gloriously glad langage ye contriue,
Of your conseite, your thought, & your entent,
I wil beware for drede or I be shent.

O rubicunde Rose, and white as the lilly,
O clarified Chrystal of worldly portraiture,
O Courtin figure resplendent with glory,
O Geme of beaute, o Carboucle shining pure,
Your fairnes exceedeth ỹ craft of dame nature,
Most womanly behauing your louely coūte-
Be regester my loue in your remēbrāce. (nāce,

What auaileth sir your proclamacion,
Of curious talking, not touching to sadnes,
It is but winde, flatering, and adulacion,
Imesurable thought of worldly wildnes,
Which is chiefe cause of ghostly feblenes,
Your wil, your thought, your double entende-
I wil beware of drede, or I be shent. (ment,

My

My wit, my thought, and mine inuencion,
Is for to please you my lady soueraine,
And for your loue throw many a region,
I would be exiled, so that ye wold not disdain
To haue pity on me when I complaine,
In wele and wo to suffre perturbaunce,
So that ye woll haue me in remembraunce.

What is your will plainly ye do expresse,
That maketh this curious supplicacion,
Sey on sir on hertly tenderesse,
Beth well aduised of vaine delectacion,
At your beginning thinke on the termination,
Passe not your boundes be not to negligent,
And euer beware for dred or ye be shent.

Your goodly behauing your beaute & counte=
Maketh me incline to do you reuerēce, (nāce
Your louely lokīg your glorious gouernāce,
Ouercōmeth my spirits my wit & my prudēce
Some drop of grace, of your magnificence,
Unto your seruaunt ye shew attendaunce,
And regester my loue in your remembraunce.

O comberous thought of mans fragilite,
O feruent will of lustes furious,
O cruel corage causing aduersite,
Of womens corrupcion and eke contrarious,
Remember man that chaunge is perilous,
To breke ꝑ virginite of virgines innocent,
Wherfore beware mankind or thou be shent.

My peine is preuy, impossible to deserue,
My lamentable thoughts by casting mour=
O general Judge Jesu sitting superne, (ning,
Graciously cōuert the loue of my swete thing,
O amiable lady gracious and beninge,
I put me wholy in your gouernaunce,
Exile me not out of your remembraunce.

Me seemeth by langage ye be some protestate
Or els some curious gloser discouable,
What is your name meekely I make regrate,
Or of what science or craft commendable,
I am a lady excellent, and honorable,
He must be gay that should be to mine entent,
Wherefore I will be ware or I be shent.

Lord God this is a sharpe examinacion,
Of her that is most in my memorie,
Unto you lady I make certificacion,
My name is trew loue of carnall desiderie,
Of mans copulacion the very exemplarie,
Which am one of your seruaūts of pleasaūce,
I must be cheefe called to remembraunce.

I haue sought true loue of yeres great proces,
Yet found I neuer loue but for a season.
Some men be diuerse & know no gentilnes,
And some lacke both wisedome and reason,
In some men is trust in some men is treason,
Wherfore I will conclude by auisement,
And euer beware for dredе that I be shent.

The rector Tullius so gay of eloquence,
And Ouide ꝑ sheweth the craft of loue expres,
With habundaunce of Salomons prudence,
And pulcritude of Absalons fairenesse,
And I were possessed with Jobs great richesse,
Manly as Sāpson my person to auaunce,
Yet should I submit me in your remembraunce.

Now sir if that it please your noblenesse,
To giue aduertence to my question,
What thing is pleasure of swetnesse,
And is most bitter in finall succession?
Or what thing geueth man occasion
In tender age for to be concupiscent?
Resolue this question or dredе sir ye be shent.

My soueraigne lady, Ouide in his writing
Saith that desire of worldy concupiscence,
Is for a time is swete in his worching,
And in his end he causeth great offence:
Notwithstanding my lady dame Prudence,
Greene flowring age, a manly countenaunce,
Causeth ladies to haue it in remembraunce.

Your goodly answer so notable in substaūce,
Wold cause the hart of womanhede conuert
Unto delite of naturall pleasaunce:
But of one thing I wold fayne be expert,
Why mens langage wol procure & transuert
The wil of women & virgines innocent?
Wherefore I am afeard or I be shent.

Let neuer the loue of true loue be losed,
(My soueraine lady) in no maner wise,
In your confidence my wordes I haue closed,
My amyable loue to you I do promise,
So that ye knit the knot of exercise,
Both locke and key ye haue in gouernaunce,
Emprynt my loue in your remembraunce,

O very trust and I were certefied,
The plain entention of your hartes cordiall,
Me seemeth in blisse then were I glorified,
Unto your pleasure I would be at your call,
But euer I feare of chaunces casuall,
Of fraude, disceipt, and langage insolent,
Then were I sure maidenhed should be shent.

Ther was neuer tresour of terrestrial richesse,
Nor precious stones rekened innumerable,
To be of cōparison vnto your high goodnes,
Aboue all creatures to me most amiable,

Trust

Trust not ỳ cõtrary I was neuer disceuabell,
Keepe well true loue, forge no dissemblaunce,
And graciously take me to your remẽbraunce.

Me semeth by feiture of womãly properte,
Ye shuld be trusty and trewe of promis,
I finde in you no false duplicite,
Wherefore true loue ye haue my here I wis,
And euermore shall endure so haue I blis,
The federalie made with good auisement,
God graunt grace that nether of vs be shent.

When Phebus fresh was in chare splẽdent,
In the moneth of Maie erly in a morning,
I hard two louers proker this argument,
In the yeere of our Lord a M. by rekenyng,
CCCCL. and VIII. yere followyng,
O potent princesse conserue true louers all,
And graunt them thy region ỽ blisse celestiall.

¶ Explicit the craft of louers.

A Ballade.

Of their nature they greatly them delite,
With holy face feined for the nones,
In saintwarie their frẽds to visite,
More for reliques than for saincts bones,
Though they be closed vnder precious stones,
To gete them pardon lyke their old vsages,
To kisse no shrines but lusty quike Images.

Whẽ maidẽs ar wedded ỽ household haue take
All their humility is exiled away,
And the cruel hartes beginneth to awake,
They do all the busie cure ỳ they can or may,
To vexe their houshold maisters ỳ soth for to say,
Wherefore ye põg mẽ I rede you for thy,
Beware alway, the blind eats many a fly.

Of this mater I dare make no lenger relaciõ,
For in default of slepe my spirits weren faint,
In my studie I haue had so lõg an habitacion,
That my body ỽ my gost are greuously attaint,
And therefore of this proces I mak no lẽger cõpt,
But whether ỳ ỳ blind eat flesh or fish, (plaint,
I pray God keepe the flie out of my dish.

Now I make an end, ỽ lay me doune to rest,
For I know by experience verament,
If maydens and wiues knew and wist,
Who made the matter he should be shent,
Wherefore I pray God omnipotent,
Him saue and keepe both night and daie.
Written in the lusty season of Maie.

Explicit.

The x. Commaundements of Loue.

Certes ferre extendeth yet my reason,
This matter as it should be, to discriue,
But I trust your grace will in this season,
Conslder how with connyng that I striue,
For in his fauour coud I neuer arriue,
Eloquẽce this Ballade hath in great despite,
The maker lacketh maner to endite.

Of Loues cõmaundements x. is the number,
As afterward shall rudely be rehearsed,
And louers in no wise depart a sunder,
Where as they be obserued and redressed,
Daunger and vnkindnes been oppressed,
And that is commaunded this to make,
Is your owne all other to forsake.

Faith.

Faith is the first and principally to tell,
Very loue requireth such credence,
That eche beleue other as true as the Gospel,
Without adulacion or flatteryng audience,
In true meanyng and trustie confidence,
Paint not your cõnyng with colour ne fable,
For then your loue must needs be vnstable.

Entencion.

In the second to treate of Entencion,
Your louer to please do your busie cure,
For as myn author Romance maketh mẽciõ,
Without entent your loue may not endure,
As women will thereof I am right sure,
Endeuour with harte, will, and thought,
To please him onely ỳ her loue hath sought.

Discrecion.

In your dealyng euer be discrete,
Set not your loue there as it shall be losed,
Aduertise in your mind whether he be mete,
That vnto him your hart may be disclosed,
And after as you find him then disposed,
Point by discretion your hour, time, ỽ place,
Cõueniently meting with armes to embrace.

Pacience.

Of these cõmaundements, the iiii. is pacièce,
☞ though by trous cozage your louer be mcued,
With soft wozdes and humble obedience,
His wzath may sone be swaged and releued,
And thus his loue obteyned and acheued,
Will in you roote with greater diligence,
Bicause of your meke and womanly pacience.

Secretnesse.

Secretly behaue you in your werkes,
In shewing coũtenaũce oz meuing of your iye,
Though soch behauoz to some folke be darke,
He that hath loued will it soone aspie,
Thus your selfe your counsaile may descrie,
☞ Make pzuy to your deling as few as ye may,
Foz iii. may keepe a counsel if twain be away.

Pzudence.

☞ Let pzudẽce be gouernoz of your bzidel reine,
Set not your loue in so feruent wise,
But that in goodly hast ye may refreine,
If your louer list you to dispise,
☞ Romaũce mine auctour wold you this aduise,
Ty slacke your loue foz if ye do not so,
That wanton lust will tourne you into wo.

Perseueraunce.

☞ Stablish your loue in so stedfast wise,
If that ye thinke your louer will be trew,
As entirely as you can deuise,
Loue him onely and refuse all new,
Then shall not your wozship chaũge his hew,
Foz certes masteres then is he to blame,
But if that he wil quite you with the same.

Pitie.

☞ Be piteous to him as womãhod requireth,
That foz your loue endureth paines smart,
Whom so soze your pleasaunt looke enfireth,
That pzinted is your beauty in his hart,
And wounded lieth without knife oz dart,
There let your pitie spzed without restraint,
Foz lacke of pitie, let not your seruaunt faint.

Measure.

Take mesure in your talking be not outrage,
Foz this rehearseth Romance de la Rose,
☞ A man endued with plenteous langage,
Oft tyme is denied his purpose,
Take measure in langage wisedome ingrose,
☞ Foz mesure as right well pzoued is by reason,
Things vnseasonable setteth in season.

Mercie.

Soch daunger exile him vtterly,
Ouer all mercy to occupie his place,
To piteous complaints your eares apply,
And receiue your seruaunt in grace,
To him that bound is in loues lace,
Shew fauour lady and be not merciles,
Least ye be called a common murderes.

Lenuoye.

When ye vnto this balade haue inspection,
In my makyng holde me excusable,
It is submitted vnto your cozrection,
Consider that my connyng is disable,
To write to you the figure vniable,
All deuoide of connyng and experience,
Mayer of inditying, reason and eloquence.

Trust it well the maker your owne,
You to obey while his lyfe may endure,
To do you seruice as a man vnknowne,
No guerdone desiring of yearthly treasure,
But if it might accozd with your pleasure,
Foz true seruice him to auaunce,
And call him into your remembzaunce.

¶ Explicit the x. commaundements of Loue.

The ix. Ladies woorthie.

Quene Sinope.

PRofulgent in pzeciousnesse
O Sinope queen,
Of al feminine bearing the
sceptre and regalie,
Subduing ỹ large coũtrie
of Armenia as it was seue
maugre their mights thou
bzought thẽ to applie,
Thin honoz to encrese, thy power to magnifie,
O renomed Hercules with al thy põpous host,
& his Pzinces tooke ỹ pzisoner & put to flight
(thine hoste.

Ladie Ipolite.

(spake of Ipolit,
Yet Hercules wexed red foz shame, when I
Chief patrones & captain of ỹ people of Sinope,
which with amozous ther & cozagious mizt,
Smote thee to ground foz all thy crueltie,
Wherfoze ỹ dukedom of Diomedes & dignitie,
Unto her great land and glozie perpetuall,
Attributed is with triumph Laureall,

Ladie

Ladie Deifile.

The noble triumphe of this Lady Deifile,
In releue & succor of ẏ great duke of Athenes,
She chastised & brought into perpetual exile,
The aureat citezeins of mighty Thebes,
The strong brasen pillers there had no reles,
But she with her sister Argia thē did doun cast,
And with furious fire the citee brent at last.

Ladie Teuca.

O pulchrior sole in beautie full lucident,
Of all femine most formous flour, (feruēt,
In Italy reigning with great cheualry right
Chastised ẏ Romains as maistres & cōqueror,
O lady Teuca moch was thy glorie & honor,
Yet moch more was to cōmēde thy benignite,
In thy parfite liuing and virginall chastitie.

Queene Pantasile.

O ye Trogeās for this noble quene Pātasile,
sorow her mortalitie with dolorous cōpassiō,
Her loue was to you so pregnaunt and fertile,
That against ẏ proud Grekes made defensiō,
With her victorious hād was all her affectiō,
To lash ẏ Greks to groūd was her harts ioy,
To reuēge ẏ coward death of Hector of Troy.

Queene Thamiris.

O thou rigorous quene Thamiris inuincible,
Upon ẏ strong & hideous people of citees rei=
Which by thy power & wits sensible, (ning,
Thou tokest in battail Cyrus the great king
Of Perce & Mede, his head of in blood liyng,
Thou badest him drinke ẏ blood had thursted,
And xxii. M. of his hoste there were distressed.

Ladie Lampedo.

The famous trūpe of gold forged so bright,
Hath blowen so vp the fame & glory enuiron,
Of this lady Lāpedo with her sister Marthesi
that al ẏ land of Feminie, Europe, & Epheson,
Be yelden & applied lowly to her subiection,
Many an high toure she raised, & built toures
Perpetuelly to last with huge wals strōg. (lōg

Quene Semiramys.

Lo here Semiramys quene of great Babilō,
Most generous gem & floure of louely fauor,
whose excellēt power fro Mede vnto septētriō
Florished in her regally as a mighty cōqueror,
subdued al Barbary: & zorast ẏ king of honor,
she slue in Ethiop, & cōqueced Armony in Inde,
In which non entred but Alexander & she as I (finde.

Ladie Menalip.

Also the ladie Menalip thy sister deere,
Whose marcial power no mā coud withstand,
Through the worlde was not found her pere,
The famous duke Thesus she had in hand,
She chastised hym and all his land,
The proude Greekes mightely she did assaile,
Ouercame & vanquished them in battaile.

Explicit the Ballades of the ix. worthies of Ladies.

A Lone walking
In thought plainyng
And sore sighing } All desolate,

Me remembryng
Of my liuyng
My death wishing } Both early and late.

Infortunate
Is so my fate
That wote ye what } Out of measure

My life I hate:
Thus desperate
In such poore estate } Doe I endure.

Of other cure
Am I not sure,
Thus to endure } Is hard certain.

Suche is my vre
I you ensure,
What creature } May haue more pain.

My truthe so plaine
Is take in vaine
And great disdaine } In remembraunce.

Yet I full faine
Would me cōplaine
Me to abstaine } From this penaunce.

But in substaunce
None allegeaunce
Of my greuaunce } Can I not finde.

Right so my chaūce
With displesaunce
Doeth me auaunce. } And thus an end.

Explicit.

A Ballade.

IN the season of Feuerere
when it was full cold,
Frost, and Snowe, Hayle,
Raine, hath dominacō,
With chaūgable elemēts,
and windes manifold,
Which hath grouēd, flour, & herbe, vnder iurisdiccō,
For a tyme to dispose after their correction,
And yet Aprill with his pleasaunt shoures,
Dissolueth ỹ snow, & brīgeth forth his flours.

Of whose inuencion ye louers may be glad,
For they bryng in the Kalendes of Maie,
And ye with countenaunce demure, meke & sad,
Owe for to worship, the iustie floures alwaie,
And in especiall one is called see of the daie,
The Daisee, a floure white and rede,
And in French called La bele Margarete.

O commendable floure and most in mind,
O floure so gracious of excellence,
O amiable Margerite exalted of natife kind,
Unto whō I must resort with all my diligēce,
With hart wil & thought, with most lowly obe-
Ey to be your seruāt, & ye my regēt, (dience,
For lyfe ne death neuer to repent.

Of this processe now forth will I proceed,
Which happeth me with great disdaine,
As for the time thereof I take lest heed,
For vnto me was brought the sore paine,
Therfore my cause was the more to cōplaine,
Yet vnto me my greuaunce was the lesse,
That I was so nigh my lady and maistresse.

There where she was present in this place,
I hauyng in harte great aduersitee,
Except only the fortune and good grace
Of her, whose I am, the which releeued mee,
And my great dures vnlased hath thee,
And brought me out of the fearfull greuaunce,
If it were her ease, it were to me pleasaunce.

As for the wo which I did endure,
It was to me a very pleasaunt pain,
Seyng it was for that faire creature,
Which is my Lady and louerain,
In whose presence to rest I would be fain,
So that I wist it were her pleasure,
For she is from all distaunce my protectour.

Though vnto me dredful were the chaūce,
No maner of gentilnes oweth me to blame:
For I had leuer suffer of death the penaunce,
Thā she should for me haue dishonor or shame
Or in any wise lose a drop of her good name,
So wisely God for his endelesse mercis,
Graūt euery true loue, to haue ioy of his ladie.

Explicit.

A Ballade.

OMercifull and O merci-
able,
King of Kinges, and fa-
ther of pitee,
Whose might and mercy
is incomperable,
O prince eterne, O migh-
tie Lord say we,
To whom mercy is giuen of propertie,
On thy seruaunt that lieth in prison bound,
Haue thou mercy or that his harte be wound.

And ỹ thou wilt graunt to him thy prisoner,
Free libertie, and lose him out of pain,
All his desires and all his heauy chere,
To all gladnesse they were restored again,
Thy high vēgeāce, why shold thou not refrain
And shew mercy, sith he is penitent,
Now helpe him lord, & let him not be shent.

But sith it is so, there is a trespas done,
Unto Mercy let yeld the trespassour,
It is her office to redresse it sone,
For trespasse to mercie is a mirrour,
And like as the swete, hath the pyce by sourc,
So by trespasse, mercy hath all her might,
Without trespasse, mercy hath lacke of light.

What shold Physike do but if sikenes were,
What needeth salue, but if there were sore,
What needeth drīk, wher thirst hath no power
What should mercy do, but trespas goe afore,
But trespas be, mercy woll be little store,
Without trespas neuer execution,
May mercy haue ne chiefe perfection.

The cause at this time of my writyng,
And touching mercy to whom I make mone,
Is for feare lest my souereigne and swetyng,
I meane her that loueliest is none,
With me is displeased for causes more thē one,
What causes they be ỹ knoweth God & she,
But so do not I alas it forthinketh me.

What see she in me, what defaut or offence,
What haue I do that she on me disdaine,
How might I doe come to her presence,
To tell my complaint whereof I were faine,

I

I drede to looke, to speake, or to complayne,
To her that hath my harte euery deale,
So help me God I wold al thing wer weale.

For in this case came I neuer or now,
In loues daunce so farre to hold the trace,
For with mine ease, scape I ne mow,
Out of this daunger except her good grace,
For though my countenaunce be mery in her face
As semeth to her by word or by chere,
Yet her good grace sitteth mine harte ful nere.

And if ỹ my soueraine haue any meruayle,
Why I to her now and afore haue wrote,
She may well thinke it is no great trauaile,
To him that is in loue brought so hote:
It is a simple tree that falleth with one stroke,
That meane I, though ỹ my soueraine tofore
Me hath denied, yet grace may come to more.

But maistres for the good will that I haue (you ought,
And euermore shal as long as my life dureth,
Pitie your seruãt & keepe him in your thought,
And giue him some cõfort or medicin, & cureth
His feruent ague, that encreaseth ỹ renueth,
So greuous ben his paines & his sighes sore,
That without your mercie, his dayes be all (forlore.

Go little bill, go forth and hie thee fast,
And recommande me, & excuse me as thou can,
For very feebleneſſe thus am I at the last,
My pen is worn, my hew is pale and wan,
My yen been sonken, disfigured like no man,
Till death his dart, that causeth for to smart,
My corps haue cõsumed, then farewell sweet (hart.

O doughter of Phebus in vertuous apparẽce
My loue elect in my remembraunce,
My careful harte distreined cause of absence,
Till ye my Empryse me release my greuaũce,
Upon you is set my lyfe and mine attendance,
Without recure I wis vntill,
Ye graunt true harte to haue his will.

Thus my dere sweting in a traunce I doe lie,
And shal til sum drops of pity from you spring,
I meane your mercie that lieth my hart nie,
That me may reioyce, & cause me for to sing,
These termes of loue, lo I haue won the ring,
My goodly maistres. Thus of his good grace
God graũt her blisse in heauẽ to haue a place,

Explicit.

Here followeth how Mercurie with Pallas, Venus, and Minerua, appeared to Paris of Troie, he sleeping by a fountaine.

Pallas loquitur ad Parisum de Troie.

SOnne of Priamus gentil Paris of Troie,
Wake of thy sleepe, behold vs Goddes three,
Wee haue brought to thee encrease of ioye,
To thy discretion reporting our beautie,
Take here this Appell and well deuise thee,
Which of vs is fairest in thy sight,
And giue thou it, we pray thee gentill knight.

Pallas loquitur primo.

If so be thou giue it vnto me Paris,
This shall I giue vnto thy worthines,
Honour, conquest, nobley, loue and prise,
Victory, courage, force, and hardines,
Good auenture, and famous manlines,
For that Apple all this giue I to thee,
Consider this Paris, and giue it vnto mee.

Venus loquitur ad Parisum.

Nay giue it me and this shall I you giue,
Glad aspect with fauour and fairenes,
And loue of ladies also whyle that ye liue,
Famous stature, and Princely seemelinesse,
Accoording to your native gentilnes,
Understande this gift well I you aduise,
And giue it me hardy Paris.

Minerua loquitur ad Parisum.

Se ye Paris take heed vnto me,
Thou art a Prince borne by discent,
And for to rule thy royall dignitie,
I shall thee giue first intendement,
Discretion, prudence in right iudgement,
Which in a Prince, is thing most conuenable,
Giue it me I am to haue it able.

Explicit.

A ballad pleasaunt.

I Haue a Ladie where so ye bee,
That seldome is she soueraine of my thought,

On whose beautie when I behold and see,
Remembring me how well she is wrought,
I thank fortune that to her grace me brought,
So faire is she but nothing angelike,
Her beauty is to none other like.

For hardly and she were made of brasse,
Face and all, she hath enough fairenes,
Her eyen been holow & greene as any grasse,
And Rauinish yelow is her sounitres,
Thereto she hath of euery comelines,
Such quantity giuen her by nature,
That with the least she is of her stature.

And as a bolt her browes been ibent,
And betill browed she is also withall,
And of her wit as simple and innocent,
As is a child that can no good at all,
She is not thicke, her stature is but small,
Her fingers been little, and nothing long,
Her skin is smooth as any Oxes tong.

Thereto she is so wise in daliaunce,
And beset her words so womanly,
That her to heare it doth me displeasaunce,
For that she saieth, is said so conningly,
That when there be no mo than she and I,
I had leuer she were of talking still,
Then that she should so goodly speach spill.

And sloth none shall ye haue in her entresse,
So diligent is she and vertulesse,
And so busie aye all good to vndresse,
That as a she Ape she is harmelesse,
And as an Harnet meke and pitilesse,
With that she is so wise and circumspect,
That prudence none her follie can infect.

Is it not ioy that such one of her age,
Within the boundes of so great tendernesse,
Should in her werke be so sadde and sage,
That of the wedding sawe all the noblesse,
Of queene Iane, and was tho as I gesse,
But of the age of yeeres ten and fiue,
I trowe there are not many such aliue.

For as Iesu my sinfull soule saue,
There nis creature in all this world liuing,
Like vnto her that I would gladly haue,
So pleaseth mine hart ẏ goodly swete thing,
Whose soule in hast vnto his blisse bryng,
That first her formed, to be a creature,
For were she well, of me I did no cure.

Explicit the discriuing of a faire Ladie.

Another Ballade.

O Mossie Quince hangyng by your stalke,
The whiche no man dare plucke away nor take,
Of all the folke that passe forth by or walke,
Your floures fresh be fallen away and shake:
I am right sorry maistresse for your sake,
Ye seeme a thing that all men haue forgotten,
Ye be so ripe, ye waxe almost rotten.

Your vgly cheare deinous and froward,
Your greene eyen frowning, and not glad,
Your chekes enbolned like a mellow Costard,
Colour of Orenge, your brestes Satournad,
Gilt vpon warrantise, the colour wil not fade,
Bawsin buttocked, bellied like a tonne,
Men crie s. Barbary at ẏ losing of your gonne.

My louely leud maistres take consideration,
I am so sorrowfull there as ye be absent,
The floure of ẏ barkfat, ẏ foulest of all ẏ natiõ,
To loue you but a little is mine entent, (shent,
The swert hath yswent you ẏ smoke hath you
I trow ye haue ben laid vpon some kell to drie,
You do me so much worship ther as ye be pre=
Of al womẽ I loue you best a m. times fie, (sent,

Explicit.

A ballade, warning men to beware of deceitfull women.

Looke well about yee that louers bee,
Let not your lustes leade you to dotage,
Bee not enamoured on all thyngs that ye see,
Sampson the fort, and Salomon the sage
Deceiued were for all their great courage,
Men deme it right that they see with eie,
Beware therfore, the blind eateth many a flie.

I meane of women for all their cheres queint,
Trust thẽ not too much, their truth is but gea=
The fairest outward well can they paint, (son,
Their stedfastnesse endureth but a season,
For they fain frendlines and worchẽ treason,
And for they are chaungable naturally,
Beware therfore, the blind eateth many a flie.

What wight on liue trusteth on their cheres,

Shal

Shal haue at last his guerdon and his mede,
For women can shaue neerer than rasours or
All is not gold ẏ shineth men take hede (sheres,
Their gall is hid vnder a sugred wede,
It is full queint their fantasie to aspie,
Beware therfore, the blind eateth many a flie.

Though all the world doe his busie cure
To make women stand in stablenesse,
It would not be, it is against nature,
The world is doe when they lacke doublenes,
For they can laugh & loue not, this is expresse,
To trust on them it is but fantasie,
Beware therfore, the blind eateth many a flie.

Women of kind hath conditions three,
The first is, they be full of disceit,
To spinne also is their propertie,
And women haue a wonderfull conceit,
For they can weepe oft, and all is a sleit,
And euer when they list, the teare is in the eie,
Beware therfore, the blind eateth many a flie.

In sooth to say, though all the erth so wanne
Were parchement smooth, white, & scribabell,
And the great sea, that called is the Ociane,
Were tourned into inke blacker than Sabell,
Euery sticke a pen, each man a scriuener abell,
Not coud they write womans trecherie,
Beware therfore, the blind eateth many a flie.

Explicit.

These verses next following

were compiled by Geffray Chaucer, and in the written copies follow at the end of the complaint of Pitie.

The long nights, when euery creature
Shuld haue their rest in somewhat as by kind,
Or els ne may their life not long endure:
It falleth most into my wofull mind,
How I so farre haue brought my self behind,
That safe the deth ther may nothing me lisse,
So dispaired I am from all kin blisse.

This same thought me lasteth till the morow,
And from the morrow forth till it be eue,
There needeth me no care for to borrow,
For both I haue good laiser and good leue,
There is no wight that will my wo bireue,
To weepe inough, and waylen all my fill:
The sore sparke of my pein now doth me spill,

Tis loue that hath me set in such a place,
That my desier will neuer fulfill:
For neither Pitie, Mercy, neither Grace
Can I not find, yet from my sorrowfull hart,
For to be dede, I can it not arace,
The more I loue, the more she doth me smart,
Thorow which I see without remedie,
That from the death I may no wise astart.

Now sothly what she hight I woll reherse,
Her name is Bountie, set in womanhede,
Sadnes in youth, and Beautie pridelesse,
And Plesaunce, vnder Gouernaunce & Drede:
Her surname is eke faire Ruthelesse,
The Wise eknit vnto good Auenture,
That for I loue her, she sleeth me guiltlesse,
Her loue I best, and shall while I may dure.

Bet then my selfe a hundred thousand dele,
Than all this worlds riches or creature:
Now hath not loue me bestowed wele,
To loue there I neuer shal haue part,
Alas right thus, is turned me the wheele:
Thus am I slaine with loues furious dart,
I can but loue her best my swetest fo,
Loue hath me taught no more of all his art,
But serue alway, and stinten for no wo.

In my true carefull heart there is
So much wo and so little blisse,
That wo is me that euer I was bore,
For all that thing which I desire, I misse,
And all that euer I would not I wisse,
That find I ready to me euermore:
And of all this I not to whom me plaine,
For she that might me out of this bring,
Ne recheth nought whether I weepe or sing,
So little ruth hath she vpon my paine.

Alas, when sleeping time is, lo then I wake,
Whē I should daunce, for fere lo then I quake:
This heauy life I lede lo for your sake,
Though ye thereof in no wise heed do take,
Mine harts lady, and hole my liues quene,
For truly durst I say, as that I fele,
Me seemeth that your sweet heart of stele
Is whetted now against me to kene.

My dere hart, and best beloued fo,
Why liketh you to do me all this wo,
What haue I done, that greueth you, or saide,
But for I serue and loue you and no mo,
And whilest I liue I will euer do so:
And therefore swete, ne bethe not euill apaide,
For so good and so faire as ye be,
It were right great wonder but if ye had
Of all seruaunts both of good and bad,
And best worthy of all them I am he.

But neuertheleſſe, my right lady ſwete,
Though that I be vnkonning and vnmete
To ſerue as I coud beſt aye your hignes,
Yet is there none fainer, that would I hete,
Than I, to do you eaſe or els bete,
What ſo I wiſt that were to your highnes,
And had I might as good as I haue will,
Then ſhould ye fele where it were ſo or none:
For in this world liuing then is there none,
That fainer would your harts will fulfill.

For both I loue and eke drede you ſo ſore,
And algates mote and haue don you full yore,
That better loued is none ne neuer ſhall:
And yet I would beſeech you of no more,
But leueth well, and be not wroth therefore,
And let me ſerue you forth, lo this is all,
For I am nought ſo hardy ne ſo wood,
For to deſire that ye ſhould louen me,
For well I wote alas that may not be,
I am ſo little worthy and ye ſo good,
For ye be one the worthieſt on liue,
And I the moſt vnlikely for to thriue.

Yet for all this, weteth ye right well,
That ye ne ſhould me from your ſeruice driue,
That I ne will aye with all my wits liue
Serue you truly, what wo ſo that I fele,
For I am ſet ſo hie vpon your wheele,
That though ye neuer will vpon me rew,
I muſt you loue, and been euer as trew,
As any man can or may on liue.

But the more that I loue you goodly free,
The laſſe find I that ye loue me,
Alas when ſhall that hard wit amend,
Where is now all your womanly pite,
Your gentleneſſe and your debonairte,
Will ye nothing thereof vpon me ſpend,
And ſo hole ſweet as I am yours all,
And ſo great will as I haue you to ſerue,
Now certes, and ye let me thus ſterue,
Yet haue ye wonne thereon but ſmall.

For at my knowing I do nought why,
And thus I will beſeech you heartely,
That euer ye find whiles ye liue
A truer ſeruaunt to you than am I.
Leueth then, and ſleath me hardely,
And I my death to you will all forgiue,
And if ye find no truer verely,
Woll ye ſuffer then that I thus ſpill,
And for no manner gilt but my good will,
As good were then vntrue as true to be.

Explicit.

A Ballade, declaring that womens chaſtity
Doeth much excell all treaſure worldly.

IN womãhede as auctours do all write,
Moſt thing commended is their honeſty,
Thing moſt ſlaunderous their nobles to awite,
As when women of haſty fraelty,
Exceeden the bonds, of wifely chaſtity,
For what auaileth linage or royall blood,
When of their liuing the report is not good.

The holy bed defoyled of marriage,
For ones defouled may not recouered be,
The vice goeth forth, & the froward language
By many a realme, and many a great cite,
Sclaunder hath a cuſtome, and that is great
True or fals, by a contrarious ſoune,
Ones areiſed it goeth not lightly downe.

For when a lechour by force or by maiſtry,
Defouled hath of virgines the cleaneſſe,
Widdowes oppreſſed, and lie in aduoutry,
Aſſailed wiues that ſtood in ſtableneſſe,
Who may thẽ their ſlaũdrous harme redreſſe,
Whẽ their good name is hurt by ſuch report,
For fame loſt ones, can neuer haue his reſort.

A theefe may rob a man of his richeſſe,
And by ſome meane make reſtitution,
And ſome man may diſherite and oppreſſe,
A poore man from his poſſeſſion,
And after make againe ſatiſfaction,
But no man may reſtore in no degree,
A maid robbed of her virginite.

A man may alſo beat a caſtell doun,
And built it after more freſh to the ſight,
Exile a man out of his regioun,
And him reuoke whether it be wrong or right,
But no man hath the power ne the might,
For to reſtore the palais virginall,
Of chaſtitie when broken is the wall.

Men may alſo putten out of ſeruice,
And officers remeue out of their place,
And at a day when fortune lift deuiſe,
They may again reſtored be to grace,
But there nis time, nother ſet down, ne ſpace,
Nor neuer in ſtory, neither rad ne ſaine,
That maidenhed loſt, recouered was againe.

For which all men ſhould haue a conſcience
To rewen in their heart, and repent ſore,

And

And haue remorse of such a great offence,
To rauish thing, which they may not restore:
For it is said, and hath be said full yore,
☞ The emeraud greene, of parfite chastite,
Stole ones away, may not recouered be.

And hard it is to rauish a treasour,
Which of nature is not recuparable:
Lordship may not, of King nor Emperour,
Reforme a thing, which is nat reformable:
☞ Rust of defame is inseperable,
☞ And maidenhode once lost of new or yore,
No man of liue may it againe restore.

The Romanes old thorough their patience
Suffered tyraunts in their tyrannies
On their cities to do great violence,
The people to oppresse, with their robberies:
But to do punish, they set great espies,
On false auouterers, as it is well couth,
Which widowes rauish, and maidens in their (youth.

Explicit.

The Court of Loue.

This booke is an imitation of the Romaunt of the Rose, shewing that all are subject to loue, what impediments soeuer to the contrary: containing also those twentie statutes which are to be obserued in the Court of Loue.

With timerous heart, and trembling hand of drede,
Of cunning naked, bare of eloquence,
Unto the floure of porte in womanhede
I write as he that none intelligence
Of metres hath ne floures of sentence:
Saufe that me list my writing to conuey,
In that I can to please her high nobley.

The blosomes fresh of Tullius gardein soote
Present they not, my matter for to borne:
Poemes of Uirgil taken here no root,
Ne craft of Galfride, may not her soiourne:
Why nam I cunning? O well may I mourne
For lacke of science, that I cannat write
Unto the princes of my life aright.

No tearmes digne vnto her excellence,
So is she sprong of noble stirpe and high:
A world of honour and of reuerence
There is in her, this will I testifie,
Caliope thou suster wise and slie,
And thou Minerua, guide me with thy grace,
That language rude, my matter not defare.

Thy suger dropes sweet of Helicon
Distill in me, thou gentle muse I pray,
And thee Melpomene I call anone,
Of ignoraunce the mist to chase away:
And giue me grace so for to write and say,
That she my lady of her worthinesse
Accept in gree this little short treatesse,

That is entituled thus, The Court of Loue:
And ye that ben Metriciens me excuse,
I you beseech for Uenus sake aboue,
For what I meane in this, ye need not muse:
And if so be my lady it refuse
For lacke of ornate speech, I would be wo,
That I presume to her to writen so.

But my entent and all my busie cure
Is for to write this tretesse, as I can,
Unto my lady, stable, true, and sure,
Faithfull and kind, sith first that she began
Me to accept in seruice as her man:
To her be all the pleasure of this booke,
That when her like she may it rede and look.

When I was young, at eighteene yeare of age,
Lusty and light, desirous of pleasaunce,
Approching on full sadde and ripe courage,
Loue arted me to do my obseruaunce
To his estate, and done him obeisaunce,
Commaunding me the Court of Loue to see,
Alite beside the mount of Citharee.

There Citherea goddesse was and quene:
Honoured highly for her maieste,
And eke her sonne, the mighty God I wene,
Cupide the blind, that for his dignite
A M. louers worship on their kne,
There was I bid in paine of death to pere,
By Mercury the winged messengere.

So then I went by strange & ferre countrees,
Enquiring aye what coast had to it drew
The Court of Loue: and thiderward as bees,
At last I see the people gan pursue:
And me thoght some wight was there ẏ knew
Where that the court was holden ferre or nie,
And after then full fast I gan me hie.

Anone as I them ouertooke, I said:
Heile friends, whither purpose ye to wend?
Forsooth (qd. one) that answered liche a maid,
To Loues Court now go we gentle friend.

Where

Where is that place (qd. I) my fellow hend?
At Citheron, sir said he, without dout,
The king of Loue and all his noble rout

Dwelleth within a castle rially.
So then apace I tourned forth among,
And as he said, so fond I there truly:
For I beheld the toures high and strong,
And high pinacles, large of hight and long,
With plate of gold bespred on euery side,
And precious stones, ỹ stone werke for to hide.

No Saphire in Inde, no Rube rich of price,
There lacked then, nor Emeraud so grene,
Bales Turkes, ne thing to my deuice,
That may the castle maken for to shene:
All was as bright as sterres in Winter bene,
And Phebus shone to make his peace ageine,
For trespas done to high estates tweine.

Uenus and Mars, the god & goddesse clere,
When he them found in armes cheined fast,
Uenus was then full sad of hart and chere:
But Phebus beames streight as is the mast,
Upon the castle ginneth he to cast,
To please the lady, princes of that place,
In signe he looketh after loues grace.

For there nis God in heauen or hell iwis,
But he hath ben right soget vnto loue:
Ioue, Pluto, or whatsoeuer he is,
Ne creature in yearth, or yet aboue,
Of these the reuers may no wight approue:
But furthermore, the castle to deserie,
Yet saw I neuer none so large and hie.

For vnto heauen it stretcheth, I suppose,
Within and out depeinted wonderly,
With many a thousand daisie rede as rose,
And white also, this saw I verely:
But who tho deises might do signifie,
Can I not tell, safe that the quenes floure,
Alceste it was that kept there her soioure:

Which vnder Uenus lady was and quene,
And Admete king and soueraine of that place,
To whom obeied the ladies good nineteene,
With many a thousand other bright of face:
And yong men fele came forth with lusty pace,
And aged eke, their homage to dispose,
But what they were, I coud not well disclose.

Yet nere and nere forth in I gan me dresse
Into an hall of noble apparaile,
With arras spred, and cloth of gold I gesse,
And other silke of riper auaile:
Under the cloth of their estate sauns faile,
The king and quene there sat as I beheld:
It passed ioy of Helise the field.

There saints haue their comming & resort,
To seene the king so rially beseine
In purple clad, and eke the quene in sort,
And on their heads saw I crownes tweine,
With stones fret, so that it was no paine,
Without en meat and drinke to stand and see
The kings honour and the realtee.

And for to treat of states with the king,
That ben of councell cheefe, & with the quene:
The king had Daunger nere to him standing,
The quene of loue, Disdaine, & that was sene:
For by the faith I shall to God, I wene
Was neuer straunger none in her degree,
Than was the quene in casting of her eye.

And as I stood perceiuing her apart,
And eke the beames shining of her eyen,
Me thought they weren shapen lich a dart,
Sharp & persing, & smale and streight of line:
And all her haire it shone as gold so fine,
Dishiuil crispe, down hanging at her backe
A yard in length: and soothly then I spake.

O bright regina, who made thee so faire?
Who made thy colour vermelet and white?
Wher wōneth ỹ God, how far aboue the aire?
Great was his craft, & great was his delite.
Now marueil I nothing that ye do light
The quene of loue, and occupie the place
Of Cithare: now sweet lady thy grace.

In mewet spake I so, that nought astart
By no condition word, that might be hard:
But in my inward thought I gan aduert,
And oft I said my wit is dull and hard:
For with her beautie, thus God wot I ferde,
As doeth the man praulsed with sight,
When I beheld her cristall eyen so bright:

No respect hauing what was best to done,
Till right anone beholding here and there,
I spied a friend of mine, and that full sone,
A gentlewoman was the chamberere
Unto the quene, that here as ye shall here,
Philobone, that loued all her life:
When she me sey, she led me forth as blife:

And me demaunded how and in what wise
I thither come, and what my errand was?
To seen the Court (qd. I) and all the guise,
And eke to sue for pardon and for grace,
And mercy aske for all my great trespas,
That I none erst come to the court of loue:
Forgeue me this, ye gods all aboue,

That

That is well ſaid (qd. Philobone) indede:
But were ye not allomoned to appere
By Mercurius, for that is all my drede:
Yes gentill feire (qd. I) now am I here,
Be yet what tho though that be true my dere:
Of your free will ye ſhould haue come vnſent,
For ye did not, I deme ye will be ſhent.

For ye that reigne in youth and luſtineſſe,
Pampired with eaſe, and lalous in your age,
Your dutie is, as farre as I can geſſe,
To loues court to dreſſen your viage,
As ſoone as nature maketh you ſo ſage,
That ye may know a woman from a ſwan,
Or when your foot is growen halfe a ſpan.

But ſith that ye by wilfull negligence
This xviii. yeare hath kept your ſelfe at large,
The greater is your treſpas and offence,
And in your necke you mote bere all ỹ charge:
For better were ye ben withouten barge
Amidde the ſea in tempeſt and in raine,
Then biden here, receiuing wo and paine.

That ordained is for ſuch as them abſent
Fro loues court by yeres long and fele.
I ley my life ye ſhall full ſoone repent,
For loue will reiue your colour, luſt, and hele:
Eke ye muſt bait on many an heauy mele:
No force (wis: I ſtirred you long agone
To draw to court (qd. little) Philobone.

Ye ſhall well ſee, how rough and angry face
The king of Loue will ſhew, when ye him ſe:
By mine aduiſe kneele down & aſk hym grace,
Eſchewing perill and aduerſite.
For well I wote it will none other be,
Comfort is none, ne counſell to your eaſe,
Why will ye then the king of Loue diſpleaſe?

O mercy God (qd. iche) I me repent,
Caitife and wreth in hert, in wil and thought,
And after this ſhall be mine hole entent
To ſerue & pleaſe, how dere ỹ loue be bought:
Yet ſith I haue mine own pennaunce ſought,
With humble ſpite ſhall I it receiue,
Though that ỹ king of Loue my life bereiue.

And though that feruent loues qualite
In me did neuer wrech truly: yet I
With all obeiſaunce and humilite,
And benigne hart ſhall ſerue him till I die:
And he that lord of might is great and hie,
Right as him liſt me chaſtice and correct,
And puniſh me with treſpace thus infect.

Theſe words ſaid, ſhe caught me by the lap,
And led me forth in till a temple round,
Both large and wide: and as my bleſſed hap
And good auenture was, right ſoone I found
A tabernacle reiſed from the ground,
Where Venus ſat, and Cupide by her ſide,
Yet halfe for drede I can my viſage hide.

And eft againe I looked and beheld,
Seeing full ſundry people in the place,
And miſter folke, & ſome that might not weld
Their limbs wele, me thoght a wonder caſe,
The temple ſhone with windows all of glaſſe,
Bright as the day, with many a faire image,
And there I ſee the freſh queene of Cartage

Dido that brent her beautie for the loue
Of falſe Eneas, and the weimenting
Of her Annelida, true as Turtle doue,
To Arcite fals: and there was in peinting
Of many a prince, and many a doughty king,
Whoſe martirdom was ſhewed about ỹ walls
And how that fele for loue had ſuffred falls.

But fore I was abaſhed and aſtonied
Of all tho folke that there were in that tide,
And then I aſked where they had wonned:
In diuers courts (qd. ſhe) here beſide,
In ſundry clothing mantill wiſe full wide
They were arraied, and did their ſacrifiſe
Unto the God, and goddeſſe in their guiſe.

Lo yonder folk (qd. ſhe) that kneele in blew,
They weare the colour aye and euer ſhall,
In ſigne they were and euer will be trew
Withouten chaunge: and ſouthly yonder all
That ben in black, and mourning cry and call
Unto the gods, for their loues bene,
Some ſick, ſome dede, ſom all to ſharp & kene.

Yea then (qd. I) what done theſe prieſts here,
Nonnes and Hermites, Freres, and all tho,
That ſit in white, in ruſſet, and in grene:
Forſooth (qd. ſhe) they waylen of their wo.
O mercy Lord, may they ſo come and go
Freely to court, and haue ſuch libertie?
Yea men of each condition and degre.

And women eke: For truly there is none
Exception made, ne neuer was ne may:
This court is ope and free for euerichone,
The king of loue he will not ſay them nay:
He taketh all in poore or rich array,
That meekely ſew vnto his excellence
With all their hart and all their reuerence.

And walking thus about with Philobone
I ſee where come a meſſengere in hie (anone,
Streight from the king, which let command
Throughout the court to make an horrie:

All

All new come folke abide, and wote ye why,
The kings lust is for to seene you sone:
Come nere let see, his will mote need be done.

Then gan I me present tofore the king,
Trembling for fere with visage pale of hew,
And many a louer with me was kneeling,
Abashed sore, till vnto the time they knew
The sentence yeue of his entent full trew:
And at the last the king hath me behold
With sterne visage, & seid, what doth this old

Thus ferre ystope in peres, come so late
Unto the court? forsooth, my liege (qd. I)
An hundred time I haue ben at the gate
Afore this time, yet could I neuer espie
Of mine acqueintaunce eny in mine eie:
And shamefastnesse away me gan to chace,
But now I me submit vnto your grace.

Well, all is pardoned with condition,
That thou be true frō hencefoorth to thy might
And serues loue in thine entention,
Sweare this, and then as ferre as it is right,
thou shalt haue grace here in thy quenes sight.
Yes by the faith I owe to your croun, I swere,
Though death therefore me thirlith with his (spere.
And when the king had seene vs euerychone,
He let commaund an Officer in hie
To take our faith, and shew vs one by one
The statutes of the court full busily:
Anon the booke was leid before their eie,
To rede and see what thing we must obserue
In Loues Court, till that we die and sterue.

And for that I was lettred, there I red
The statutes hole of Loues Court and hall:
The first statute that on the booke was spred,
Was to be true in thought and deeds all
Unto the king of Loue the lord ryall,
And to the quene as faithfull and as kind,
As I could thinke with hart, will and mind.

The Second statute secretly to kepe,
Councell of loue, not blowing euery where
All that I know, and let it sinke and slepe,
It may not sowne in euery wights ere:
Exiling slaunder aye for drede and fere,
And to my lady which I loue and serue,
Be true and kind her grace for to deserue.

The Third statute was clerely writ also,
Withouten chaunge to liue and die the same,
None other loue to take for welene wo,
For blind delite, for ernest nor for game:
Without repent for laughing or for grame,
To biden still in full perseuerannce,
All this was hole the kings ordinaunce.

The Fourth statute to purchase euer to here,
And stirren folke to loue, and beten fire
On Uenus auter, here about and there,
And preach to them of loue and hote desire,
And tell how loue will quiten well their hire:
This must be kept, and loth me to displease:
If loue be wroth, passe: for there by is ease.

The Fift statute, not to be daungerous,
If that a thought would reue me of my slepe:
Nor of a sight to be ouer squemous,
And so verely this statute was to kepe,
To turne and wallow in my bed and wepe,
When that my lady of her cruelte
Would from her heart exilen all pitie.

The Sixt statute, it was for me to vse,
Alone to wander, void of company,
And on my ladies beautie for to muse,
And to thinke it no force to liue or die,
And eft againe to thinke the remedie,
How to her grace I might anone attaine,
And tell my wo vnto my soueraine.

The Seuenth statute, was to be patient,
Whether my lady ioyfull were or wroth,
For words glad or heauy, diligent,
Whether that she me helden lefe or loth:
And hereupon I put was to mine oth,
Her for to serue, and lowly to obey,
In shewing her my chere ye xx. sith a day.

The Eight statute to my remembraunce,
Was to speaken and pray my lady dere,
With hourely labour and great entendaunce,
Me for to loue with all her hart entere,
And me desire and make me ioyfull chere,
Right as she is surmouning euery faire,
Of beautie well and gentle debonaire.

The Ninth statute, with letters writ of gold,
This was the sentence how that I and all,
Should euer dread to be to ouerbold,
Her to displease, and truely so I shall,
But ben content for thing that may fall,
And meekely take her chastisement, and yerd,
And to offend her euer ben afeerd.

The Tenth statute, was egally to discerne,
Betwene the lady and thine ability,
And thinke thy selfe art neuer like to yerne,
By right her mercy nor her equity,

But

But of her grace and womanly pitie:
For though thy selfe be noble in thy strene,
A thousand fold more noble is thy quene.

Thy liues lady, and thy soueraine,
That hath thine hart al hole in gouernaunce,
Thou mayest no wise it taken to disdaine,
To put thee humbly at her ordinaunte,
And giue her free the reine of her Plesaunce,
For libertie is thyng that women looke,
And truly els the matter is a crooke.

The xi. statute, thy signes for to know
With eye and finger, and with smiles soft,
And low to couch, and alway for to show,
For drede of spies, for to winken oft:
And secretly to bring vp a sigh aloft,
But still beware of ouermuch resort,
For that parauenture spilleth all thy sport.

The xii. statute remember to observe:
For all the paine thou hast for loue and wo,
All is too lite her mercy to deserue,
Thou must̃ think, wher euer thou ride or go:
And mortall wounds suffer thou also,
All for her sake, and thinke it well besette
Upon thy loue, for it may not be bette.

The xiii. statute, whylome is to thinke,
What thing may best thy lady like & please,
And in thine harts bottome let it sinke:
Some thing deuise, and take for it thine ease,
And send it her, that may her hart appease:
Some hart, or ring, or letter, or deuice,
Or precious stone, but spare not for no price.

The xiiii. statute eke thou shalt assay,
Formely to keepe the most part of thy life:
Wish that thy Lady in thine armes lay, (wife,
And nightly dreme, thou hast thy nights harts
Sweetly in armes, straynyng her as blife:
And when thou seest it is but fantasie,
See that thou sing not ouer merely.

For too much ioy hath oft a wofull end,
It longeth eke, this statute for to hold,
To deme thy lady euermore thy friend,
And thinke thy selfe in no wise a cokold.
In euery thing she doeth but as she should:
Construe the best, beleeue no tales new,
For many a lie is told, that seemeth full trew.

But think that she, so bounteous and faire,
Could not be false: imagine this algate,
And think ỹ tongs wicked would her appaire,
Slandering her name & worshipfull estate,
And louers true to setten at debate:
And though thou seest a faut right at thine eie,
Excuse it blue, and glose it prettily.

The xv. statute, vse to sweare and stare,
And counterfeit a lesing hardely,
To saue thy ladies honour euery where,
And put thy selfe for her to fight boldely:
Say she is good, vertuous, and ghostly,
Clere of entent, and heart, yea, thought & will,
And argue not for reason ne for skill

Againe thy ladies pleasure ne entent:
For loue will not be countrepleted indede:
Say as she saith, then shalt thou not be shent,
The Crow is white, ye truly so I rede:
And aye what thing that she thee will forbede,
Eschew all that, and giue her soueraintee,
Her appetite follow in all degree.

The xvi. statute keepe it if thou may,
Seuen sith at night thy lady for to please,
And seuen at midnight, seuen at morrow day,
And drinke a caudle eately for thine ease.
Do this, and keep thine head from all disease,
And win the garland here of louers all,
That euer came in court, or euer shall.

Full few, think I, this statute hold & keepe:
But truely this my reason giueth me fele,
That some louers should rather fall asleepe,
Than take on hand to please so oft and wele.
There lay none oth to this statute adele,
But keep who might, as gaue him his corage
Now get this garland lusty folke of age:

Now win who may ye lusty folke of youth,
This garland fresh, of floures red and white,
Purple and blew, and colours fell vncouth,
And I shall croune him king of all delite,
In all the court there was not to my sight
A louer true, that he ne was adrede,
When he expresse hath heard the statute rede.

The xvii. statute, when age approcheth on,
And lust is laied, and all the fire is queint,
As freshly then thou shalt begin to sonne
And dote in loue, and all her image paint
In thy remẽbraunce, till thou begin to faint,
As in the first season thine hart began:
And her desire, though thou ne may ne can

Performe thy lining actuell, and lust,
Register this in thine remembraunce: (rust,
Eke when thou maist not keep thy thing from
Yet speake and talke of pleasaunt dalliaunce,
For ỹ shall make thine hart reioice & daunce,
And when thou maist no more the game assay,
The statute bid thee pray for them that may.

The xviii. statute, holy to commend,
To please thy lady, is that thou eschew
With subtilnesse thy selfe for to offend,
Be iollife fresh, and kete, with things new,
Courtly with manner, this is all thy due,
☞ Gentill of port, and louing cleanlinesse,
This is the thing, that liketh thy maistresse.

And not to wander liche a dulled Asse,
Ragged and torne, disguised in array,
Ribaud in speech, or out of measure passe,
Thy bound exceeding, thinke on this alway:
☞ For women been of tender hearts aye,
And lightly set their pleasure in a place,
When they misthinke, they lightly let it passe.

The xix. statute, meat and drinke forgete:
Ech other day, see that thou fast for loue,
☞ For in the court, they liue withouten mete,
Saue such as cõmeth from Venus all aboue,
They take none hede, in pain of great reproue
Of meat and drinke, for that is all in vaine,
Onely they liue, by sight of their soueraine.

The xx. statute, last of euerychone,
Enroll it in thyne harts priuitee:
To wring & waile, to turne, & sigh and grone,
When that thy lady absent is from thee,
And eke renew the words all that she
Betweene you twain hath said, & all the chere
That thee hath made, thy liues lady dere.

And see thine hart in quiet, ne in rest
Sojourne, till time thou seene thy Lady eft,
But where she won, by south, or east, or west,
With all thy force, now see it be not left:
Be diligent, till time thy life be reft,
In that thou mayest, thy lady for to see,
This statute was of old antiquitee.

An officer of high authority,
Cleped Rigour, made vs to sweare anone:
He nas corrupt with partiality,
Fauour, prayer, ne gold that clerely shone:
Ye shall (qd. he) now sweren here echone,
Yong and old, to kepe in that they may
The statutes truly, all after this day.

O God thought I, hard is to make this oth:
But to my power shall I them obserue,
In all this world nas matter half so loth
To sweare for all: for though my body sterue,
I haue no might them hole to obserue.
But herken now, the case how it befell,
After my oth was made, the troth to tell,

I tourned leaues, looking on this booke,
Where other statutes were of women shene,
And right forthwith Rigour on me gan looke
Full angerly, and sayed vnto the queene
I traitour was, and charged me let been,
There may no man (qd. he) the statute know,
That long to women, hie degree ne low.

In secret wise they kepten been full close,
They sounc echone to libertie, my friend,
Pleasaunt they be, and to their owne purpose,
There wote no wight of thē, but God & fiend,
Ne naught shall wit, vnto the worlds end.
The queen hath yeue me charge in pain to die,
Neuer to rede ne seene them with myne eie.

For men shall not so nere of counsaile bene ☜
With womanhood, ne knowen of her guise,
Ne what they think, ne of their wit thengine,
I me report to Salomon the wise,
And mighty Sampson, which beguiled thrise
With Dalida was, he wote that in a throw,
There may no man statute of women know.

For it peraunenture may right so befall, ☜
That they be bound by nature to deceiue,
And spinne, and weep, and sugre strew on gall,
The hart of man, to rauish and to reiue,
And whet their tongue as sharpe as swerde or
It may betide, this is their ordinance, (gleue,
So must they lowly doen their obseruaunce,

And keepe the statute yeuen them of kind,
Of such as loue hath yeue hem in their life.
Men may not wete, why turneth euery wind, ☜
Nor warren wise, nor been inquisitife
To know secret of maid, widow, or wife,
For they their statutes haue to them reserued,
And neuer man to know them hath deserued.

Now dresse you forth, ỹ God of loue you guide
(Qd. Rigour then) and seek the temple bright
Of Cithera, goddesse here beside,
Beseech her by influence and might
Of all her vertue, you to teach aright,
How for to serue your ladies, and to please
Ye that been sped, and set your hart in ease.

And ye that ben vnpurueyed, pray her eke
Comfort you soone with grace and destinie,
That ye may set your hart there ye may like,
In such a place, that it to loue may be
Honour and worship, and felicitie
To you for aye, now goeth by one assent.
Graunt mercy sir (qd, we) and forth we went,

Deuoutly soft and easie pace to see
Venus the goddesse Image all of gold:
And there we found a thousand on their knee,
Some fresh and faire, some deadly to behold,

In

In sundry Mantils new, and some were old,
Some painted were with flames red as fire,
Outward to shew their inward hote desire.

With dolefull chere, ful fell in their complaint,
Cried Lady Venus, rew vpon our sore,
Receiue our bils, with teares all bedreint,
We may not weepe, there is no more in store
But wo and pain, vs fretteth more and more:
Thou blissedful Planet, louers sterre so shene,
Haue routh on vs, that sigh and carefull bene.

And punish Lady, greuously we pray,
The false vntrue, with counterfeit plesaunce:
That made their oth, be true to liue or dey,
With chere assured, and with countenaunce:
And falsely now they footen loues daunce,
Barraine of routh, vntrue of that they saied,
Now that their lust and pleasure is alaied.

Yet eft againe a thousand million
Reioycing loue, leading their life in blisse,
They saied Venus, redresse of all diuision,
Goddesse eternell, thy name I hired is:
By loues bond is knit all thing twis,
Beast vnto beast, the yearth to water wan,
Bird vnto bird, and woman vnto man.

This is the life of ioy that we been in,
Resembling life of heauenly paradise,
☞ Loue is exiler aye of vice and sinne,
Loue maketh harts lustie to deuise,
Honour and grace, haue they in euery wise,
That been to loues law obedient,
Loue maketh folke benigne and diligent,

☞ Ayestering them to drede vice and shame:
In their degree, it maketh them honourable,
And sweet it is of loue to beare the name,
So that his loue be faithfull, true, and stable:
Loue pruneth him, to semen amiable,
Loue hath no faut, there it is exercised,
But sole with thē, that haue all loue dispised.

Honour to thee celestiall and clere
Goddesse of Loue, and to thy celsitude,
That yeuest vs light so fer doun krō thy spere,
Piercing our hearts with thy pulcritude,
Comparison none of similitude
May to thy grace be made in no degree,
That hast vs set with Loue in vnitie.

Great cause haue we to praise thy name & thee
For thorough thee we liue in ioy and blisse,
Blessed be thou, most soueraine to see,
Thy holy court of gladnesse may not misse:
☞ A thousand sith we may reioyce in this,
That we ben thine with hart and all yfere,
Enflamed with thy grace, and heauenly fere.

Musing of tho that spaken in this wise,
I me bethought in my remembraunce
Mine ortz on right goodly to deuise,
And pleasauntly with harts obeisaunce,
Beseech the goddesse vouchen my greuaunce,
For I loued eke, sauke that I wist not where,
Yet downe I set, and saied as ye shall here.

Fairest of all, that euer were or bee,
Licour and light, to penslike creature,
Mine hole affiaunce, and my lady free,
My goddesse bright, my fortune and my vre,
I yeue and yeeld my hart to thee full sure,
Humbly beseeching lady of thy grace
Me to bestow now in some blessed place.

And here I bow me, faithful, true, and kind,
Without offence of mutabilitie,
Humbly to serue, while I haue wit and mind,
Mine hole affiaunce, and my lady free,
In thilke place, there ye me signe to be:
And sith this thing of new is yeue me aye
To loue and serue, needly must I obey.

Be merciable with thy fire of grace,
And fire mine hart, there beautie is & routh:
For hote I loue, determine in no place,
Sauke onely this, by God and by my trouth
Troubled I was, with slumber, slepe, & slouth
This other night, and in a visioun
I see a woman romen vp and doun,

Of meane stature, and semely to behold,
Lustie and fresh, demure of countenaunce,
Long and well shape, with hair shone as gold,
With eyen as cristall, fercd with plesaunce,
And she gan stirre mine hart a lite to daunce:
But suddainly she vanish gan right there,
Thus I may say, I loue and wote not where.

For what she is, ne her dwelling I not,
And yet I fele that loue distreineth me:
Might iche her know, her would I faine God wot
Serue and obey with all benignitie,
And if that other be my destinie,
So that no wise I shall her neuer see,
Then graunt me her that best may liken me,

With glad reioyce to liue in parfite hele,
Deuoid of wrath, repent or variaunce:
And able me to doe that may be wele
Unto my lady, with harts hie plesaunce:
And mighty goddes through thy purueiaunce
My wit, my thoght, my lust and loue so guide,
That to thine honor I may me prouide

To set mine hart in place there I may like,
And gladly serue, with all affection,
Great is the paine, which at mine heart doth
Till I be sped by thine election: (sticke,
Helpe Lady goddesse, that possession
I might of her haue, that in all my life
I clepen shall my quene, and hearts wife.

And in the court of Loue to dwell for aye
My will it is, and doen thee Sacrifice:
Daily with Diane eke to fight and fraye,
And holden werre, as might will me suffice:
That goddesse chast, I keepen in no wise
To serue, a Figge for all her chastitie,
Her law is for Religiousitie.

And thus gan finish prayer, laud, & preice,
Which that I youe to Venus on my knee,
And in mine hart to ponder and to peice,
I gan anone her Image fresh beautie:
Heile to that figure sweet, and heile to thee
Cupide (qd. I) and rose and yede my wey,
And in the temple as I yede, I sey

A shrine surmounting, all in stones rich,
Of which ye force was pleasaunce to mine eie,
With Diamond or Saphire, neuer liche
I haue none seene, ne wrought so wonderly:
So when I met with Philobone in hie,
I gan demaund, who is this sepulture,
Forsooth (qd. she) a tender creature

Is shrined there, and Pitie is her name,
She saw an Egle wreke him on a flie,
And pluck his wing, and eke him in his game,
And tender hart of that hath made her die:
Eke she would weepe & mourne right pitously
To seene a louer suffer great distresse,
In all the court nas none, as I do gesse,

That coud a louer halfe so well auaile,
Ne of his wo the torment or the rage
Asken for he was sure withouten faile,
That of his greefe she coud the heat assuage.
In steed of Pitie, speedeth hote courage
The matters all of court, now she is dead,
I me report in this to womanhead.

For weile and weepe and crie, & speak, & pray,
Women would not haue pitie on thy plaint,
Ne by that meane, to ease thine hart conuay,
But thee receiuen for their owne talent:
And say that Pitie causeth thee in consent
Of reuth to take thy seruice and thy paine,
In that thou mayest, to please thy soueraine.

But this is counsaile, keepe it secretly,
(Qd. she) I nolde for all the world about,
The queene of Loue it wist, and wite ye why,
For if by me this matter springen out,
In court no lenger should I out of dout
Dwellen, but shame in all my life endry,
Now keepe it close (qd. she) this hardely.

Well, all is well, now shall ye seene she said
The fairest lady vnder Sunne that is:
Come on with me, demeane you liche a maid,
With shamefast drede, for ye shall speak ywis
With her that is the mirrour ioy and blisse:
But somewhat straunge & sad of her demeane
She is, beware your countenaunce be seene

Nor ouer light, ne rechelesse, ne too bold,
Ne malapert, ne renning with your tong,
For she will you obeisen and behold,
And you demaund why ye were hence so long
Out of this court, without resort among:
And Rosiall her name is hote aright,
Whose heart as yet is yeuen to no wight.

And ye also been, as I vnderstond,
With loue but light auaunced, by your word,
Might ye by hap your freedome maken bond,
And fall in grace with her, and wele accord,
Well might ye thank the God of Loue & lord,
For she that ye saw in your dreame appere,
To loue such one, what are they then the nere.

Yet wote ye what, as my remembraunce
Me yeueth now, ye faine where that ye say,
That ye with loue had neuer acquaintaunce,
Saue in your dreame rizt late this other day:
Why yes parde, my life that durst I lay,
That ye were caught vpon an heath, when I
Saw you complain, and sigh full pitously.

Within an herber, and a gardein faire
Where flowers grow, and herbes vertuous,
Of which the sauour swete was and the aire,
There were your selfe full hote and amorous:
I wis ye been too nice and daungerous,
I would ye now repent, and loue some new,
Nay by my troth, I saied I neuer knew

The goodly wight, whose I shal be for aye:
Guide me the lord, that loue hath made & me.
But forth we went into a chamber gay,
There was Rosiall, womanly to see,
Whose streames, sotell piercing of her eye,
Mine hart gan thrill for beautie in the stound,
Alas (qd. I) who hath me yeue this wound.

And then I drede to speake, till at the last
I grete the lady reuerently and wele,
When that my sigh was gone and ouerpast,
Then doun on knees ful humbly gan I knele,

Be=

Beseeching her my feruent wo to kele,
For there I tooke full purpose in my mind
Unto her grace, my painfull hart to bind.

For if I shall all fully her discriue,
Her head was round, by compasse of nature,
Her haire as gold, she passed all on liue,
And Lilly forehed had this creature,
With liueliche browes, flawe of colour pure,
Betwene ỹ which was meane disceueraunce
From euery brow, to shew a due distaunce.

Her nose directed streight, and euen as line,
With forme and shape thereto conuenient,
In which ỹ god's milk white path doth shine,
And eke her eyen ben bright and orient,
As is the Smaragde, vnto my iudgement,
Or yet these sterres heauenly small & bright,
Her visage is of louely rede and white.

Her mouth is short, and shit in little space,
Flaming somedeale, not ouer redde I meane,
With pregnaunt lips, & thicke to kisse percace,
For lippes thinne not fat, but euer lene,
They serue of nauzt, they be not worth a bean,
For if the balle been full, there is delite,
Maximian truly thus doeth he write.

But to my purpose, I say white as snow
Been all her teeth, and in order they stond
Of one stature, and eke her breath I trow
Surmounteth all odours that euer I found
In sweetnesse, and her body, face, and hond
Been sharpely slender, so that from the head
Unto the foot, all is but womanhead.

I hold my peace, of other things hidde,
Here shall my soule, and not my tong bewray,
But how she was arraied, if ye me bidde,
That shall I well discouer you and say,
A bend of gold and silke, full fresh and gay,
With her intresse, broudered full wele,
Right smoothly kept, and shining euerydele.

About her necke a flower of fresh deuise,
With Rubies set, that lusty were to sene,
And she in goune was light and summer wise,
Shapen full wele, the colour was of grene,
With aureat sent about her sides clene,
With diuers stones, precious and rich,
Thus was she raied, yet saw I neuer her lich.

For if that Ioue had but this lady seine,
Tho Calixto ne yet Alcmena,
They neuer hadden in his armes leine,
Ne he had loued the faire Europa,
Ne ne yet Dane ne Antiopa,
For all their beautie stood in rotiall,
She seemed lich a thing celestiall.

In bountie, fauour, port, and seemelinesse,
Pleasaunt of figure, mirrour of delite,
Gracious to seene, and root of all gentilnesse,
With angell visage, lustie redde and white:
There was not lack, sauf daunger had alite
This goodly fresh in rule and gouernaunce,
And somdele strange she was for her pleasaunce

And truly sone I tooke my leaue and went,
When she had me enquired what I was,
For more and more impressen gan the dent
Of loues dart, while I beheld her face,
And eft againe I come, to seeken grace,
And vp I put my bill, with sentence clere,
That followeth after, rede and ye shall here.

O ye fresh, of beautie the root,
That nature hath formed so wele and made
Princes and quene, and ye that may do boot
Of all my langour, with your words glad,
Ye wounded me, ye made me wo bestad,
Of grace redresse my mortall greefe, as ye
Of all my harme the very causer be.

Now am I caught, and vnware suddainly
With persaunt streames of your eye so clere,
Subiect to been, and seruen you meekely,
And all your man, wis my lady dere,
Abiding grace, of which I you require,
That mercilesse ye cause me not to sterue,
But guerdon me, liche as I may deserue.

For by my troth, all the daies of my breath
I am and will be your in will and hart,
Patient and meeke, for you to suffer death
If it require, now rue vpon my smart,
And this I swere, I neuer shall out start
From loues court for none aduersitie,
So ye would rue on my distresse and me.

My destenie, my fate, and houre I blisse,
That haue me set to been obedient
Onely to you, the floure of all wis,
I trust to Uenus neuer to repent,
For euery redy, glad, and dilligent,
Ye shall me find in seruice to your grace,
Till death my life out of my body race.

Humble vnto your excellence so digne,
Enforcing aye my wits and delite
To serue and please with glad hart & benigne,
And been as Troylus Troies knight,
Or Antonie for Cleopatre bright,
And neuer you me thinkes to renay,
This shall I keepe vnto mine ending day.

Enprint my speech in your memoriall
Sadly my princes, salue of all my sore,
And think, that for I would become thrall,
And been your owne, as I haue saied before,
Ye must of pitie cherish more and more
Your man, and tender after his desert,
And giue him courage for to been expert.

For wher that one hath set his hart on fire,
And findeth neither refute ne pleasaunce,
Ne word of cõfort, death will quite his hire,
Alas that there is none allegeaunce
Of all their wo, alas the great greuaunce
To loue vnloued, but ye my lady dere,
In other wise may gouerne this matere.

Truly gramercie friend of your good will,
And of your profer in your humble wise,
But for your seruice, take and keepe it still,
And where ye say, I ought you well to cherish,
And of your greefe the remedie deuise,
I know not why: I nam acquainted well
With you, ne wot not sothly where ye dwell.

In art of loue I write, and songs make,
That may be song in honour of the king
And quene of Loue, and then I vndertake,
He that is sadde, shall then full merry sing,
And daungerous not ben in euery thing
Beseech I you, but seene my will and rede,
And let your answere put me out of drede.

What is your name, rehearse it here I pray,
Of whence and where, of what condition
That ye been of, let see come off and say,
Faine would I know your disposition
Ye haue put on your old entencion,
But what ye meane, to serue me I ne wote,
Sauf that ye say ye loue me wonder hote.

My name, alas, my hart why makes thou
Philogenet I cald am fer and nere, (straunge,
Of Cãbrige clerke, ꝑ neuer thinke to chaunge
Fro you that with your heuenly stremes clere
Kaught mine hart and ghost, and all infere,
Since at the first I write my bill for grace,
Me thinke I see some mercy in your face.

And what I mene, bygods ꝑ al hath wrought,
My bill now maketh finall mention,
That ye been lady in mine inward thought
Of all mine hart withouten offencion,
That I best loue, and sith I begon
To draw to court, lo then what might I say,
I yeeld me here vnto your nobley.

And if that I offend, or wilfully
By pompe of hart your precept disobay,
Or doen againe your will vnskilfully,
Or greuen you for earnest or for play,
Correct ye me right sharply then I pray,
As it is seene vnto your womanhede,
And rew on me, or els I nam but dede.

Nay God forbede to seeke you so with grace,
And for a word of fugred eloquence,
To haue compassion in so little space,
Then were it time that some of vs were heng,
Ye shall not find in me such insolence:
Eye what is this, may ye not suffre light,
How may ye looke vpon the candle light?

That clerer is and hotter than mine eie,
And yet ye saied the beames perse and frete,
How shall ye then the candle light endure,
For well wote ye, that hath the sharper hete,
And there ye bid me, you correct and bete,
If ye offend, nay that may not be done,
There come but few, that speden here so sone.

Withdraw your eie, withdraw frõ preesẽs eke:
Hart not your selfe, through foly with a looke,
I would be sorrie so to make you sicke,
A woman should beware eke whom she took:
Ye beth a clerke, go serchen well my booke,
If any women ben so light to winne,
Nay bide a while, tho ye were all my kinne.

So sone ye may not win mine hart in truth,
The guise of court will seen your stedfastnesse:
And as you doen to haue vpon you reuth,
Your owne desert, and lowly gentilnesse,
That will reward you, ioy for heauinesse,
And tho ye waxen pale, and grene and dede,
Ye must it vse a while withouten drede,

And it accept and grutchen in no wise,
But where as ye me heartely desire
To lene to loue, me thinke ye be not wise,
Cease of your language, cease I you require,
For he that hath this twentie yeare ben here,
May not obtaine, then marueile I that ye
Be now so bold of loue to treat with me.

Ah mercy hart, my lady and my loue,
My right wise princesse and my liues guide,
Now may I plaine to Venus all aboue,
That ruthlesse ye me gaue this woũd so wide:
What haue I done, why may it not betide,
That for my trouth I may receiued be?
Alas then, your daunger and your cruelte.

In wofull houre I got was, welaway,
In wofull houre fostred and fedde,
In wofull houre iborne that I ne may
My supplication sweetly haue I spedde,

The

The frosty graue and cold must be my bedde,
Without ye list your grace and mercy shewe,
Death with his axe so fast on me doth hewe.

So great disease and in so littell while,
So littel ioy that felte I neuer yet,
And at my wo Fortune ginneth to smile,
That neuer earst I felt so harde a fit:
Confounden ben my spirites and my wit,
Till that my lady take me to her cure,
Which I loue beste of erthly creature.

But that I like, that may I not come by,
Of that I plain, that haue I habondaunce,
Sorrow and thought they sit me wonder nie,
Ye is withhold that might be my pleasaunce:
Yet turne againe my worldly suffisaunce,
O lady bright, and sauke your faithfull true,
And or I die yet ones vpon me rewe.

With that I fell in sound and dede as stone,
With colour flaine and wanne as asshe pale,
And by the hand she caught me vp anon,
Arise (qd. she) what haue ye dronken dwale,
Why slepen ye it is no nutertale:
Now mercy sweete (qd. I) iwis affraied:
what thig (qd. she) hath made you so dismaied.

Now wote I well that ye a louer be,
Your hew is witnesse in this thing, she said:
If ye were secret, ye might know (qd. she)
Curteise and kind, all this shuld be aleid:
And now mine harte, al that I haue misseid,
I shall amend and set your harte in ease.
That word it is (qd. I) that doth me please.

But this I charge, that ye the statuts keepe,
And breke them not for slouth nor ignorannce.
With that she gan to smile and laughen depe,
Iwis (qd. I) I will do your pleasaunce:
The xvi. statute doth me great greuaunce,
But ye must that relcasse or modifie.
I graunt (qd. she) and so I will truly.

And softly then her colour gan appere,
As Rose so red throughout her visage all,
Wherefore me thinke it is accordyng here,
That she of right be cleped rosiall:
Thus haue I won with words great & small,
Some goodly worde of her, that I loue best,
And trust she shall yet sette mine hart in rest.

Doth on, she said to Philobone,
and take
This man with you, and lede
him all about
within the court & shewe him
for my sake,
What louers dwell within and all the route,
Of officers him shew for he is out of doute
A straunger yet: come on (qd. Philobone)
Philogenet with me now must ye gon.

And stalkyng soft with easie pace, I saw,
About the king stonden all environ,
Attendaunce, Diligence, and their felow,
Fortherer, Asperaunce, and many one,
Dred to offend, there stood, and not alone,
For there was eke the cruell aduersarie,
The louers foe that cleped is Displeasure.

Which vnto me spake angrely and fell,
And said, my lady me disseiue ne shall:
Trowest thou (qd. she) that all that she did tell,
Is true, nay nay, but vnder hony gall,
Thy birth and hers they be nothing egall:
Cast of thine hart, for all her words white,
For in good faith she loueth thee but alite.

And eke remembre thine habilite,
May not cõpare with her, this wel thou wost
Ye then came Hope and said, my frend let be,
Beleue him not: Dispaire he ginneth dote,
Alas (qd. I) here is both cold and hote:
The one me biddeth loue, the toder nay,
Thus wote I not what me is best to say.

But well wote I, my lady graunted me,
Truly to be my woundes remedie,
Her gentilnesse may not infected be
With doublenes, thus trust I till I die,
So cast I to voide dispaires company,
And taken hope to counsel and to friend.
Yea keepe that wel (qd. Philobone) in mind.

And there beside within a bay window,
Stod one in grene full large of bread & legth,
His beard as black as fethers of the Crow,
His name was lust of wõder might & strẽgth,
And with Delite to argue there he thinkth,
For this was all his opinion,
That loue was sinne: and so he hath begon

To reason fast, and ledge auctorities:
Nay (qd Delite) loue is a vertue clere,
And from the soule his progresse holdeth he:
Blind apetite of lust doth often stere,
And ỹ is sinne: for reason lacketh there, (win:
For thou dost thinke thy neighbours wife to
Yet thinke it well that loue may not be sinne.

For God, and seint, they loue right verely,
Void of all sinne and vise this know I well,
Affection of flesh is sinne truly,
But verray loue is vertue as I fele,
For loue may thy freill desire ackele:

For verray loue is loue, withouten sinne:
Now stint (qd. Lust) thou spekest not worth a (pinne.

And there I left them in their arguing,
Roming ferther in the castell wide,
And in a corner Lier stode talkyng,
Of lesings fast, with Flatery there beside,
He said that woman weare attire of pride,
And men were found of nature variaunt,
And could be false & shewen beaw semblaunt.

Than flatery bespake and said, twis
See so she goth on patens faire and fete,
It doth right well: what prety man is this,
That rometh here, now truly drink ne mete,
Nede I not haue, mine hart for ioy doth bete,
Him to behold, so is he goodly freth:
It semeth for loue his hart is tẽder and nesh.

This is the court of lusty folke and glad,
And well becommeth their abite and array,
O why be some so sory and so sad,
Complaining thus in blacke & white & gray,
Freres they ben, and Monkes in good fay:
Alas for rouwth great dole it is to seene,
To see them thus bewaile and sory been.

See how they cry & wring their hands whit,
For they so sone went to religion, (plight,
And eke the Nonnes with vayle and wimple
Their thought is, they ben in confusion:
Alas they sain we fain perfection,
In clothes wide and lacke our libertie,
But all the sinne mote on our frends be.

For Venus wote, we wold as faine as ye,
That bene attyred here and welbesene,
Desiren man and loue in our degre,
Ferme and faithfull right as wold the quene:
Our frends wicke in tender youth and grene,
Ayenst our will made vs religious,
That is the cause we mourne & wailen thus.

Then said the Monke and Freres in the tide,
Wel may we curse our Abbes and our place,
Our statutes sharpe to sing in copes wide,
Chastely to keepe vs out of loues grace,
And neuer to fele comfort ne solace:
Yet suffre we the heate of loues fire,
And after that some other haply we desire.

O Fortune cursed, why now & wherefore
Hast thou, they said, berafte vs libartie,
Sithe nature yaue vs instrument in store,
And appetite to loue and louers be:
Why mote we suffer soch aduersite,
Diane to serue, and Venus to refuse,
Ful often sithe this matters doth vs muse:

We serue and honour fore ayenst our will,
Of chastite the goddes and the queene,
Vs lefer were with Venus biden still,
And haue reward for loue and soget bene
Unto these women courtly, fresh, and shene,
Fortune we curse thy wheele of variaunce,
There we were well thou reuil our pleasaunce.

Thus leaue I thẽ with voice of plaint and care,
In raging wo crying full petiously,
And as I yede full naked and full bare,
Some I behold looking dispiteously,
On pouertie that dedly cast their ye,
And welaway they cried, and were not faine,
For they ne might their glad desire attaine.

For lacke of richesse worldly and good,
They banne and curse, and weepe, & sain alas,
That pouertie hath vs hent ỹ whilom stood
At harts eas, and free and in good case,
But now we dare not shew our selfe in place,
Ne vs embold to dwell in company,
There as our hart wold loue right faithfully.

And yet againeward shriked euery nonne,
The pange of loue so streineth them to crie:
Now wo the time (qd. they) that we be boun
This hatefull ordre nise wil doen vs die,
We sighe and sobbe, and bleden inwardly,
Freting our self with thought & hard cõplaĩt,
That nie for loue we waxen wood and faint.

And as I stood beholding here and there,
I was ware of a sort full languissing,
Sauage and wild, of loking and of chere,
Their mantelles and their clothes ey tering,
And oft they were of nature complaining,
For they their mẽbers lacked, foot and hand,
With visage wry, and blind I vnderstand.

They lacked shape, & beautie to preferre
Themself in loue: and said that God & kind,
Hath forged them to worshippen the sterre,
Venus the bright, and lefte all behind,
His other werkes clene and out of mind:
For other haue their full shape and beautie,
And we (qd. they) been in deformitie.

And nie to them there was a company,
That haue the fusters waried and missaide,
I meane the three of fatall destiny,
That be our workers: sodenly abraide
Out gan they crie as they had been affraied,
We curse (qd. they) that euer hath nature,
Ifourmed vs this wofull life to endure.

And there eke was cõtrite and gan repent,
Confessing hole the wound that Cithere

Hath

Hath with the darte of hote desire him sent
And how that he to loue must subiect be,
Then held he all his skornes vanitie
And said that louers held a blissful life,
Yong men & olde and widowe maide & wife.

Bereue me goddesse (qd. he) of thy might
My skornes all and skoffes, that I haue
No power for to moken any wight,
That in thy seruice dwell: for I did raue:
This know I well right now so god me saue,
And I shalbe the chief post of thy laith,
And loue vphold, the reuers who so saith.

Dissemble stode not ferre from him in troth,
With party mantil party hode and hose,
And said he had vpon his lady routh,
And thus he wound him in and gan to glose
Of his entent ful double I suppose
In all the world he said he loued her wele
But ay me thought he loued her nere a dele.

Eke shamfastnesse was there as I tooke hede,
That blushed rede, and durst nat ben aknow
Sh e louer was for thereof had she drede,
She stode and hing her visage downe alow,
But such a sight it was to seene I trow,
As of these roses rody on their stalke,
There coud no wight her spy to speak or talk.

In loues art so gan she to abashe,
Ne durst not vtter al her preuite:
Many a stripe and many a greuous lashe
She gauen to them that wolden louers be,
And hindered sore the simple cominaltie,
That in no wise durst grace and mercy craue,
For were not she they need but aske and haue.

Where if they now aprochein for to speke,
Then shamefastnesse returneth them again:
They thinke, if we our secrets counsell breke,
Our ladies wil haue scorne on vs certein,
And peraventure thinken great disdein:
Thus shamefastnesse may bringen in dispeire,
When she is dede the toder will be heire.

Come forth a Vaunter, now I ring thy bel,
I spied him sone, to God I make a vowe,
He loked blacke as fendes doth in hell,
The first (qd. he) that euer I did wowe,
Within a worde she come, I wotte not how,
So that in armes was my lady free,
And so hath ben a thousand mo than she.

In England, Britain, Spain, & Picardie,
Artois, and Fraunce, and vp in hie Holand,
In Burgoine, Naples, and Italy,
Nauerne, and Grece, and vp in Hethen lond
Was neuer woman yet that wold withstond,
To ben at commaundement when I wold,
I lacked neyther siluer, coigne, ne gold.

And there I met with this estate and that,
And here I broched her, and her I trow:
Lo there goeth one of mine & wotte ye what?
You fresh attired haue I laid full lowe,
And soch one yonder eke right well I know:
I kept the statute when we lay ifere,
And yet yon same hath made me right good (chere.
Thus hath a Vaunter blowen euery where,
Al that he knoweth, and more a thousand fold
His auncestrie of kinne was to lier,
For first he maketh promise for to hold
His ladies councell, and it not vnfold,
Wherfore the secret when he doeth vnshitte,
Then lieth he, that all the world may witte.

For falling so his promise and behest,
I wounder sore he hath such fantasie,
He lacketh wit I trow or is a beast,
That can no bet himselfe with reason gie,
By mine aduise, loue shall be contrary
To his auaile, and him eke dishonour,
So that in court he shall no more soiour.

Take heed (qd. she) this little Philobone,
Where enuy rocketh in the corner pond,
And sitteth dirke, and ye shall see anone
His leane body, fading both face and hond,
Himselfe he fretteth, as I vnderstond,
Witnesse of Ouid Methamorphose,
The louers so he is, I will not glose.

For where a louer thinketh him promote,
Enuy will grutch, repining at his wele,
It swelleth sore about his harts rote,
That in no wise he cannot liue in hele,
And if the faithfull to his lady stele,
Enuy will noise and ring it round about,
And sey much worse than done is out of dout.

And priuy thought reioysing of himselfe,
Stood not ferre thence in abite marueilous,
Yon is (thought I) some spirit or some elfe,
His subtill image is so curious:
How is (qd. I) that he is shaded thus
With yonder cloth, I not of what colour?
And nere I went and gan to lere and pore.

And frained him a question full hard,
What is (qd. I) the thing thou louest best,
Or what is bote vnto thy paines hard,
Me thinke thou liuest here in great vnrest,
Thou wandrest aye from south to east & west,
And east to north as ferre as I can see,

There

There is no place in Court may holden thee.

Whom followest thou where is thy hart iset,
But my demaund asoile I thee require,
Me thought (qd. he) no creature may let
Me to ben here, and where as I desire:
For where as absence hath done out the fire,
My mery thought it kindeleth yet againe,
That bodely me thinke with my soueraine.

I stand & speake, & laugh, & kisse, and halse:
So that my thought comforteth me ful oft,
I think god wote, though al ỹ world be false,
I will be true, I thinke also how soft,
My lady is in speach, and this on loft
Bringeth min hart with ioy & great gladnes,
This priuy thought alayeth mine heauines.

And what I thinke or where to be, no man
In all this earth can tell I wis but I:
And eke there nis no swalow swift, ne swan
So wight of wing, ne half so yerne can flie,
For I can bene and that right sodenly,
In heuen, in hell, in Paradise, and here,
And with my lady when I will desire.

I am of counsell, ferre and wide I wote,
With lorde and lady, & they? preuitie
I wotte it all, and be it colde or hote,
They shall not speake without licence of me,
I mine in soch as seasonable be,
For first the thing is thought within the hart,
Er any word out from the mouth astart.
(yede:

And with ỹ word Thought bad farewell and
Eke forth went I to seene the courts guise,
And at the doore came in so God me spede,
Twenty courteours of age and of assise,
Liche high, and brode, and as I me aduise,
The golden loue, and leden loue they hight,
The toue was sad, the toder glad and light.

Yes draw your heart with all your force &
To lustinesse and ben as ye haue seid, (might,
And thinke that I no drope of fauour hight,
Ne neuer had vnto your desire obeid,
Till sodenly me thought me was affraied,
To seene you waxe so dede of countenaunce,
And pite bade me done you some pleasaunce.

Out of her shrine she rose from death to liue,
And in mine care full priuely she spake,
Doth not your seruaunt hens away to driue,
Rosial (qd. she) and then mine hart it brake,
For tenderich: & where I found moch lacke,
In your person, then I my selfe bethought,
And saide, this is the man myne hearte hath
(sought.

Gramercy Pity, might I but fulfille,
To yeue due laude vnto thy shrine of gold,
God wotte I would: for sith that thou did rise
From death to liue for me, I am behold,
To thanken you a thousand times told,
And eke my lady Rosial the shene,
Which hath in cõfort set mine harte iwene.

And here I make mine protestacion,
And depely swere as mine power to bene
Faithful, deuoide of variacion,
And her forbeare in anger or in tene,
And seruiceable to my worldes quene,
With al my reason and intelligence,
To done her honour high and reuerence.

I had not spoke so sone the worde, but she,
My souerain, did thanke me hartely,
And said abide ye shall dwell still with me,
Till season come of Maie, for then truly,
The king of loue and all his company,
Shall hold his feste full rially and well,
And there I bode till that the season fell.

On May day whẽ ỹ larke began to rise,
To Matens went ỹ lusty Nightingale,
Within a tẽple shapen Hauthorn wise,
He might not slepe in all the nightertale,
But Domine labia gan he crie and gale,
My lippes open lord of loue I crie,
And let my mouth thy preising now bewrie.

The Egle sang Venite bodies all,
And let vs ioy to loue that is our health,
And to the deske anon they gan to fall,
And who came late he preced in by stealth:
Then saied the Faucõ our owẽ harts wealth,
Domine Dominus noster I wote,
Ye be the God that done vs brenne thus hote.

Cœli enarrant said the Popingay,
Your might is told in heauen and firmament,
And thẽ came in the gold finch freshe and gay,
And said this Psalme with hartily glad intẽt
Domini est terra, This laten intent,
The God of loue hath perth in gouernaunce:
And then the worẽ gan scippen and to daunce.

Iube Domine O Lord of loue I pray,
Commaund me well this lesson for to rede,
This legende is of all that woulden dey
Warters for loue, God yef the souls spede:
And to thee Uenus sing we out of drede,
By influence of all thy vertue great,
Beseching thee to keepe vs in our heat.

The second lesson Robin Redebrest sang,
Haile to the God and goddes of our lay,

And

And to the lectorn amorously he sprong,
Haile now (qd. eke) O fresh season of May,
Our moneth glad that singen on the spray,
Haile to the floures, rede, and white, & blewe,
Which by their vertue maketh our lust new.

The third lesson the Turtil doue toke vp,
And thereat lough the Mauis in a scorne,
He said, O God, as mote I dine or suppe,
This foolish Doue will giue vs al an horne,
There ben right here a M. better borne,
To rede this lesson, which as well as he,
And eke as hote, can loue in all degree.

The Turtil doue said welcom welcom May,
Gladsom and light to louers that ben trew:
I thanke thee lord of loue that doth puruey,
For me to rede this lesson al of dewe,
For in good soth of corage I pursue,
To serue my make till death vs must depart,
And then Tu autem sang he all apart.

Te deum amoris sang the Thrustel cocke,
Tuball him selfe the first Musician,
With key of armony coude not on locke,
So swete tewne as that the Thrustel can:
The lorde of loue we prayse (qd. he) than,
And so done al the foules great and lite,
Honour we May, in fals louers dispite.

Dominus regnauit said the Pecocke there,
The lord of loue that mighty prince iwis,
He is receyued here and euery where:
Now Iubilate sing: what meaneth this
Said then the Linet? welcome lord of blisse:
Out stert the Owle with Benedicite,
What meaneth all this mery fare (qd. he.)

Laudate sang the Larke with voice ful shril,
And eke the Kight O admirabile,
This quere wil thorow min eares pers & thril,
But what, welcome this May season (qd. he)
And honour to the lord of loue mote be,
That hath this feste so solempne and so hie,
Amen said al, and so said eke the Pie.

And forth the Cockow gan procede anon,
With Benedictus thanking God in hast,
That in this May would visite them echon,
And gladden them all while the feast shal last:
And therewithal a laughter out he brast,
I thanke it God that I shuld end the song,
And all the Seruice which hath ben so long.

Thus sang they all the sernice of the fest,
And that was done right erly to my dome,
And furth goeth all the court both most & lest,
To fetch ỹ floures fresh, and braunch & blome,
And namely Hauthorn brought both page & with fresh garlãts party blew & white, (grom
And then reioysen in their great delite.

Eke ech at other threw the floures bright,
The Primerose, the Violete, & the gold,
So then as I beheld the royall sight,
My lady gan me sodenly behold,
And with a trewe loue plited many a fold:
She smote me through ỹ very heart as blive,
And Venus yet I thanke I am alive.

Explicit.

Chaucers dreame, neuer before the yeare 1597. Printed. That which heretofore hath gone vnder the name of his *dreame, is the book of the Duchesse: or the death of Blanch, Duchesse of Lancaster.*

This dreame deuised by Chaucer, seemeth to be a couert report of the mariage of Iohn of Gaunt the kings sonne, with Blanch the daughter of Henry Duke of Lancaster, who after long loue, (during the time wherof the Poet faineth them to be dead) were in the end by consent of friends happily married: figured by a bird bringing in her bill an hearbe, which restored them to lyfe againe. Here also is shewed Chaucers match with a certain Gentlewoman, who although she was a stranger, was notwithstanding so well liked and loued of the Lady Blanch, and her Lord, as Chaucer himselfe also was, that gladly they concluded a marriage betweene them.

WHen Flora the queene of pleasaunce,
Had whole achieued thobeysaunce
Of the fresh and new season,
Thorow out euery region,
And with her mantle whole couert
That winter made had discouert,
Of auenture without light,
In May I lay vpon a night,
Alone, and on my lady thought,
And how the Lord that her wrought,
Couth well entayle in Imagery
And shewed had great maistry,
When he in so little space
Made such a body and a face,
So great beauty with swich features
More than in other creatures.
And in my thoughts as I lay,
In a lodge out of the way,

Beside

Beſide a well in a foreſt,
Where after hunting I tooke reſt,
Nature and kind ſo in me wrought,
That halfe on ſleepe they me brought,
And gan to dreame to my thinking,
With mind of knowliche like making,
For what I dreamed as me thought,
I ſaw it, and I ſlept nought,
Wherefore is yet my full beleeue,
That ſome good ſpirit that eue,
By meane of ſome curious port,
Bare me, where I ſaw payne and ſport,
But whether it were I woke or ſlept,
Well wot I of, I lough and wept,
Wherefore I will in remembraunce,
Put whole the payne, and the pleaſaunce,
Which was to me axen and hele
Would God ye wiſt it euerydele,
Or at the leaſt, ye might o night
Of ſuch another haue a ſight,
Although it were to you a payne,
Yet on the morow, ye would be fayne,
And wiſh it might long dure,
Then might ye ſay ye had good cure,
For he that dreames, and weenes he ſee,
Much the better, yet may hee
Wit what, and of whom, and where,
And eke the laſſe it will hindere,
To thinke I ſee this with mine eene,
Iwis this may not dreame keene,
But ſigne or ſignifiaunce,
Of haſty thing ſouning pleaſaunce,
For on this wiſe vpon a night,
As ye haue heard without light,
Not all waking, ne full on ſleepe
About ſuch houre as louers weepe,
And crie after their ladies grace,
Befell me this wonder caſe,
Which ye ſhall heare and all the wiſe,
So wholly as I can deuiſe,
In playne Engliſh euill written,
For ſleepe writer well ye witten,
Excuſed is, though he do miſ,
More than one that waking is,
Wherefore here of your gentilneſſe,
I you requyre my boiſtouſneſſe
Ye let paſſe, as thing rude
And heareth what I will conclude,
And of the enditing taketh no heed,
Ne of the tearmes ſo God you ſpeed,
But let all paſſe as nothing were,
For thus befell, as you ſhall here.

Within an yle me thought I was,
Where wall, and yate was all of glaſſe,
And ſo was cloſed round about,
That leaueleſſe none come in ne out,
Uncouth and ſtraunge to behold,
For euery yate of fine gold,
A thouſand fanes, aie turning,
Entuned had, and briddes ſinging,
Diuers, and on each fane a paire,
With open mouth againſt haire,
And of a ſute were all the toures,
Subtily couren after floures,
Of vncouth colours during aye,
That neuer been none ſeene in May,
With many a ſmall turret hie,
But man on liue could I non ſie,
Ne creatures, ſaue ladies play,
Which were ſuch of theyr array,
That as me thought of goodlihead,
They paſſeden all, and womanhead,
For to behold them daunce and ſing,
It ſeemed like none earthly thing,
Such was their vncouth countinaunce,
In euery play of right diſaunce,
And of one age euerichone,
They ſeemed all ſaue onely one,
Which had of yeeres ſufficiaunce,
For ſhe might neyther ſing ne daunce,
But yet her countenaunce was ſo glad,
As ſhe ſo fewe yeeres had had,
As any lady that was there
And as little it did her dere,
Of luſtines to laugh and tale
As ſhe had full ſtuffed a male
Of diſports and new playes:
Fayre had ſhe been in her daies,
And maiſtreſſe ſeemed well to be,
Of all that luſty companie,
And ſo ſhe might I you enſure
For one the conningeſt creature
She was, and ſo ſaid euerichone,
That euer her knew, there fayled none,
For ſhe was ſober, and well auiſed,
And from euery fault diſguiſed,
And nothing vſed but faith and truth,
That ſhe nas young it was great ruth,
For euery where and in ech place,
She gouerned her, that in grace
She ſtode alway with poore and riche,
That at a word was none her liche,
Ne halfe ſo able maiſtres to be,
To ſuch a luſty companie.

Befell me ſo, when I auiſed
Had, the yle that me ſufficed,
And whole the ſtate euery where,
That in that luſty yle was there,
Which was more wonder to deuiſe,
Than the Ioieux paradiſe,
I dare well ſay, for flour ne tree,
Ne thing wherein pleaſaunce might bee,
There fayled none, for euery wight,
Had they deſired, day and night,

Riches,

Riches, heale, beauty, and ease,
With euery thing that them might please,
Thinke and haue, it cost no more,
In such a country there before,
Had I not bene ne heard tell,
That liues creature might dwell.
And when I had thus all about,
The ple auised throughout,
The state, and how they were arayed,
In my heart I were well payed,
And in my selfe I me assured,
That in my body I was well hred,
Sith I might haue such a grace,
To see the ladies and the place,
Which were so faire I you ensure,
That to my dome though that nature,
Would euer striue and do her paine,
She should not con ne mow attaine,
The least feature to amend,
Though she would all her conning spend,
That to beautie might auaile,
It were but paine and lost trauaile,
Such part in their natiuitie,
Was them alarged of beautie,
And eke they had a thing notable,
Unto their death, ay durable,
And was, that their beauty should dure,
Which was neuer seene in creature,
Saue onely there (as I trow)
It hath not be will ne know,
Wherefore I praise with their conning,
That during beautie, rich thing,
Had they been of their liues certaine,
They had been quite of euery paine,
And when I wend thus all haue seene,
The state, the riches, that might beene,
That me thought impossible were,
To see one thing more than was there,
That to beauty or glad conning,
Serue or auaile might any thing.
All sodainly as I there stood,
This lady that couth so much good,
Unto me came with smiling chere,
And said Benedicite, this yere
Saw I neuer man here but you,
Tell me how ye come hider now?
And your name, and where ye dwell?
And whom ye seeke eke mote ye tell,
And how ye come be to this place,
The soth well told may cause you grace,
And els ye mote prisoner be,
Unto the ladies here, and me,
That haue the gouernaunce of this ple:
And with that word she gan to smile,
And so did all the lusty rout,
Of ladies that stood her about.
Madame (qd. I) this night past,
Lodged I was and slept fast,
In a forest beside a well,
And now am here, how should I tell,
Not I not, by whose ordinance,
But onely fortunes purueiance,
Which puts many as I gesse,
To trauaile, paine, and busines,
And lettes nothing for their truth,
But some seeth eke, and that is ruth,
Wherefore I doubt her brittilnes,
Her variance and vnstedfastnes,
So that I am as yet afraid,
And of my being here amaid,
For wonder thing seemeth me,
Thus many fresh ladies to see,
So faire, so cunning, and so yong,
And no man dwelling them among:
Not I not how I hider come,
Madame (qd. I) this all and some,
What should I faine a long processe,
To you that seeme such a princesse,
What please you commaund or say,
Here I am you to obay,
To my power, and all fulfill,
And prisoner bide at your will,
Till you duly enformed be,
Of euery thing ye aske me,
This lady there right well apaid,
Me by the hand tooke, and said,
Welcome prisoner aduenturus,
Right glad am I ye haue said thus,
And for ye doubt me to displease,
I will assay to do you ease:
And with that word, ye anon,
She, and the ladies euerichon,
Assembled, and to counsaile went,
And after that soone for me sent,
And to me said on this maner,
Word for word, as ye shall here.

To see you here vs thinke marueile,
And how without bote or saile,
By any subtilty or wyle,
Ye get haue entre in this ple,
But not for that, yet shall ye see,
That we gentill women bee,
Loth to displease any wight,
Notwithstanding our great right,
And for ye shall well vnderstond,
The old custome of this lond,
Which hath continued many yere,
Ye shall well wete that with vs here,
Ye may not bide, for causes twaine,
Which we be purposed you to saine.
Thone is this, our ordinance,
Which is of long continuance,
Will not, sothly we you tell,

That no man here among vs dwell,
Wherefore ye mote needs retourne,
In no wise may you here sojourne.
Thother is else, that our Queene
Out of the Realme, as ye may seene,
Is, and may be to vs a charge,
If we let you goe here at large,
For which cause the more we doubt,
To doe a fault while she is out,
Or suffer that may be noysaunce,
Against our old accustomaunce.
And when I had these cayses twaine
Heard, O God what a paine
All sodainly about mine hart,
There came at ones and how smart,
In creeping soft as who should steale,
Or doe me robbe of all mine heale,
And made me in my thought so fraid,
That in courage I stode dismaid.
And standing thus, as was my grace,
A Lady came more than apace,
With huge preasse her about,
And told how the Queene without
Was arriued and would come in,
Well were they that thider might twin,
They hied so they would not abide,
The bridling their horse to ride,
By fiue, by sixe, by two, by three,
There was not one abode with me,
The queene to meet euerichone,
They went, and bode with me not one,
And I after a soft pase,
Imagining how to purchase
Grace of the Queene, there to bide,
Till good fortune some happy guide,
Me send might, that would me bring,
Where I was borne to my wonning,
For way ne foot knew I none,
Ne witherward I nist to gone,
For all was sea about the yle,
No wonder though me list not smile,
Seeing the case vncouth and straunge,
And so in like a perilous chaunge,
Imagining thus walking alone,
I saw the Ladies euerichone,
So that I might somwhat offer,
Sone after that I drew me nere,
And tho I was ware of the Queene,
And how the Ladies on their kneene,
With ioyous words, gladly aduised,
Her welcomed so that it suffised,
Though she princes hole had be,
Of all enuironed is with see:
And thus auising, with chere sad,
All sodainly I was glad,
That greater ioy as mote I thriue,
I trow had neuer man on liue,
Than I tho, ne heart more light,
When of my Lady I had sight,
Which with the queene come was there,
And in one clothing both they were,
A knight also there well beseene,
I saw that come was with the queene,
Of whome the Ladies of that yle,
Had huge wonder long while,
Till at the last right soberly,
The queene herselfe full cunningly,
With soft words in good wise,
Said to the Ladies young and nise,
My sisters how it hath befall,
I trow ye know it one and all,
That of long time here haue I beene,
Within this yle biding as queene,
Liuing at ease, that neuer wight,
More parfit ioy haue ne might,
And to you been of gouernance,
Such as you found in whole pleasance,
In euery thing as ye know,
After our custome and our low,
Which how they first found were,
I trow ye wote all the manere,
And who queene is of this yle,
As I haue been long while,
Ech seuen yeeres not of visage,
Visit the heauenly armitage,
Which on a rocke so high stonds,
In strange sea out from all londs,
That to make the pilgrimage,
Is called a long perillous viage,
For if the wind be not good frend,
The tourney dures to the end,
Of him that it vndertakes,
Of twenty thousand one not scapes,
Upon which Rock growth a tree,
That certaine yeeres beares apples three,
Which three apples who may haue,
Been from all displeasaunce saue,
That in the seuen yeere may fall,
This wote you well one and all,
For the first apple and the next,
Which growth vnto you next,
Hath three vertues notable,
And keepeth youth aie durable,
Beauty and looke, euer in one,
And is the best in euerichone.
The second apple red and greene,
Only with lookes of your yene,
You nourishes in pleasaunce,
Better than Partidge or Fesaunce,
And feeds euery liues wight,
Pleasantly with the sight.
The third apple of the three,
Which groweth lowest on the tree,
Who it beares may not faile,

That

That to his pleasaunce may auaile,
So your pleasure and beauty rich,
Your during youth euer liche,
Your truth, your cunning, and your weale,
Hath aye floured, and your good heale,
Without sickness or displeasaunce,
Or thing that to you was noysaunce,
So that you haue as goddesses,
Liued aboue all princesses:
Now is befall as ye may see,
To gather these said apples three,
I haue not failed againe the day,
Thitherward to take the way,
Wening to speed as I had ost,
But when I come, I find aloft
My sister which that here stands,
Hauing those apples in her hands,
Musing them and nothing said,
But looked as she were well paid:
And as I stood her to behold,
Thinking how my ioyes were cold,
Sith I those apples haue ne might,
Euen with that so came this knight,
And in his armes of me aware,
Me tooke, and to his ship me bare,
And said, though him I neuer had seen,
Yet had I long his lady been,
Wherefore I should with him wend,
And he would to his liues end
My seruant be, and gan to sing
As one that had wonne a rich thing,
Tho were my spirits fro me gone,
So sodainly euerichone,
That in me appeared but death,
For I felt neither life ne breath,
Ne good ne harme none I knew,
The sodaine paine me was so new,
That had not the hasty grace be
Of this lady, that fro the tree
Of her gentilnesse so hied
Me to comfort, I had died,
And of her three apples, one
In mine hand there put anone,
Which brought againe mind and breath,
And me recouered from the death,
Wherefore to her so am I hold,
That for her all things do I wold,
For she was lech of all my smart,
And from great paine so quite mine hart,
And as God wote, Right as ye heare,
Me to comfort with friendly cheare,
She did her prowesse and her might,
And truly eke so did this knight,
In that he couth, and oft said,
That of my wo he was ill paid,
And cursed the ship that them there brought,
The mast, the master that it wrought,
And as ech thing mote haue an end,
My sister here your brother frend,
Con with her words so womanly
This knight entreat, and cunningly,
For mine honour and his also,
And said that with her we should go
Both in her ship, where she was brought,
Which was so wonderfully wrought,
So cleane, so rich, and so araid,
That we were both content and paid,
And me to comfort and to please,
And mine heart to put at ease,
She toke great paine in little while,
And thus hath brought vs to this yle,
As ye may see, wherfore echone,
I pray you thanke her one and one,
As heartily as ye can deuise,
Or imagine in any wise,
At once there tho men might seen,
A world of Ladies fall on kneen,
Before my Lady that there about,
Was left none standing in the rout,
But altogither they went at ones
To kneele, they spared not for the stones,
Ne for estate, ne for their blood,
Well shewed there they couth much good,
For to my Lady they made such feast,
With such words, that the least,
So friendly and so faithfully,
Said was, and so cunningly,
That wonder was seing their youth,
To here the language they couth,
And wholly how they gouerned were,
In thanking of my Lady there,
And said by will and maundement,
They were at her commaundement,
Which was to me as great a ioy,
As winning of the towne of Troy
Was to the hardy Greckes strong,
When they it wan with siege long,
To see my Lady in such a place,
So receiued as she was,
And when they talked had a while
Of this and that, and of the yle,
My lady, and the ladies there,
Altogither as they were,
The Queene her selfe began to play,
And to the aged lady say:
Now seemeth you not good it were,
Sith we be altogither here,
To ordaine and deuise the best,
To set this knight and me at rest,
For woman is a feble wight,
To rere a warre against a knight,
And sith he here is in this place,
At my list, danger, or grace,
It were to me great villany,
To do him any tiranny,
But faine I would, now will ye here,

In his owne country that he were,
And I in peace, and he at ease,
This were a way vs both to please,
If it might be, I you beseech,
With him hereof you fall in speech.
This lady tho began to smile,
Musing her a little while,
And with glad chere she said anone,
Madam I will vnto him gone,
And with him speake, and of him fele
What he desires euery dele:
And soberly this lady tho,
Her selfe and other ladies two
She tooke with her, and with sad chere,
Said to the knight on this manere,
Sir, the princes of this yle,
Whom for your pleasance many mile,
Ye sought haue, as I vnderstond,
Till at the last ye haue her fond,
Ye sent hath here, and ladies twaine,
To heare all thing that ye saine,
And for what cause ye haue her sought,
Faine would she wote, a whol your thought,
And why you do her all this wo,
And for what cause you be her so,
And why of euery wight vnware,
By force ye to your ship her bare,
That she so nigh was agone,
That mind ne speech had she none,
But as a painfull creature,
Dying, abode her aduenture,
That her to see indure that paine,
Here weell say vnto you plaine,
Right on your selfe ye did amisse,
Seing how she a princes is.
This knight the which cowth his good,
Right of his truth meued his blood,
That pale he wore as any lead,
And lookt as he would be dead,
Blood was there none in nother cheke,
Wordlesse he was and semed sicke,
And so it proued well he was,
For without mouing any paas,
All sodainely as thing dying,
He fell at once downe sowning,
That for his wo, this lady fraid,
Unto the queene her hyed and said,
Cometh on anon as haue you blisse,
But ye be wise, thing is amisse,
This knight is dead or will be soone,
Lo where he lyeth in a swoone,
Without word, or answering
To that I haue said, any thing:
Wherefore I doubt, that the blame,
Might be hindering to your name,
Which floured hath so many yere,
So long, that for nothing here,
I would in no wise he dyed,
Wherefore good were that ye hyed,
His life to saue at the least,
And after that his wo be ceast,
Commaund him bord, or dwel,
For in no wise dare I more mell
Of thing wherein such perill is,
As like is now to fall of this.
This queene right tho full of great feare,
With all the ladies present there,
Unto the knight came where he lay,
And made a Lady to him say:
Lo here the queene, awake for shame,
What will you doe, is this good game?
Why lye you here, what is your mind?
Now is well seene your wit is blind,
To see so many Ladies here,
And ye to make none other chere,
But as ye set them all at nought,
Arise, for his loue that you bought:
But what she said, a word not one
He spake, ne answere gaue her none,
The Queene of very pitty tho,
Her worship, and his like also,
To saue there she did her paine,
And quoke for feare, and gan to saine:
For woe alas what shall I doe,
What shall I say this man vnto,
If he die here, lost is my name,
How shal I play this perillous game?
If any thing be here amisse,
It shall be said, it rigour is,
Whereby my name impayre might,
And like to die eke is this knight:
And with that word her hand she laid
Upon his brest, and to him said,
Awake my knight, lo it am I
That to you speake, now tell me why
Ye fare thus, and this paine endure,
Seing ye be in country sure,
Among such friends that would you heale,
Your hearts ease eke and your weale,
And if I wist what you might ease,
Or know the thing that you might please,
I you ensure it should not faile,
That to your heale you might auaile:
Wherefore with all my heart I pray
Ye rise, and let vs talke and play,
And see how many Ladies here,
Be comen for to make good chere.
All was for nought, for still as stone
He lay, and word spoke none,
Long while was or he might braid,
And of all that the Queene had said,
He wist no word but at the last,
Mercy twise he cryed fast,
That pitie was his voice to heare,
Or to behold his painefull cheare,
Which was not fained well was to sein,

Both

Both by his visage and his eyn,
Which on the queene at once he cast,
And sighed as he would to brast,
And after that he shright so,
That wonder was to see his wo,
For sith that payne was first named,
Was neuer more wofull payne attained,
For with voyce dead he gan to plaine,
And to himselfe these words saine,
I wofull wight full of malure,
Am worse than dead, and yet dure,
Maugre any payne or death,
Against my will I fell my breath:
Why nam I dead sith I ne serue,
And sith my Lady will me sterue,
Where art thou death art thou agast,
Well shall we meete yet at the last,
Though thou thee hide it is for nought,
For where thou dwelst thou shalt be sought,
Maugre thy subtill double face,
Here will I die right in this place,
To thy dishonour and myne ease,
Thy manner is no wight to please,
What needs thee sith I thee seche,
So thee to hide my payne to eche,
And well wost thou I will not liue,
Who would me all this world here giue,
For I haue with my cowardise,
Lost ioy, and heale, and my seruise,
And made my souereigne Lady so,
That while she liues I trow my so
She will be euer to her end,
Thus haue I neither ioy ne frend,
Wote I not whether hast or sloth,
Hath caused this now by my troth,
For at the hermitage full hie,
When I her saw first with myne ye,
I hied till I was aloft,
And made my pace small and soft,
Till in mine armes I had her fast,
And to my ship bare at the last,
Whereof she was displeased so,
That endles there seemed her wo,
And I thereof had so great fere,
That me repent that I come there,
Which hast I trow gan her displease,
And is the cause of my disease:
And with that word he gan to cry,
Now death, death, thy or thy,
And motred wot I not what of slouth.
And euen with that the Queene of routh,
Him in her armes tooke and sayd,
Now mine owne knight be not euill apayd,
That I a lady to you sent,
To haue knowledge of your entent,
For in good faith I meant but well,
And would ye wist it euery dele,
Nor will not do to you ywis,
And with that word she gan him kisse,
And prayed him rise, and said she would
His welfare by her truth, and told
Him how she was for his disease
Right sory, and faine would him please,
His lyfe to saue: these words tho,
She said to him and many mo,
In comforting for from the paine,
She would he were deliuered faine,
The knight tho vp cast his een,
And when he saw it was the queen,
That to him had these words said,
Right in his wo he gan to braid,
And him vp dresses for to knele,
The queene auising wonder wele:
But as he rose he ouer threw,
Wherefore the queene, yet eft anew
Him in her armes anon tooke,
And pitiously gan on him looke,
But for all that nothyng she sayd,
Ne spake not like she were well payd,
Ne no chere made, nor sad, ne light,
But all in one to euery wight,
There was seene, conning, with estate,
In her without nopse or debate,
For saue onely a looke piteous,
Of womanhead vndispiteous,
That she showed in countenance,
For seemed her heart from obeisance,
And not for that she did her reine,
Him to recure from the peine,
And his hart to put at large,
For her entent was to his barge
Him to bryng agaynst the eue,
With certaine ladies and take leue,
And pray him of his gentilnesse,
To suffer her thencefoorth in peace,
As other Princes had before,
And from thencefoorth for euermore,
She would him worship in all wise,
That gentilnesse might deuise,
And payne her wholly to fulfill,
In honour, his pleasure and will.
And during thus this knights wo,
Present the queene and other mo,
My lady and many another wight,
Ten thousand ships at a sight,
I saw come ouer the wawy flood,
With sayle and ore, that as I stood
Them to behold, I gan marualle,
From whom might come so many a saile,
For sith the tyme that I was bore,
Such a naute there before,
Had I not seene, ne so arayed,
That for the sight my heart played
To and fro within my brest,
For ioy, long was or it would rest,
For there was sayles full of floures,

After castels with huge toures,
Seeming full of armes bright,
That wonder lusty was the sight,
With large toppes, and mastes long,
Richly depeint and rear among,
At certaine times gan repayre,
Small birds downe from thaire,
And on the ships bounds about,
Sate and song with voyce full out,
Ballades and Layes right ioyously,
As they cowth in their harmony,
That you to write that I there see,
Mine excuse is it may not be,
For why, the matter were to long,
To name the birds and write their song,
Whereof anon the tydings there,
Unto the queene soone brought were,
With many alas, and many a doubt,
Shewing the ships there without,
Tho gan the aged lady weepe,
And said alas our ioy on sleepe
Soone shalbe brought, ye long or night
For we diserted been by this knight,
For certes it may none other be,
But he is of ponde companie,
And they be come him here to seche,
And with that word her fayled speche,
Without remedy we be destroid,
Full oft said all, and gan conclude,
Holy at once at the last,
That best was, shit their yates fast,
And arme them all in good langage,
As they had done of old vsage,
And of fayre wordes make their shot,
This was their counsaile and the knot,
And other purpose tooke they none,
But armed thus forth they gone,
Toward the walles of the yle,
But or they come there long while,
They met the great lord of boue,
That called is the god of Loue,
That them auised with such chere,
Right as he with them angry were,
Auayled them not their wals of glasse,
This mighty lord let not to passe,
The shutting of theyr yates fast
All they had ordaind was but wast,
For when his ships had found land,
This lord anon with bow in hand,
Into this yle with huge preasse,
Hied fast and would not ceasse,
Till he came there the knight lay,
Of Queene ne lady by the way,
Tooke he no heed but forth past,
And yet all followed at the last,
And when he came where lay the knight,
Well shewed he, he had great might,
And forth the Queene called anone,
And all the ladies eurichone,
And to them said, is not thus routh,
To see my seruaunt for his trouth,
Thus leane, thus sicke, and in this payne,
And wot not vnto whom to playne,
Saue onely one without mo,
Which might him heale and is his fo.
And with that word, his heauy brow
He shewed the Queene and looked row,
This mighty lord forth tho anone,
With o looke her faults echone,
He can her shew in little speech,
Commaunding her to be his lech,
Withouten more shortly to say,
He thought the Queene soone should obay,
And in his hond he shoke his bow,
And said right soone he would be know,
And for she had so long refused
His seruice, and hys lawes not vsed,
He let her wit that he was wroth,
And bent his bow and forth he goth
A pace or two, and euen there
A large draught, vp to his eare
He drew, and with an arrow ground
Sharpe and new, the Queene a wound
He gaue, that pierced vnto the hart,
Which afterward full sore gan smart,
And was not whole of many yeare,
And euen with that be of good cheare,
My knight, qd. he, I will thee hele,
And thee restore to parfite wele,
And for each payne thou hast endured,
To haue two ioies thou art cured,
And forth he past by the rout,
With sober cheare walking about,
And what he said I thought to heare,
Well wist he which his seruaunts were,
And as he passed anon he fond
My lady and her tooke by the hond,
And made her chere as a Goddes,
And of beaute called her princes,
Of bounty eke gaue her the name,
And said there was nothyng blame
In her, but she was vertuous,
Sauing she would no pity vse,
Which was the cause that he her sought,
To put that far out of her thought,
And sith she had whole richesse
Of womanhead, and friendlinesse,
He said it was nothing sitting,
To void pity his owne leggyng,
And gan her preach and with her play,
And of her beauty told her aie,
And said she was a creature,
Of whom the name should endure,
And in bookes full of pleasaunce,
Be put for euer in remembraunce,
And as me thought more friendly,

Unto my lady, and goodlily
He spake, than any that was there,
And for the appuls, I trow it were,
That she had in possession,
Wherefore long in procession,
Many a pace arme vnder other,
He welke, and so did with none other,
But what he would commaund or say,
Forthwith needs all must obay,
And what he desired at the lest
Of my lady, was by request,
And when they long together had beene,
He brought my lady to the Queene,
And to her said, so God you speed,
Shew grace, consent, that is need,
My lady tho full conningly,
Right well auised, and womanly
Downe gan to kneele vpon the floures,
Which Aprill nourished had with shoures,
And to this mighty lord gan say,
That pleaseth you, I woll obay,
And me restraine from other thought,
As ye woll all thyng shall be wrought,
And with that word kneeling she quoke,
That mighty lord in armes her tooke,
And said you haue a seruaunt one,
That truer liuing is there none,
Wherefore good were, seeing his trouth,
That on his paines ye had routh,
And purpose you to heare his speech,
Fully auised him to leech,
For of one thyng ye may be sure,
He will be yours, while he may dure,
And with that word right on his game
Me thought he lough, and told my name,
Which was to me marualle, and fere,
That what to do I nist there,
Ne whether was me bet or none,
There to abide, or thus to gone,
For well wend I my lady wold
Imagen, or deme, that I had told
My counsaile whole, or made complaint
Unto that lord, that mighty saint,
So verily, each thyng vnsought,
He said as he had knowne my thought,
And told my trouth and mine vnease,
Bet than I couth haue for mine ease,
Though I had studied all a weke,
Well wist that lord that I was seke,
And would be leched wonder faine,
No man me blame, mine was the paine:
And when this lord had all said,
And long with my lady plaid,
She gan to smile with spirit glade,
This was the answere that she made,
Which put me there in double peine,
That what to do, ne what to seine
Wist I not, ne what was the best,
Ferre was my heart then fro his rest,
For as I thought, that smiling signe
Was token, that the heart encline
Would to requests reasonable,
Because smiling is fauorable
To euery thing that shall thriue,
So thought I tho anon bliue,
That wordlesse answere in no toun,
Was tane for obligatioun,
Ne called surety in no wise,
Amongst them that called been wise,
Thus was I in a ioyous dout,
Sure and vnsurest of that rout,
Right as mine heart thought it were,
So more or lesse were my fere,
That if one thought made it wele,
Another thent it euerydele,
Till at the last I couth no more,
But purposed as I did before,
To serue truly my liues space,
Awaiting euer the yeare of grace,
Which may fall yet or I sterue,
If it please her that I serue,
And serued haue, and woll do euer,
For thyng is none, that me is leuer,
Than her seruice, whose presence
Mine heauen is whole, and her absence
An hell, full of diuers paines,
Whych to the death full oft me straines,
Thus in my thoughts, as I stood,
That vnneth felt I harme ne good,
I saw the Queene a little paas
Come where this mighty lord was,
And kneeled downe in presence there
Of all the ladies that there were,
With sober countenaunce aukked,
In few words that well suffised,
And to this lord anon present
A bill, wherein whole her entent
Was written, and how she besought,
As he knew euery will and thought,
That of his godhead and his grace
He would forgyue all old trespace,
And vndispleased be of time past,
For she would euer be stedfast,
And in his seruice to the death
Use euery thought while she had breath,
And sight and wept, and said no more,
Within was written all the sore:
At whych bill the lord gan smyle,
And said he would within that yle
Be lord and syre, both east and west,
And cald it there his new conquest,
And in great councell tooke the Queene,
Long were the tales them betweene,
And ouer her bill he read thrise,
And wonder gladly gan deuise
Her features faire, and her visage,

And bad good thrift on that Image,
And saied he trowed her compleint
Should after cause her be coseint,
And in his sleeue he put the bill,
Was there none that knew his will,
And forth he walke apace about,
Beholding all the lusty rout,
Halfe in a thought with smiling chere,
Till at the last, as ye shall here,
He turned vnto the Queene ageine,
And said to mone, here in this pleine,
I woll ye be, and all yours,
That purposed ben to weare flours,
Or of my lusty colour vse,
It may not be to you excuse,
Ne none of yours in no wise,
That able be to my seruise,
For as I said haue here before,
I will be lord for euermore
Of you, and of this ple, and all,
And of all yours, that haue shall
Joy, peace, ease, or in pleasaunce
Your liues vse without noysaunce,
Here will I in state be seene,
And turned his visage to the Queene,
And you giue knowledge of my will,
And a full answere of your bill.
Was there no nay, ne words none,
But very obeisaunt seemed echone,
Queene and other that were there,
Well seemed it they had great fere,
And there tooke lodging euery night,
Was none departed of that night,
And some to read old Romances,
Them occupied for their pleasances,
Some to make berelaies, and laies,
And some to other diuerse plaies:
And I to me a Romance tooke,
And as I reading was the booke,
Me thought the sphere had so run,
That it was rising of the Sun,
And such a prees into the plaine
Assemble gone, that with great paine
One might for other gone stand,
Ne none take other by the hand,
Withouten they disturbed were,
So huge and great the prees was there.

And after that within two houres,
This mighty lord all in floures
Of diuers colours many a paire,
In his estate vp in the aire,
Well two fathom, as his right,
He let him there in all their sight,
And for the Queene and for the knight,
And for my lady, and euery wight,
In hast he sent, so that neuer one
Was there absent, but come echone:
And when they thus assembled were,
As ye haue heard me say you here,
Without more tarrying on right,
There to be seene of euery wight,
Up stood among the prees aboue
A counsayler, seruaunt of loue,
Which seemed well, of great estate,
And shewed there, how no debate
Owe ne goodly might be vsed
In gentilnesse, and be excused,
Wherefore he said, his lords will,
Was euery wight there should be still,
And in pees, and one accord,
And thus commaunded at a word,
And can his tongue to swiche language
Turne, that yet in all mine age
Heard I neuer so conningly
Man speake, ne halfe so faithfully,
For euery thing he said there,
Seemed as it insealed were,
Or approued for very trew:
Swiche was his cunning language new,
And well according to his chere,
That where I be, me thinke I here
Him yet alway, when I mine one
In any place may be alone:
First con he of the lusty ple
All the state in little whyle
Rehearse, and wholly euery thing,
That caused there his lords comming,
And euery wele and euery wo,
And for what cause ech thing was so,
Well shewed he there in easie speech,
And how the sicke had need of leech:
And that whole was, and in grace,
He told plainly why each thing was,
And at the last he con conclude,
Voided euery language rude,
And said, that prince, that mighty lord,
Or his departing, would accord
All the parties there present,
And was the fine of his entent,
Witnesse his presence in your sight,
Which sits among you in his might:
And kneeled downe withouten more,
And not a word spake he more.

Tho gan this mighty lord him dresse,
With cheare auised, to do largesse,
And said vnto this knight and me,
Ye shall to joy restored be,
And for ye haue ben true ye twaine,
I graunt you here for euery paine
A thousand toies euery weeke,
And looke ye be no lenger seeke,
And both your ladies, lo hem here,
Take ech his own, beeth of good chere,
Your happie day is new begun,

Sith

Sith it was rising of the sun,
And to all other in this place,
I graunt wholly to stand in grace,
That serueth truely, without slouth,
And to auaunced be by trouth.
Tho can this knight, and I downe kneele,
Wening to doe wonder wele,
Seeing O Lord your great mercy,
Us hath enriched, so openly,
That we deserue may neuer more,
The least part, but euermore
With soule and body truely serue
You and yours till we sterue.
And to their Ladies there they stood,
This knight that couth so mikel good,
Went in hast, and I also,
Joyous, and glad were we tho,
And also rich in euery thought,
As he that all hath and ought nought.
And them besought in humble wise,
Us taccept to their seruice,
And shew vs of their friendly cheares,
Which in their treasure many yeares
They kept had, vs to great paine,
And told how their seruants twaine,
Were and would be, and so had euer,
And to the death chaunge would we neuer,
Ne doe offence, ne thinke like ill,
But fill their ordinance and will:
And made our othes fresh new,
Our old seruice to renew,
And wholly theirs for euermore,
We there become, what might we more,
And well awaiting, that in slouth,
We made ne fault, ne in our trouth,
Ne thought not do, I you ensure,
With our will, where we may dure.

This season past, againe an eue,
This Lord of the Queene tooke leue,
And said he would hastely returne,
And at good leisure there sojourne,
Both for his honour, and for his ease,
Commaunding fast, the knight to please,
And gaue his statutes in papers,
And ordent diuers officers,
And forth to ship the same night
He went, and soone was out of sight.
And on the morrow when the aire,
Attempred was, and wonder faire,
Early at rising of the sun,
After the night away was run,
Playing vs on the riuage,
My Lady spake of her voyage,
And said she made small iournies,
And held her in straunge countries,
And forthwith to the Queene went,
And shewed her wholly her entent,
And tooke her leaue with cheare weeping,
That pitty was, to see that parting:
For to the Queene it was a paine,
As to a Martyr new slaine,
That for her woe, and she so tender,
Yet I weepe oft when I remember,
She offerd there to resigne,
To my Lady eight times or nine,
Thastate, the ple, shortly to tell,
If it might please her there to dwell,
And said, for euer her linage,
Should to my Lady doe homage,
And hers be hole withouten more,
Ye, and all theirs for euermore:
Nay God forbid, my Lady eft,
With many conning word and soft,
Said, that euer such thing should beene,
That I consent should, that a Queene
Of your estate, and so well named,
In any wise should be attamed:
But would be faine with all my hert,
What so befell, or how me smert,
To doe thing that you might please,
In any wise, or be your ease,
And kissed there, and bad good night,
For which leue, wept many a wight.
There might men here my Lady praised,
And such a name of her araised,
What of cunning and friendlinesse,
What of beauty with gentilnesse,
What of glad and friendly cheares,
That she vsed in all her yeares,
That wonder was here euery wight
To say well, how they did their might,
And with a prees vpon the morrow,
To ship her brought, and what a sorrow
They made, when she should vnder saile,
That and ye wist, ye would meruaile.
Forth goeth the ship, out goeth the sond,
And I as wood man vnbond,
For doubt to be behind there,
Into the sea withouten fere,
Anon I ran, till with a wawe,
All sodenly I was ouerthrawe,
And with the water to and fro,
Backward and forward trauailed so,
That mind and breath, nigh was gone,
For good ne harme knew I none,
Til at the last with hookes tweine,
Men of the ship with mikel peine,
To saue my life, did such trauaile,
That and ye wist ye would merualle,
And in the ship me drew on hie,
And laiden all that I would die,
And laid me long downe by the mast,
And of their clothes on me cast,
And there I made my testament,
And wist my selfe not what I ment,

But

But when I said had what I would,
And to the mast my wo all told,
And tane my leaue of euery wight,
And closed mine eyen, and lost my sight,
Auised to die, without moze speech,
Oz any remedy to seech
Of grace new, as was great need:
My lady of my paine tooke heed,
And her bethought how that foz trouth,
To see me die it were great routh,
And to me came in sober wise,
And softly said, I pzay you rise,
Come on with me, let be this fare,
All shall be wel, haue ye no care,
I will obey ye and fulfill
Holy in all that lozds will,
That you and me not long ago,
After his list commaunded so,
That there againe no resistence
May be without great offence,
And therefoze now what I say,
I am and will be friendly aye,
Rise vp behold this auauntage,
I graunt you inheritage,
Peaceably without strife,
During the daies of your liue,
And of her apples in my sleue
One she put, and tooke her leue
In wozds few and said good hele,
He that all made you send and wele,
Wherewith my paines all at ones
Tooke such leaue, that all my bones,
Foz the new diuerse pleasaunce,
So as they couth, desired to daunce,
And I as whole as any wight,
Up rose with ioyous heart and light,
Hole and sticke, right wele at ease,
And all fozget had my disease,
And to my lady where she plaid,
I went anone, and to her said:
He that all ioies, persons to please,
First ozdained with parfite ease,
And euery pleasure can depart,
Send you madame, as large a part,
And of his goods such plenty,
As he has done you of beauty,
With hele and all that may be thought,
He send you all as he all wzought:
Madame (quoth I) your seruaunt trew,
Haue I ben long, and yet will new,
Without chaunge oz repentaunce,
In any wise oz variaunce,
And so will do as thzine I euer,
Foz thing is none that me is leuer,
Than you to please, how euer I fare,
Mine hearts lady and my welfare,
My life, mine hele, my lech also,
Of euery thing that doth me wo,
My helpe at need, and my surete
Of euery ioy that longs to me,
My succours whole in all wise,
That may be thought oz man deuise,
Your grace Madame such haue I found,
Now in my need that I am bound,
To you foz euer so Chzist me saue,
Foz heale and liue of you I haue,
Wherefoze is reasoun I you serue,
With due obeisaunce till I sterue,
And dead and quicke be euer yours,
Late, early, and at all hours,
Tho came my lady small alite,
And in plaine english con conSite
In wozds few, whole her entent
She shewed me there, and how she ment
To me ward in euery wise,
Wholly she came at their deuise,
Without pzocesse oz long trauell,
Charging me to keepe counsell,
As I would to her grace attaine,
Of which commaundement I was faine.
Wherefoze I passe ouer at this time,
Foz counsell couds not well in rime,
And eke the oth that I haue swoze,
To breake, me were better vnboze,
Why foz vntrue foz euermoze
I should be hold, that neuermoze
Of me in place should be repozt
Thing that auaile might, oz comfozt
To me wards in any wise,
And ech wight would me dispise
In that they couth, and me repzeue,
Which were a thing soze foz to greeue,
Wherefoze hereof moze mention,
Make I not now ne long sermon,
But shoztly thus I me excuse,
To rime a councell I refuse.
Sailing thus two daies oz three,
My lady towards her countree,
Ouer the waues high and greene,
Which were large and deepe bet weene,
Upon a time me called and said,
That of my hele she was well paid,
And of the Queene and of the yle,
She talked with me long while,
And of all that she there had seene,
And of the estate, and of the queene,
And of the ladies name by name,
Two houres oz mo, this was her game,
Till at the last the wind can rise,
And blew so fast, and in such wise,
The ship that euery wight can say,
Madame er eue be of this day,
And God toforze, ye shall be there,
As ye would fainest that ye were,
And doubt not within sixe hours,
Ye shall be there, as all is yours,

At which wordes she gan to smile,
And said that was no long while,
That they her set and vp she rose,
And all about the ship she gose,
And made good cheare to euery wight,
Till of the land she had a sight,
Of which sight glad God it wot,
She was abashed and aboot,
And forth goeth shortly you to tell,
Where she accustomed was to dwell,
And receiued was as good right,
With ioyous cheere and hearts light,
And as a glad new auenture,
Pleasaunt to euery creature,
Wot which landing tho I woke,
And found my chamber full of smoke,
My cheekes eke vnto the eares,
And all my body weat with teares,
And all so feeble and in such wise,
I was, that vnneth might I rise,
So sare trauailed and so faint,
That neither knew I kirke ne saint,
Ne what was what, ne who was who,
Ne auised, what way I would go,
But by a venturous grace,
I rise and walkt, sought pace and pace,
Till I a winding staire found,
And held the vice aye in my hond,
And vpward softly so can creepe,
Till I came where I thought to sleepe,
More at mine ease, and out of preace,
At my good leisure, and in peace,
Till somewhat I recomfort were,
Of the trauell and great feare,
That I endured had before,
This was my thought without more,
And as a wight witlesse and faint,
Without more, in a chamber paint
Full of stories old and diuers,
More than I can now rehearse,
Unto a bed full soberly,
So as I might full southly,
Pace after other, and nothing said,
Till at the last downe I me laid,
And as my mind would giue me leue,
All that I dreamed had that eue,
Before all I can rehearse,
Right as a child at schoole his verse,
Doth after that he thinketh to thriue,
Right so did I for all my liue,
I thought to haue in remembraunce,
Both the paine and the pleasaunce,
The dreame whole, as it me befell,
Which was as ye here me tell,
Thus in my thoughts as I lay,
That happy or vnhappy day,
Wot I not so haue I blame,
Of the two, which is the name:
Befell me so, that there a thought,
By processe new on sleepe me brought,
And me gouerned so in a while,
That againe within the yle,
Me thought I was, where of the knight,
And of the ladies I had a sight,
And were assembled on a greene,
Knight and lady, with the queene,
At which assembly there was said,
How they all content and paid,
Were wholly as in that thing,
That the knight there should be king,
And they would all for sure witnesse,
Wedded be both more and lesse,
In remembraunce without more,
Thus they consent for euermore,
And was concluded that the knight,
Depart should the same night,
And forthwith there tooke his voiage,
To iourney for his marriage,
And returne with such an host,
That wedded might be least and most,
This was concluded, written and sealed,
That it might not be repealed,
In no wise, but aie be firme,
And all should be within a termine,
Without more excusation,
Both feast and coronation,
This knight which had thereof the charge,
Anon into a little barge,
Brought was late against an eue,
Where of all he tooke his leaue,
Which barge was as a mans thought,
After his pleasure to him brought,
The Queene her selfe accustomed aye,
In the same barge to play,
It needeth neither mast ne rother,
I haue not heard of such another,
No maister for the gouernaunce,
Hie sayled by thought and pleasaunce,
Without labour East and West,
All was one, calme, or tempest,
And I went with at his request,
And was the first praied to the feast,
When he came in his countree,
And passed had the wauy see,
In an hauen deepe and large,
He left his rich and noble barge,
And to the court shortly to tell,
He went, where he wont was to dwell,
And was receiued as good right,
As heire, and for a worthy knight,
With all the states of the lond,
Which came anon at his first sond,
With glad spirits full of truth,
Loth to do fault or with a slouth,
Attaint be in any wise,
Their riches was their old seruise,

Which

Which euer trew had be fond,
Sith first inhabit was the lond,
And so receiued there her King,
That forgotten was no thing,
That owe to be done ne might please,
Ne their soueraine Lord do ease,
And with them so shortly to say,
As they of custome had done aye,
For seuen yere past was and more,
The father, the old wise and hore,
King of the land tooke his leue,
Of all his barons on an eue,
And told them how his dayes past
Were all, and comen was the last,
And hartily prayed hem to remember
His sonne, which yong was and tender,
That borne was their prince to be,
If he returne to that countree
Might, by aduenture or grace,
Within any time or space,
And to be true and friendly aye,
As they to him had bene alway:
Thus he them praid, without more,
And tooke his leaue for euermore.
Knowen was, how tender in age,
This young prince a great viage
Uncouth and straung, honours to seche,
Tooke in hond with little speeche,
Which was to seeke a princes,
That he desired more than riches,
For her great name that floured so,
That in that time there was no mo,
Of her estate, ne so well named,
For borne was none that euer her blamed:
Of which princes somewhat before,
Here haue I spoke, and some will more.
So thus befell as ye shall heare,
Unto their lord they made such cheare,
That ioy was there to be present,
To see their troth and how they ment,
So very glad they were eche one,
That them among there was no one,
That desired more riches,
Than for their Lord such a princes,
That they might please, and that were faire,
For fast desired they an heire,
And said great surety were ywis.
And as they were speaking of this,
The prince himselfe him auised,
And in plaine English vndisguised,
Them shewed hole his iourney,
And of their counsell can them prey,
And told how he ensured was,
And how his day he might not passe,
Without diffame and great blame,
And to him for euer a shame,
And of their counsell and auise,
There he prayth them once or twise,
And that they would, within ten daies,
Auise and ordaine him such waies,
So that it were no displeasaunce,
Ne to this Realme ouer great grieuaunce,
And that he haue might to his feast,
Sixty thousand at the least,
For his intent within short while,
Was to returne vnto his yle
That he came fro, and kepe his day,
For nothing would he be away.
To counsaile tho the Lords anon,
Into a chamber euerychone,
Together went, them to deuise,
How they might best and in what wise,
Puruey for their Lords pleasaunce,
And the Realmes continuaunce
Of honor, which in it before,
Had continued euermore,
So at the last they found the waies,
How within the next ten daies,
All might with paine and diligence
Be done, and cast what the dispence
Might draw, and in conclusion,
Made for ech thing prouision.
When this was done, wholly tofore
The prince, the lords all before
Come, and shewed what they had done,
And how they couth by no reason
Find, that within the ten daies,
He might depart by no waies,
But would be fifteene at the least,
Or he returne might to his feast:
And shewed him euery reason why
It might not be so hastily,
As he desired, ne his day
He might not keepe by no way,
For diuers causes wonder great:
Which when he heard, in such an heat
He fell, for sorow and was seke,
Still in his bed whole that weke,
And nigh the tother for the shame,
And for the doubt, and for the blame,
That might on him be aret,
And oft vpon his brest he bet,
And said alas, mine honour for aye,
Haue I here lost cleane this day,
Dead would I be, alas my name
Shall aye be more henceforth in shame,
And I dishonoured and repreued,
And neuer more shall be beleeued:
And made swich sorow, that in trouth,
Him to behold it was great routh:
And so endured the dayes fifteene,
Till that the Lords on an euen,
Him come, and told they ready were,
And shewed in few words there,
How and what wise they had purueyd,
For his estate, and to him said,

That

That twenty thousand knights of name,
And fourty thousand without blame,
All come of noble ligine,
Togider in a compane,
Were lodged on a riuers side,
Him and his pleasure there tabide,
The prince tho for ioy vp rose,
And where they lodged were, he goes
Without more that same night,
And these his supper made to dight,
And with them bode till it was dey,
And forthwith to take his iourney,
Leuing the streight, holding the large,
Till he came to his noble barge,
And when this prince, this lustie knight
With his people in armes bright,
Was comen where he thought to pas,
And knew well none abiding was
Behind, but all were there present,
Forthwith anon all his intent
He told them there, and made his cries,
Through his oste that day twise,
Commaunding euery liues wight,
There being present in his sight,
To be the morow on the riuage,
Where he begin would his viage.
The morrow come, the cry was kept,
Few was there that night that slept,
But trussed and purueied for the morrow,
For fault of ships was all their sorrow,
For saue the barge, and other two,
Of shippes there saw I no mo:
Thus in their doubts as they stood,
Waxing the sea, comming the flood,
Was cried to ship goe euery wight,
Then was but hie, that hie might,
And to the barge me thought echone,
They went, without was left not one,
Hosle, male, trusse, ne bagage,
Salad, speare, gardbrace, ne page,
But was lodged and roome ynough,
At which shipping me thought I lough,
And gan to maruaile in my thought,
How euer such a ship was wrought,
For what people that can encrease,
Ne euer so thicke might be the prease,
But all had roome at their will,
There was not one was lodged ill,
For as I trow, my selfe the last
Was one, and lodged by the mast,
And where I looked I saw such rome,
As all were lodged in a towne.
Forth goth the ship, said was the creed,
And on their knees for their good speed,
Downe kneeled euery wight a while,
And praied fast that to the yle
They might come in safety,
The prince and all the company,
With worship and without blame,
Or disclaunder of his name,
Of the promise he should retourne,
Within the time he did sotourne,
In his lond biding his host,
This was their prayer least and most,
To keepe the day it might not been,
That he appointed had with the queen,
To returne without slouth,
And so allured had his trouth,
For which fault this prince, this knight,
During the time slept not a night,
Such was his wo and his disease,
For doubt he should the queene displease,
Forth goeth the ship with such speed,
Right as the prince for his great need,
Desire would after his thought,
Till it vnto the yle him brought,
Where in hast vpon the sand,
He and his people tooke the land,
With harts glad, and chere light,
Weening to be in heauen that night:
But or they passed a while,
Entring in toward that yle,
All clad in blacke with chere piteous,
A lady which neuer dispiteous,
Had be in all her life tofore,
With sory chere, and hart to tore,
Unto this prince where he gan ride,
Come and said, abide, abide,
And haue no hast, but fast retourne,
No reason is ye here sotourne,
For your vntruth hath vs discried,
Wo worth the time we vs allied
With you, that are so soone vntrew,
Alas the day that we you knew,
Alas the time that ye were bore,
For all this lond by you is lore,
Accursed be he you hider brought.
For all your ioy is turnd to nought,
Your acquaintance we may complaine,
Which is the cause of all our paine.
Alas madame quoth tho this knight,
And with that from his horse he light,
With colour pale, and cheekes lene,
Alas what is this for to mene,
What haue ye said, why be ye wroth,
You to displease I would be loth,
Know yenot well the promesse,
I made haue to your princesse,
Which to performe is mine intent,
So mote I speed as I haue ment,
And as I am her very trew,
Without change or thought new,
And also fully her seruand,
As creature or man liuand,
May be to lady or princesse,
For she mine heauen, and whole richesse
Is, and the lady of mine heale,
My worlds ioy and all my weale,

What may this be, whence coms this speech,
Tell me Madame I you beseech,
For sith the first of my liuing,
Was I so fearfull of nothing,
As I am now to heare you speake,
For doubt I feele mine heart breake:
Say on madame, tell me your will,
The remnaunt is it good or ill,
Alas (qd. she) that ye were borne,
For, for your loue this land is lorne,
The queene is dead and that is ruth,
For sorrow of your great vntruth,
Of two partes of the lusty rout,
Of ladies that were there about,
That wont were to talke and play,
Now are dead and cleane away,
And vnder earth tane lodging new,
Alas that euer ye were vntrew,
For when the time ye set was past,
The queene to counsaile sone in hast,
What was to doe, and said great blame,
Your acquaintaunce cause would and shame,
And the ladies of their auise,
Prayed, for need was to be wise,
In eschewing tales and songs,
That by them make would ill tongs,
And sey they were lightly conquest,
And prayed to a poore feast,
And soule had their worship weined,
When so vnwisely they conceiued,
Their rich treasour, and their heale,
There famous name, and their weale,
To put in such an auenture,
Of which the sclaunder euer dure
Was like, without helpe of appele,
Wherefore they need had of counsele,
For euery wight of them would say,
Their closed ple an open way
Was become to euery wight,
And well approued by a knight,
Which he alas without paysaunce,
Had soone acheued thobeisaunce:
All this was moued at counsell thrise,
And concluded daily twise,
That bet was die without blame,
Than lose the riches of their name,
Wherefore the deaths acquaintaunce,
They chese, and left haue their pleasaunce,
For doubt to liue as repreued,
In that they you so soone beleeued,
And made their othes with one accord,
That eat, ne drinke, ne speake word,
They should neuer, but euer weping
Bide in a place without parting,
And vse their dayes in penaunce,
Without desire of allegeaunce,
Of which the truth anon con preue,
For why the queen forwith her leue,
Tooke at them all that were present,
Of her defauts fully repent,
And died there withouten more,
Thus are we lost for euermore,
What should I more hereof reherse,
Comen within come see her herse,
Where ye shall see the pitteous sight,
That euer yet was shewen to knight,
For ye shall see ladies stond,
Ech with a great rod in hond,
Clad in black with visage white,
Ready each other for to smite,
If any be that will not wepe,
Or who that makes countenance to slepe,
They be so bet, that all so blew
They be as cloth that died is new,
Such is their parfite repentance,
And thus they keepe their ordinance,
And will do euer to the death,
While them endures any breath.

This knight tho in armes twaine,
This lady tooke and gan her saine,
Alas my birth, woo worth my life,
And euen with that he drew a knife,
And through gowne, doublet, and shert,
He made the blood come from his hert,
And set him downe vpon the greene,
And full repent closed his eene,
And saue that ones he drew his breath,
Without more thus he tooke his death,
For which cause the lusty hoast,
Which in a battaile on the coast,
At once for sorrow such a cry
Gan rere, through out the company,
That to the heauen heard was the sowne,
And vnder therth als fer adowne,
That wild beasts for the feare,
So sodainly afrayed were,
That for the doubt, while they might dure,
They ran as of their liues vnsure,
From the woods vnto the plaine,
And from the valleys the high mountaine
They sought, and ran as beasts blind,
That cleane forgotten had their kind.
This wo not ceased, to counsaile went
These Lords, and for that lady sent,
And of auise what was to done,
They her besought she say would sone,
Weeping full sore all clad in blake,
This lady softly to them spake,
And said, my lords by my trouth,
This mischiefe it is of your slouth,
And if ye had that iudge would right,
A prince that were a very knight,
Ye that ben of astate echone,
Die for his fault should one and one,
And if he hold had the promesse,
And done that longs to gentilnesse,
And fulfilled the princes behest,

This hastie farme had bene a feast,
And now is vnrecouerable,
And vs a slaunder aye durable,
Wherefore I say as of counsaile,
In me is none that may auaile,
But if ye list for remembraunce,
Purucy and make such ordinaunce,
That the queene that was so meke,
With all her women dede or seke,
Might in your land a chappell haue,
With some remembraunce of her graue,
Shewing her end with the pity,
In some notable old city,
Nigh vnto an high way,
Where euery wight might for her pray,
And for all hers that haue ben trew,
And euen with that she changed hew,
And twise wished, after the death,
And sight, and thus passed her breath.
Then said the Lords of the host,
And so concluded least and most,
That they would euer in houses of thacke,
Their liues lead, and weare but blacke,
And forsake all their pleasaunces,
And turne all ioy to penaunces,
And beare the dead prince to the barge,
And named them should haue the charge,
And to the hearse where lay the queen,
The remnaunt went and down on kneen,
Holding their hands on high con crie,
Mercy, mercy, eucrich thrie,
And cursed the time that euer slouth,
Should haue such masterdome of trouth,
And to the barge a long mile,
They bare her forth, and in a while
All the Ladies one and one,
By companies were brought echone,
And past the sea and tooke the land,
And in new herses an a sand,
Put and brought were all anon,
Unto a city closed with stone,
Where it had been sted aye,
The kings of the land to lay,
After they raigned in honours,
And writ was which were conquerours,
In an abbey of Nunnes which were blake,
Which accustomed were to wake,
And of stage rise ech a night,
To pray for euery liues wight,
And so befell as is the guise,
Ordeint and said was the seruise,
Of the prince and of the queen,
So deuoutly as might been,
And after that about the herses,
Many orisons and verses,
Without note full softely,
Said weare and that full heartily,
That all the night till it was day,
The people in the Church con pray,
Unto the holy Trinitie,
Of those soules to haue pitie.

And when the night past and ronne
Was, and the new day begonne,
The yong morrow with rayes red,
Which from the Sunne ouer all con spred,
A tempered clere was and faire,
And made a tyme of wholsome aire,
Befell a wonder case and strange,
Among the people and gan change,
Soone the word and euery woo,
Unto a ioy, and some to two:
A bird all fedred blew and greene,
With bright rayes like gold betweene,
As small thred ouer euery toynt,
All full of colour strange and coint,
Uncouth, and wonderfull to sight,
Upon the queens herse con light,
And song full low and softely,
Three songs in her harmony,
Unletted of euery wight,
Till at the last an aged knight,
Which seemed a man in great thought,
Like as he set all thing at nought,
With visage and ein all forwept,
And pale, as man long vnslept,
By the herses as he stood,
With hasty honding of his hood,
Unto a prince that by him past,
Made the bridde somewhat agast,
Wherefore she rose and left her song,
And depart from vs among,
And spread her wings for to passe,
By the place he entred was,
And in his hast shortly to tell,
Him hurt, that backeward downe he fell,
From a window richly peint,
With liues of many diuers feint,
And bet his wings and bled fast,
And of the hurt thus died and past,
And lay there well an houre and more,
Till at the last of briddes a score,
Come and sembled at the place
Where the window broken was,
And made swiche wamentacioun,
That pity was to heare the soun,
And the warbles of their throtes,
And the complaint of their notes,
Which from ioy cleane was reuersed,
And of them one the glas soone persed,
And in his beke of colours nine,
An herbe he brought flourelesse all greene,
Full of small leaues and plaine,
Swart and long with many a vaine,
And where his fellow lay thus dede,
This herbe down laid by his hede,
And dressed it full softly,
And hong his head and stood thereby,

Which heard in lesse than halfe an houre,
Gan ouer all knit, and after floure
Full out and were vpe the seed,
And right as one another feed
Would in his beake he tooke the graine,
And in his fellowes beake certaine
It put, and thus within the third
Up stood, and pruned him the bird,
Which dead had be in all our sight,
And both togither forth their flight
Tooke, singing from vs, and their leue,
Was none disturb hem would ne greue,
And when they parted were, and gone
Thabbesse the seeds soone echone
Gadred had, and in her hand
The herb she tooke, well auisand
The leafe, the seed, the stalke, the floure,
And said it had a good sauour,
And was no common herb to find,
And well approued of vncouth kind,
And than other more vertuouse,
Who so haue it might for to vse
In his need, flowre, leafe, or graine,
Of their heale might be certaine:
And laid it downe vpon the herse
Where lay the queene, and gan reherse,
Echone to other that they had seene,
And taking thus the sede wex greene,
And on the drie herse gan spring,
Which me thought a wondrous thing,
And after that floure and new seed,
Of which the people all tooke heed,
And said, it was some great miracle,
Or medicine fine more than triacle,
And were well done there to assay,
If it might ease in any way,
The corses, which with torch light,
They waked had there all that night,
Soone did the lords there consent,
And all the people thereto content,
With easie words and little fare,
And made the queenes visage bare,
Which shewed was to all about,
Wherefore in swoone fell whole the rout,
And were so sorry most and least,
That long of weping they not ceast,
For of their lord the remembraunce,
Unto them was such displeasaunce,
That for to liue they called a paine,
So were they very true and plaine,
And after this the good abbesse,
Of the graine gan chese and dresse,
Three, with her fingers cleane and small,
And in the queenes mouth by tale,
One after other full easily,
She put and full commingly,
Which shewed soone such vertue,
That preued was the medicine true,
For with a smiling countenaunce,
The Queene vprose, and of disaunce,
As she was wont to euery wight,
She made good cheere, for which sight,
The people kneeling on the stones,
Thought they in heauen were soule & bones:
And to the prince where he lay,
They went to make the same assay,
And when the Queene it vnderstood,
And how the medicine was good,
She prayed she might haue the graines,
To releue him from the paines
Which she and he had both endured,
And to him went and so him cured,
That within a little space,
Lusty and frelh on liue he was,
And in good hele, and hole of speech,
And lough, and said gramercy leech,
For which the ioy throughout the town,
So great was that the bels sown,
Afraied the people, a iournay,
About the citie euery way,
And come and asked cause and why
They rongen were so stately:
And after that the queene, thabbesse
Made diligence or they would cesse,
Such, that of ladies soone a rout,
Sewing the queene was all about,
And called by name echone and told,
Was none forgetten young ne old,
There might men see ioyes new,
When the medicine fine and trew,
Thus restored had euery wight,
So well the queene as the knight,
Unto perfit ioy and hele,
That fleting they were in such wele
As folke that would in no wise,
Desire more parfit paradise.
And thus when passed was the sorrow,
With mikle ioy soone on the morrow,
The king, the queene, and euery lord,
With all the Ladies by one accord,
A generall assembly
Great cry through the country,
The which after as their intent
Was turned to a Parliament,
Where was ordained and auised,
Euery thing and deuised,
That please might, to most and least,
And there concluded was the feast,
Within the yle to be hold
With full consent of young and old,
In the same wise as before,
As thing should be without more,
And shipped and thither went
And into straunge Realmes sent,
To kings, queenes, and duchesses,
To diuers princes and princesses,
Of their linage and can pray,
That it might like them at that day

Of mariage, for their sport,
Come see the ple, and them disport,
Where should be iousts and turnaies,
And armes done in other waies,
Signifying ouer all the day
After Aprill within May,
And was auised that ladies tweine,
Of good estate and well beseine,
With certaine knights and squiers,
And of the queenes officers,
In manner of an embassade,
With certain letters closed and made,
Should take the barge and depart,
And seeke my lady euery part,
Till they her found for any thing,
Both charged haue queene and king,
And as their lady and maistres,
Her to beseke of gentilnes,
At the day there for to been,
And oft her recommaund the queen,
And prayes for all loues to hast,
For but she come all woll be wast,
And the feast, a businesse
Without ioy or lustinesse:
And tooke them tokens and good speed
Praid God send, after their need.
Forth went the ladies and the knights,
And were out fourteene daies and nights,
And brought my lady in their barge,
And had well sped and done their charge:
Whereof the queene so hartily glad
Was, that in soth such ioy she had,
When the ship approched lond,
That she my lady on the lond,
Met, and in armes so constraine,
That wonder was behold them twaine,
Which to my dome during twelue houres,
Neither for heat ne watry shoures,
Departed not no company,
Sauing themselfe but none them by,
But gaue them laysour at their ease,
To rehearse ioy and disease,
After the pleasure and courages,
Of their young and tender ages:
And after, with many a knight,
Brought were, where as for that night
They parted not, for to pleasaunce,
Content, was hert and countenaunce,
Both of the queene, and my maistresse,
This was that night their businesse:
And on the morrow with huge rowt,
This prince of lords him about,
Come and to my Lady said,
That of her comming glad and well apaid
He was, and full conningly,
Her thanked, and full heartily,
And lough and smiled, and said ywis,
That was in doubt, in safety is:
And commaunded do diligence,
And spare for neither gold ne spence,
But make ready, for on the morow,
Wedded with saint John to borow,
He would be, withouten more,
And let them wite this lese and more,
The morow come, and the seruice
Of mariage in such a wise
Said was, that with more honour,
Was neuer prince ne conquerour
Wedde, ne with such company,
Of gentilnesse in chiualry,
Ne of Ladies so great routs
Ne so beseen as all abouts
They were there, I certifie
You on my life withouten lie.

And the feast hold was in tentis,
As to tell you mine entent is,
In a rome a large plaine
Under a wood in a champaine,
Betwixt a riuer and a well,
Where neuer had abbay, ne sell
Ben, ne kirke, house, ne village,
In time of any mans age:
And dured three months the feast,
In one estate and neuer ceast,
From early the rising of the sonne,
Till the day spent was and ygonne,
In iusting, dauncing, and lustinesse,
And all that sowned to gentilnesse.

And as me thought the second morrow,
When ended was all old sorrow,
And in surety euery wight
Had with his lady slept a night,
The Prince, the Queene, and all the rest,
Unto my lady made request,
And her beseught oft and praied,
To mewards to be well apaied,
And consider mine old trouth,
And on my paines haue routh,
And me accept to her seruise,
In such forme and in such wise,
That we both might be as one,
Thus praied the Queene, and euerichone:
And for there should be no nay,
They stint iusting all a day,
To pray my lady and requere,
Be content and out of fere,
And with good heart make friendly cheare,
And said it was a happy yeare:
At which she smiled and said ywis,
I trow well he my seruaunt is,
And would my welfare as I trist,
So would I his, and would he wist
How and I knew that his trouth
Continue would without slouth,
And be such as ye here report,
Restraining both courage and sport,

I couth consent at your request,
To be named of your fest,
And do after your plaunce,
In obeying your pleasaunce,
At your request this I consent,
To please you in your entent,
And eke the soueraine aboue,
Commanded hath me for to loue,
And before other him prefer,
Against which Prince may be no wer,
For his power ouer all raigneth,
That other would for nought him paineth,
And sith his will and yours is one,
Contrary in me shall be none,
Tho (as me thought) the promise
Of marriage before the mese,
Desired was of euery wight,
To be made the same night,
To put away all maner douts
Of euery wight thereabouts,
And so was do, and on the morrow,
When euery thought and euery sorrow
Dislodged was out of mine hert,
With euery wo and euery smert,
Unto a tent Prince and Princes,
The thought, brought me and my maistres,
And said we were at full age,
There to conclude our marriage,
With ladies, knights, and squiers,
And a great host of ministers,
With instruments and sounes diuerse,
That long were here to rehearse,
Which tent was church perochiall,
Ordaint was in especiall,
For the feast and for the sacre,
Where archbishop, and archdiacre
Song full out the seruise,
After the custome and the guise,
And the churches ordinaunce,
And after that to dine and daunce
Brought were we, and to diuers plaies,
And for our speed ech with praies,
And merry was most and least,
And said amended was the feast,
And were right glad lady and lord,
Of the marriage and thaccord,
And wished vs hearts pleasaunce,
Joy, hele, and continuaunce,
And to the minstrils made request,
That in encreasing of the fest,
They would touch their cords,
And with some new ioyeux accords,
Mooue the people to gladnesse,
And praiden of all gentilnesse,
Ech to paine them for the day,
To shew his cunning and his play,
Tho began sownes meruelous,
Entuned with accords ioyous,
Round about all the tents,
With thousands of instruments,
That euery wight to daunce them pained,
To be merry was none that fayned,
Which sowne me troubled in my sleepe,
That fro my bed forth I lepe,
Wening to be at the feast,
But when I woke all was least,
For there nas lady ne creature,
Saue on the wals old portraiture
Of horsmen, haukes, and hounds,
And hurt deere full of wounds,
Some like bitten, some hurt with shot,
And as my dreame seemed that was not,
And when I wake, and knew the trouth,
And ye had seen of very routh,
I trow ye would haue wept a weke,
For neuer man yet halfe so seke,
I went escaped with the life,
And was for fault that sword ne knife
I find ne might my life tabridge,
Ne thing that kerued, ne had edge,
Wherewith I might my wofull paine
Haue voided with bleeding of my vaine,
Lo here my blisse, lo here my paine,
Which to my lady I do complaine,
And grace and mercy her require,
To end my wo and busie feare,
And me accept to her seruise,
After her seruice in such auise,
That of my dreame the substaunce
Might turne once to cognisaunce,
And cognisaunce to very preue,
By full consent, and good leue,
Or els without more I pray,
That this night, or it be day,
I mote vnto my dreame returne,
And sleeping so forth aie sojourne,
About the ple of pleasaunce,
Under my ladies obeisaunce,
In her seruice, and in such wise,
As it please her may to deuise,
And grace ones to be accept,
Like as I dreamed when I slept,
And dure a thousand yeare and ten,
In her good will, Amen, Amen.

Fairest of faire, and goodliest on liue,
All my secre to you I plaine, and shriue,
Requiring grace and of complaint,
To be healed or martered as a saint,
For by my trouth I sweare, & by this booke,
Ye may both heale, and slea me with a looke.

Go forth mine owne true hart innocent,
And with humblesse, do thine obseruaunce,
And to thy lady on thy knees present
Thy seruice new, & think how great pleasãce
It is to liue vnder thobeisance
Of her that may with her looks soft

Giue thee the blisse that thou desirest oft.

Be diligent, awake, obey, and drede,
And not too wild of thy countenaunce,
But meeke and glad, and thy nature feed,
To do each thing that may her pleasance,
When thou shalt sleep, haue aie in remẽbrance
Thimage of her which may with lookes soft
Giue thee the blisse that thou desirest oft.

And if so be that thou her name find
Written in booke, or els vpon wall,
Looke that thou as seruaunt true and kind,
Thine obeisaunce as she were therewithall,
Fayning in loue is breeding of a fall,
From the grace of her, whose lookes soft
May giue the blisse that thou desirest oft.

Ye that this Ballade read shall,
I pray you keepe you from the fall.

The Floure and the Leafe.

A Gentlewoman out of an Arbour in a groue, seeth a great companie of knights and ladies in a dance vpon the greene grasse: the which being ended, they all kneele downe, and do honor to the Daisie, some to the Floure, and some to the Leafe. Afterward this Gentlewoman learneth by one of these ladies the meaning hereof, which is this: They which honour the Floure, a thing fading with euery blast, are such as looke after beautie and worldly pleasure. But they that honour the Leafe, which abideth with the root, notwithstanding the frosts and winter stormes, are they which follow vertue and during qualities, without regard of worldly respects.

When that Phebus his chaire of gold so hie
Had whirled vp the sterrie sky aloft,
And in the Boole was entred certainely,
When shoures sweet of raine discended oft,
Causing the ground fele times and oft,
Vp for to giue many an wholesome aire,
And euery plaine was clothed faire

With new green, and maketh small floures
To springen here and there in field & in mede,
So very good and wholesome be the shoures,
That it renueth that was old and dede,
In winter time, and out of euery sede
Springeth the herbe, so that euery wight
Of this season weyeth glad and light.

And I so glad of the season swete,
Was happed thus vpon a certaine night,
As I lay in my bed, sleepe full vnmete
Was vnto me, but why that I ne might
Rest, I ne wist, for there nas earthly wight
As I suppose had more hearts ease
Than I, for I nad sickneſſe nor disease.

Wherefore I meruaile greatly of my selfe,
That I so long withouten sleepe lay,
And vp I rose three hours after twelfe,
About the springing of the day,
And on I put my geare and mine array,
And to a pleasaunt groue I gan passe,
Long or the bright sonne vp risen was.

In which were Okes great, streight as a line,
Vnder the which the grasse so fresh of hew
Was newly sprong, and an eight foot or nine
Euery tree well fro his fellow grew,
With branches brode, lade with leues new,
That sprongen out ayen the sunne shene,
Some very red, and some a glad light greene.

Which as me thought was right a pleſãt sight,
And eke the briddes song for to here,
Would haue reioyced any earthly wight,
And I that couth not yet in no manere
Heare the Nightingale of all the peare,
Ful busily herkened with hart and with eare,
If I her voice perceiue coud any where.

And at the last a path of little bread
I found, that greatly had not vsed be,
For it forgrowne was with grasse and weed,
That well vneth a wight might it se:
Thoght I this path some whider goth parde,
And so I followed, till it me brought
To right a pleasaunt herber well ywrought.

That benched was, and with turfes new
Freshly turued, whereof the greene gras,
So small so thicke, so short, so fresh of hew,
That most like vnto green well wot I it was,
The hegge also that yede in compas,
And closed in all the greene herbere,
With sicamour was set and eglatere.

Wrethen in fere so well and cunningly,
That euery branch and leafe grew by mesure,
Plaine as a bord, of an height by and by,
I see neuer thing I you ensure,
So well done, for he that tooke the cure
It to make ytrow, did all his peine,
To make it passe all tho that men haue seine.

And shapen was this herber roofe and all
As a pretie parlour, and also
The hegge as thicke as a castle wall,
That who that list without to stond or go,
Though he would all day prien to and fro,
He should not see if there were any wight
Within or no, but one within well might

Perceiue all tho that yeden there without
In the field that was on euery side
Couered with corne and grasse ẏ out of doubt,
Though one would seeke all the world wide,
So rich a field could not be espide
On no coast, as of the quantitie,
For of all good thing there was plentie.

And I that all this pleasaunt sight se,
Thought sodainly I felt so sweet an aire
Of the eglentere, that certainely
There is no heart I deme in such dispaire,
Ne with thoughts froward and contraire,
So ouerlaid, but it should soone haue bote,
If it had ones felt this sauour sote.

And as I stood and cast aside mine eie,
I was ware of the fairest Medle tree
That euer yet in all my life I se,
As full of blossomes as it might be,
Therein a goldfinch leaping prettie
Fro bough to bough, and as him list he eet
Here and there of buds and flowres sweet.

And to the herber side was ioyning
This faire tree, of which I haue you told,
And at the last the bird began to sing,
When he had eaten what he eat wold,
So passing sweetly, that by manifold
It was more pleasaunt than I could deuise.
And when his song was ended in this wise,

The Nightingale with so merry a note
Answered him, that all the wood rong
So sodainly, that as it were a sote,
I stood astonied, so was I with the song
Thorow rauished, that till late and long,
I ne wist in what place I was, ne where,
And ayen me thought she song euē by mine ere.

Wherefore I waited about busily
On euery side, if I her might see,
And at the last I gan full well aspie
Where she sat in a fresh grene laurer tree,
On the further side euen right by me,
That gaue so passing a delicious smell,
According to the eglentere full well.

Whereof I had so inly great pleasure,
That as me thought I surely rauished was
Into Paradice, where my desire
Was for to be, and no ferther passe
As for that day, and on the sote grasse
I sat me downe, for as for mine entent,
The birds song was more conuenient,

And more pleasaunt to me by manyfold,
Than meat or drinke, or any other thing,
Thereto the herber was so fresh and cold,
The wholesome sauours eke so comforting,
That as I demed, sith the beginning
Of the world was neuer seene or than
So pleasaunt a ground of none earthly man.

And as I sat the birds harkening thus,
Me thought that I heard voices sodainly,
The most sweetest and most delicious
That euer any wight I trow truly
Heard in their life, for the armony
And sweet accord was in so good musike,
That the voice to Angels most was like.

At the last out of a groue euen by,
That was right goodly and pleasant to sight,
I se where there came singing lustily
A world of ladies, but to tell aright
Their great beautie, it lieth not in my might,
Ne their array, neuertheless I shall
Tell you a part, though I speake not of all.

The surcotes white of veluet wele sitting,
They were in clad, and the semes echone,
As it were a manner garnishing,
Was set with Emerauds one and one,
By and by, but many a rich stone
Was set on the purfles out of dout
Of colors, sleues, and traines round about.

As great pearles round and orient,
Diamonds fine and rubies red,
And many another stone, of which I went
The names now, and euerich on her head
A rich fret of gold, which without dread
Was full of stately rich stones set,
And euery lady had a chapelet

On her head of fresh and greene,
So wele wrought, and so meruellously,
That it was a noble sight to seene,
Some of laurer, and some full pleasantly
Had chapelets of woodbind, and sadly
Some of Agnus castus were also
Chapelets fresh, but there were many of tho

That daunced and eke song full soberly,
But all they yede in manner of compace,
But one there yede in mid the company,
Soole by her selfe, but all followed the pace
That she kept, whose heauenly figured face
So pleasant was, and her wele shape person,
That of beautie she past hem euerichone.

And more richly beseene by manifold
She was also in euery manner thing,
On her head full pleasaunt to behold,
A crowne of gold rich for any King,
A braunch of Agnus castus eke bearing
In her hand, and to my sight truly,
She lady was of the company.

And she began a roundell lustely,
That Suse le soyle, de vert moy, men call,

Seen & mon ioly euer en dormy,
And then the company answered all,
With voice sweet entuned, and so small,
That me thought it the sweetest melody
That euer I heard in my life soothly.

And thus they came dauncing and singing
Into the middest of the mede echone,
Before the herber where I was sitting,
And God wot me thought I was wel bigone,
For then I might auise hem one by one,
Who fairest was, who coud best dance or sing,
Or who most womanly was in all thing.

They had not daunced but a little throw,
When that I heard not ferre off sodainly,
So great a noise of thundering trumps blow,
As though it should haue departed the skie,
And after that within a while I sie,
From ỹ same groue where ỹ ladies come out,
Of men of armes comming such a rout,

As all the men on earth had ben assembled
In that place, wele horsed for the nones,
Stering so fast, that all the earth trembled:
But for to speake of riches and stones,
And men and horse I trow the large wones,
Of Petit John ne all his treasorie,
Might not vnneth haue bought ỹ tenth partie.

Of their array who so list heare more,
I shall rehearse so as I can alite:
Out of the groue that I spake of before,
I sie come first all in their clokes white,
A company that ware for their delite,
Chapelets fresh of okes serial,
Newly sprong, and trumpets they were all.

On euery trumpe hanging a broad banere
Of fine Tartarum were full richely bete,
Euery trumpet his lords armes here
About their neckes with great pearles sete,
Collers brode for cost they would not lete,
As it would seeme for their stochones echone,
Were set about with many a precious stone.

Their horse harneis was all white also,
And after them next in one company,
Came kings of armes and no mo
In clokes of white cloth of gold richly,
Chapelets of greene on their heads on hie,
The crowns ỹ they on their stochones bere,
Were set with pearle, ruby, and saphere.

And eke great Diamonds many one,
But all their horse harneis and other geare
Was in a sute according euerychone,
As ye haue heard the foresaid trumpets were,
And by seeming they were nothing to lere,
And there guiding, they did so manerly,
And after hem came a great company

Of heraulds and pursuaunts eke,
Arrayed in clothes of white veluet,
And hardily they were no thing to seke,
How they on hem should the harneis set,
And euery man had on a chapelet
Stochones and eke horse harneis indede,
They had in sute of hem that before hem yede.

Next after hem came in armour bright
All saue their heads, seemely knights nine,
And euery claspe and naile as to my sight
Of their harneis, were of red gold fine,
With cloth of gold, and furred with ermine
Were the trappors of their stedes strong,
Wide and large, that to the ground did hong.

And euery bosse of bridle and paitrell
That they had, was worth as I would wene,
A thousand pound, and on their heads well
Dressed were crownes of laurer grene,
The best made that euer I had sene,
And euery knight had after him riding
Three henshmen on him awaiting.

Of which euery on a short tronchoun
His lords helme bare, so richly dight,
That the worst was worth the raunsoun
Of a king, the second a shield bright
Bare at his necke, the thred bare vpright
A mightie spere, full sharpe ground and kene,
And euery child ware of leaues grene

A fresh chapelet vpon his haires bright,
And clokes white of fine veluet they were,
Their steeds trapped and raied right
Without difference as their lords were,
And after hem on many a fresh corsere,
There came of armed knights such a rout,
That they despred the large field about.

And all they ware after their degrees
Chaplets new made of laurer grene,
Some of eke, and some of other trees,
Some in their hands bare boughs shene,
Some of laurer, and some of okes kene,
Some of hauthorne, and some of woodbind,
And many mo which I had not in mind.

And so they came their horses freshly stering
With bloodie sownes of her trompes loud,
There sie I many an vncouth disguising
In the array of these knights proud,
And at the last as euenly as they coud,
They took their places in middes of the mede,
And euery knight turned his horse hede

To his fellow, and lightly laid a spere
In the rest, and so iustes began
On euery part about here and there,
Some brake his spere, some threw down horse
About the field astray the steeds ran, (a man,

And

And to behold their rule and gouernaunce,
I you ensure it was a great pleasaunce.

And so the iusts last an houre and more,
But they that crowned were in laurer grene,
Wan the prise, their dints were so sore,
That there was none ayenst hē might sustene,
And the iusting all was left off clene,
And fro their horse the ninth alight anone,
And so did all the remnant euerichone.

And forth they yede togider twain and twain,
That to behold it was a worthy sight
Toward the ladies on the greene plaine,
That song and daunced as I said now right:
The ladies as soone as they goodly might,
They brake of both the song and dance,
And yede to meet hem with ful glad semblance.

And euery lady tooke full womanly
By the hond a knight, and forth they yede
Unto a faire laurer that stood fast by,
With leues lade the boughes of great brede,
And to my dome there neuer was indede
Man, that had seene halfe so faire a tree,
For vnderneath there might it well haue be

An hundred persons at their owne plesance
Shadowed fro the heat of Phebus bright,
So that they should haue felt no greuance
Of raine ne haile that hem hurt might,
The sauour eke reioice would any wight,
That had be sicke or melancolius,
It was so very good and vertuous.

And with great reuerence they enclining low
To the tree so soot and faire of hew,
And after that within a little throw
They began to sing and daunce of new,
Some song of loue, some plaining of vntrew,
Enuironning the tree that stood vpright,
And euer yede a lady and a knight.

And at the last I cast mine eye aside,
And was ware of a lustie company
That came coming out of the field wide,
Hond in hond a knight and a lady,
The ladies all in surcotes, that richely
Purfiled were with many a rich stone,
And euery knight of greene ware mantles on.

Embrouded well so as the surcotes were,
And euerich had a chapelet on her hed,
Which did right well vpon the shining here,
Made of goodly floures white and red,
The knights eke that they in hond led
In sute of hem ware chapelets euerychone,
And before hem went minstrels many one.

As Harpes, Pipes, Lutes, and Sautry
All in greene, and on their heads bare
Of diuers floures made full crafterly
All in a sute goodly chapelets they ware,
And so daunsing into the mede they fare,
In mid the which they found a tuft that was
All ouerspraad with floures in compas.

Whereto they enclined euerychone
With great reuerence, and that full humbly,
And at the last there began anone
A lady for to sing right womanly
A Bargaret in praising the daisie,
For as me thought among her notes swete,
She said Si douset & la Margarete.

Then they all answered her in fere,
So passingly well, and so pleasauntly,
That it was a blisfull noise to here,
But I not it happed suddainly,
As about noone the sonne so feruently,
Ware hote that the pretie tender floures
Had lost the beautie of her fresh colours.

Forshronke with heat, the ladies eke tohrent,
ỳ they ne wist where they hem might bestow,
The knights swelt for lack of shade nie shent,
And after that within a little throw,
The wind began so sturdily to blow,
That down goeth all the floures euerichone,
So that in all the mede there laft not one,

Saue such as succoured were among ỳ leues,
Fro euery storme that might hem assaile,
Growing vnder hedges and thicke greues,
And after that there came a storme of haile,
And raine in fere, so that withouten faile,
The ladies ne the knights nade o threed
Drie on them, so dropping was her weed.

And whē the storm was cleane passed away
Tho in white that stood vnder the tree,
They felt nothing of the great affray,
That they in greene without had in yde,
To them they yede for routh and pite,
Them to comfort after their great disease,
So faine they were the helpelesse for to ease.

Then I was ware how one of hem in greene
Had on a crowne rich and well sitting,
Wherefore I demed well she was a Quene,
And tho in greene on her were awaiting,
The ladies then in white that were comming
Toward them, and the knights in fere
Began to comfort hem, and make hem chere.

The Queen in white, ỳ was of great beauty,
Tooke by the hond the queen ỳ was in grene,
And said, suster, I haue right great pitie
Of your annoy, and of the troublous tene,
Wherein ye and your company haue bene
So long alas, and if that it you please
To go with me, I shall do you the ease,

In all the pleasure that I can or may,
Whereof the tother humbly as she might,
Thanked her for in right ill array,
She was with storm and heat I you behight,
And euery lady then anone right
That were in white, one of them took in grene
By the hond, which when ỹ knights had sene,

In likewise ech of them tooke a knight
Clad in greene, and forth with hem they fare,
To an hegge, where they anon right
To make their iusts they would not spare,
Boughes to hew down, and eke trees square,
Wherwith they made hem stately fires great,
To dry their clothes ỹ were wringing weat.

And after that of hearbs that there grew,
They made for blisters of the sunne brenning,
Very good and wholesome ointments new,
Where that they yede the sick fast annointing,
And after that they yede about gadering
Pleasaunt salades which they made hem eat,
For to refresh their great vnkindly heat.

The lady of the Leafe then began to pray
Her of the Floure (for so to my seeming
They should be as by their array)
To soupe with her, and eke for any thing,
That she should with her all her people bring:
And she ayen in right goodly manere,
Thanketh her of her most friendly cheare,

Saying plainely that she would obay
With all her hart all her commaundement,
And then anon without longer delay
The lady of the Leafe hath one ysent
For a palfray, after her intent,
Arrayed well and faire in harneis of gold,
For nothing lacked, that to him long ihold.

And after that to all her company
She made to puruey horse and euery thing
That they needed, and then full lustily,
Euen by the herber where I was sitting,
They passed all so pleasantly singing,
That it would haue comforted any wight,
But then I sie a passing wonder sight.

For then the nightingale, that all the day
Had in the laurer sete, and did her might
The whole seruice to sing longing to May,
All sodainly gan to take her flight,
And to the lady of the Leafe forthright
She flew and set her on her hond softly,
Which was a thing I marueled of greatly.

The goldfinch eke, that fro the medle tree
Was fled for heat into the bushes cold,
Unto the Lady of the Flower gan flee,
And on her hond he let him as he wold,
And pleasauntly his wings gan to fold,
And for to sing they pained hem both as fore,
As they had do of all the day before.

And so these ladies rode forth a great pace,
And all the rout of knights eke in fere,
And I that had seene all this wonder case,
Thought I would assay in some manere,
To know fully the trouth of this matere,
And what they were that rode so pleasantly,
And when they were the herber passed by,

I drest me forth, and happed to mete anone
Right a faire Lady I you ensure,
And she come riding by her selfe alone,
All in white, with semblance ful demure:
I saluted her, and bad her good auenture
Might her befall, as I could most humbly,
And she answered, my doughter gramercy.

Madame (qd. I) if that I durst enquere
Of you I would faine of that company
Wit what they be that past by this arbere,
And she ayen answered right friendly:
My faire doughter, all tho that passed here by
In white clothing, be seruaunts euerichone
Unto the Leafe, and I my selfe am one.

See ye not her that crowned is (qd. she)
All in white? Madame (qd. I) yes:
That is Diane, goddesse of chastite,
And for because that she a maiden is,
In her hond the braunch she beareth this,
That Agnus castus men call properly,
And all the ladies in her company.

Which ye se of that hearb chaplets weare,
Be such as han kept alway her maidenheed:
And all they that of laurer chaplets beare,
Be such as hardy were and manly indeed,
Victorious name which neuer may be dede,
And all they were so worthy of ther hond,
In her time that none might hem withstond.

And tho that weare chaplets on their hede
Of fresh woodbind, be such as neuer were
To loue vntrue in word, thought ne dede,
But aye stedfast, ne for pleasance ne fere,
Thogh that they should their harts all to tere,
Would neuer flit but euer were stedfast,
Till that their liues there asunder brast.

Now faire madame (qd. I) yet I would pray,
Your ladishipe if that it might be,
That I might know by some maner way,
Sith that it hath liked your beaute,
The trouth of these Ladies for to tell me,
What that these knights be in rich armour,
And what tho be in grene and weare the flour?

And why that some did reuerence to the tre,
And some vnto the plot of floures faire:

With

With right good will my fair doghter (qd. she)
Sith your desire is good and debonaire,
Tho nine crowned be very exemplaire,
Of all honour longing to chiualry,
And those certaine be called the nine worthy.

Which ye may see riding all before,
That in her time did many a noble dede,
And for their worthinesse full oft haue bore
The crowne of Laurer leaues on their hede,
As ye may in your old bookes rede,
And how that he that was a conquerour,
Had by laurer alway his most honour.

And tho that beare bowes in their hond
Of the precious laurer so notable,
Be such as were I will ye vnderstond,
Noble knights of the round table,
And eke the douseperis honourable,
Which they beare in signe of victory,
It is witnesse of their deeds mightily.

Eke there be knights old of the Garter,
That in her time did right worthily,
And the honour they did to the laurer,
Is forby they haue their laud wholly,
Their triumph eke, and marshall glory,
Which vnto them is more parfit richesse,
Than any wight imagine can or gesse.

For one leafe giuen of that noble tree
To any wight that hath done worthily,
And it be done so as it ought to be,
Is more honour than any thing earthly,
Witnesse of Rome that founder was truly
Of all knighthood and deeds marueious,
Record I take of Titus Liuius.

And as for her that crowned is in greene,
It is Flora, of these floures goddesse,
And all that here on her awaiting beene,
It are such that loued idlenesse,
And not delite of no businesse,
But for to hunt and hauke, and play in medes,
And many other such idle dedes.

And for the great delite and pleasaunce
They haue to the Floure, and so reuerently
They vnto it do such obeisaunce,
As ye may see, now faire Madame (qd. I)
If I durst aske what is the cause and why,
That knights haue the signe of honour,
Rather by the Leafe than the Flour.

Soothly doughter (qd. she) this is the trouth,
For knights euer should be perseuering,
To seeke honour without feintise or slouth,
Fro wele to better in all manner thing,
In signe of which with leaues aye lasting,
They be rewarded after their degree,
Whose lusty green May, may not appaired be.

But ake keping their beautie fresh and greene,
For there nis storme that may hem deface,
Haile nor snow, wind nor frosty kene,
Wherfore they haue this propertie and grace,
And for the Floure within a little space
Woll be lost, so simple of nature
They be, that they no greeuance may endure.

And euery storme will blow them soone away,
Ne they last not but for a season,
That is the cause, the very trouth to say,
That they may not by no way of reason
Be put to no such occupation.
Madame (qd. I) with all mine whole seruise,
I thanke you now in my most humble wise.

For now I am acertained throughly
Of euery thing I desired to know,
I am right glad that I haue said soothly
Ought to your pleasure if ye will me trow.
(Qd. she ayen) but to whom do ye owe
Your seruice, and which woll ye honour,
Tel me I pray, this yere, the Leafe or ỳ Flour.

Madame (qd. I) though I least worthy,
Unto the Leafe I owe mine obseruaunce:
That is (qd. she) right well done certainly,
And I pray God to honour you auaunce,
And kepe you fro the wicked remembraunce
Of male bouch, and all his crueltie,
And all that good and well conditioned be.

For here may I no lenger now abide,
I must follow the great company
That ye may see ponder before you ride,
And forth as I couth most humbly,
I tooke my leue of her as she gan hie,
After them as fast as euer she might,
And I drow homeward, for it was nigh night

And put all that I had seene in writing
Under suppost of them that lust it to rede.
O little booke, thou art so vnconning,
How darst thou put thy self in prees for drede,
It is wonder that thou werest not rede,
Sith that thou wost full lite who shall behold
Thy rude language, full boistously vnfold.

Explicit.

Chaucers A. B. C. called *La Priere de noſtre Dame.*

Chaucers A.B.C. called *La Priere de noſtre Dame:* made, as ſome ſay, at the requeſt of Blanch, Ducheſſe of Lancaſter, as a praier for her priuat vſe, being a woman in her religion very deuout.

A Almightie and all mercia-
ble Queene,
To whom all this world
fleeth for ſuccour,
To haue releaſe of ſinne, of
ſorrow, of tene,
Glorious Virgine of all
flouris flour,
To thee I flee confounded in errour,
Helpe and releeue almightie debonaire,
Haue mercy of mine perillous langour,
Venquiſt me hath my cruell aduerſaire.

B Bountie ſo fire hath in my heart his tent,
That well I wote thou will my ſuccour be,
Thou canſt not warne that with good entent,
Aſkith thyne helpe, thine heart is aye ſo free:
Thou art largeſſe of plaine felicite,
Hauen and refute of quiete and of reſt,
Lo how that Theuis ſeuen chaſen me,
Helpe Lady bright, or that mine ſhip to weſt.

C Comfort is none, but in you Lady dere,
For lo mine ſinne and mine confuſioun,
Which ought not in thin preſence for to apere,
Han taken on me a greeuous actioun,
Of weray right and diſperatioun,
And as by right they mighten well ſuſtene,
That I were worthy mine damnatioun,
Nere mercy of you bliſſull Quene.

D Dout is there none, Queen of miſericord,
That thou nart cauſe of grace & mercy here,
God vouchedeſafe thrugh thee with vs to ac-
For certis, Chriſtis bliſſull modir dere, (cord:
Were now the bow bent in ſwiche manere,
As it was firſt of iuſtice and of ire,
The rightfull God would of no mercy here:
But thrugh thee han we grace as we deſire.

E Euer hath mine hope of refute in thee be:
For here beforne full oft in many a wiſe,
Unto mercy haſt thou receiued me,
But mercy Lady at the great aſſiſe,
When we ſhall come before the high Juſtiſe,
So little frout ſhall then in me ben found,
That but thou or that day correct me,
Of very right mine werke will me confound.

F Flying, I flee for ſuccour to thine tent,
We for to hide fro tempeſt full of drede,
Beſeking you, that ye you not abſent,
Though I be wicke: O help yet at this nede,
All haue I been a beaſt in wit and dede,
Yet Lady thou mee cloſe in with thine owne
Thine enemie & mine, lady take hede, (grace,
Unto mine death in point is me to chaſe.

G Gracious maid and modir, which that neuer
Were bitter nor in earth nor in ſee,
But full of ſweetneſſe and of mercy euer,
Helpe that mine fader be not wroth with me:
Speake thou, for I ne dare him not ſee,
So haue I done in earth, alas the while,
That certes but if thou mine ſuccour be,
To ſinke eterne he will mine ghoſt exile.

H Ye vouchedeſafe, tell him, as was his will,
Become a man as for our alliaunce,
And with his blood he wrote that bliſſull bill
Upon the croſſe as generall acquetaunce,
To euery penitent in full crpaunce:
And therfore Lady bright, thou for vs prey,
Then ſhalt thou ſtent all his greeuaunce,
And maken our foe to faylen of his prey.

I Wote well thou wilt been our ſuccour,
Thou art ſo full of bountie in certaine,
For when a ſoule falleth in errour,
Thine pitie goeth, and haleth him againe,
The maketh thou his peace with his ſoucrain
And bringeſt him out of the crooked ſtrete:
Who ſo thee loueth, ſhall not loue in vaine,
That ſhall he find, as he the life ſhall lete.

K Kalenderis enlumined been they,
Ye in this world ben lighted with thine name,
And who ſo goith with thee the right wey,
Him that not drede in ſoule to been lame,
Now Queen of comfort, ſith thou art ye ſame,
To whom I ſeech for my medicine:
Let not mine ſo no more mine wound entame,
Mine hele into thine hond all I reſine.

L Lady, thine ſorrow can I not portrey
Under the croſſe, ne his greeuous pennaunce:
But for your bothis peine, I you prey,
Let not our alder ſo make his boſtaunce,
That he hath in his leſtis with miſchaunce,
Conuict that ye both han bought ſo dere:
As I ſaid erſt, thou ground of ſubſtaunce,
Continue on vs thine pitous eyen clere.

M Moyses that saw the bosh of flambis rede
Brenning, of which then neuer a sticke brend,
Was signe of thine vnwemmed maidenhede,
Thou art the bosh, on which there can descend
The Holyghost, which that Moyses weend
Had been on fire: and this was in figure.
Now Lady from the fire vs defend,
Which that in hell eternally shall dure.

N Noble princesse, that neuer haddest pere,
Certes if any comfort in vs bee,
That commeth of thee, Christis moder dere,
We han none other melodie ne glee,
Vs to reioyce in our aduersite,
Ne aduocat none, that will and dare so prey
For vs, and that for as little hire as ye,
That helpen for an Auemary or tweye.

O O very light of eyen tho been blind,
O very lust of labour and distresse,
O treasorere of bountie to mankind,
The whom God chese to moder for humblesse,
From his ancelle he made thee maistresse
Of heauen and earth, our bill vp to bede,
This world awaiteth euer on thine goodnes,
For thou ne failedest neuer wight at nede.

P Purpose I haue sometime for tenquere,
Wherefore & why the holy ghost thee sought,
When Gabriells voice come to thine ere,
He not to werre vs swich a wonder wrought,
But for to saue vs, that he sithen bought:
Then needeth vs no weapon vs to saue,
But onely there we did not as vs ought,
Do penitence, and mercy alke and haue.

Q Queen of comfort, right whē I me bethinke,
That I agilt haue both him and thee,
And that mine soule is worthy for to sinke:
Alas I caitife, whoder shall I flee,
Who shall vnto thine sonne mine meane be?
Who but thine selfe, that art of pitie well,
Thou hast more routh on our aduersite,
Than in this world might any tongue tell.

R Redresse me moder, and eke me chastise,
For certainly my faders chastising
Ne dare I not abiden in no wise,
So hideous is his full reckening.
Moder of whom our ioy gan to spring,
Be ye mine iudge, and eke my soules leech,
For euer in you is pitie abounding,
To each that of pitie will you beseech.

S Sooth is, he ne graunteth no pite
Without thee: for God of his goodnesse
Forgiueth none, but it like vnto thee:
He hath thee made vicaire and maistresse
Of all this world, and eke gouernesse
Of heauen: and representeth his iustise
After thine will: and therefore in witnesse
He hath thee crowned in so royall wise.

T Temple deuout, ther God chese his wonning,
For which these misbeleeued depriued been,
To you mine soule penitent I bring,
Receiue me, for I can no ferther sleen.
With thornis venemous, heauen Queen,
For which the erth accursed was ful sore,
I am so wounded, as ye may well seene,
That I am lost almost, it smert so sore.

V Virgine that art so noble of apparaile,
That leadest vs into the high toure
Of Paradise, thou me wisse and counsaile,
How I may haue thy grace and thy succour:
All haue I been in filth and in errour,
Lady on that countrey thou me adiourne,
That cleaped is thine bench of fresh flour,
There as that mercy euer shall sojourne.

X Xpē thine sonne that in this world alight
Upon a crosse to suffer his passioun,
And suffred eke that Longeus his hart pight,
And made his heart blood renne adoun,
And all this was for my saluatioun:
And I to him am fals and eke vnkind,
And yet he will not mine dampnatioun:
This thanke I you, succour of all mankind.

Y Ysaac was figure of his death certaine,
That so ferre forth his fader would obey,
That him ne rought nothing for to be slaine:
Right so thy sonne list a lambe to dey:
Now Lady full of mercy I you prey,
Sith he his mercy sured me so large,
Be ye not scant, for all we sing or say,
That ye been fro vengeaunce aye our targe.

Z Zacharie you clepith the open well,
That wisht sinfull soule out of his guilt,
Therefore this lesson out I will to tell,
That nere thine tender heart, we were spilt.
Now Lady bright, sith thou canst and wilt
Been to the seed of Adam merciable,
Bring vs to that palcis that is built
To penitentis, that ben to mercie able.

Explicit.

Iacke

Iacke Vpland.

In this Treatiſe is ſet foorth the blind ignoraunce and variable diſcord of the Churchmen, how rude and vnskilfull they were in matters & principles of our Chriſtian inſtitution. This is thought to bee that Crede which the Pellican ſpeaketh of in the Plowmans tale in theſe words:

Of Freers I haue told beſore,
In a making of a Crede,
And yet I could tell worſe and more,
But men would werrien it to rede.

IAcke Upland make my mone to bery God, and to all true in Chriſt, that antichriſt and his diſciples (by colour of holines) walking & deceiuing Chriſts church by many falſe figures, wherethrough (by antichriſt and his) many vertues been tranſpoſed to vices.

But the felliest folke that euer Antichriſt found, been laſt brought into the church and in a woonder wiſe, for they been of diuerſe ſects of antichriſt, ſown of diuerſe countries & kindreds. And all men knowne well, that they bee not obedient to biſhops, ne leegemen to kings: neither they tillen, ne ſowen, weeden, ne reapen wood, corne, ne graſſe, neither nothing that man ſhould helpe; but onely themſelues their liues to ſuſteine. And theſe men han all manner power of God, as they ſein, in heauen and in yearth, to ſell heauen and hell to whom that them liketh, and theſe wretches weet neuer where to been themſelues.

And therefore (freer) if thine order and rules been grounded on Goddis law, tell thou mee Iacke Upland, that I aſke of thee, and if thou be or thinkeſt to be on Chriſtes ſide, keepe thy paciens.

SAint Paule teacheth, That all our deedes ſhould be do in charitie, and elſ it is nought worth, but diſpleaſing to God and harme to our owne ſoules. And for that freers challenge to be greateſt clerkes of the church, and next following Chriſt in liuing: men ſhould for charitie aſke them ſome queſtions, and pray them to ground their anſweres in reaſon and holy writ, for elſe their anſwer would nought be worth, be it flouriſhed neuer ſo faire, and as me thinke men might ſkilfully aſke thus of a freer.

1 Freer, how many orders bee in earth, and which is the perfecteſt order? Of what order art thou? Who made thine order? What is thy rule? Is there any perfecter rule than Chriſt himſelf made? If Chriſts rule be moſt perfect, why ruleſt thou thee not thereafter? Without more, why ſhal a freer be more puniſhed if he break the rule that his patron made, than if he break the heeſts ỹ God himſelf made?

2 Approoueth Chriſt any more religions than one, that S. James ſpeaketh of? If hee approueth no more, why haſt thou left his rule and takeſt another? Why is a freer apoſtata that leueth his order, and taketh another ſect, ſith there is but one religion of Chriſt?

3 Why be ye wedded faſter to your habits than a man is to his wife? For a man may leaue his wife for a year or two, as many men done: and if you leaue your habite a quarter of a yeare, ye ſhould be holden apoſtataes.

4 Maketh your habit you men of religion or no? If it doe, then euer as it weareth, your religion weareth, and after that your habit is better, your religion is better, and when yee haue liggen it beſide, then lig ye your religion beſide you, and been apoſtataes: why buy ye you ſo precious clothes, ſith no man ſeeketh ſuch, but for vaineglorie, as Saint Gregorie ſayth.

What betokeneth your great hood, your ſcaplerie, your knotted girdle, and your wide cope?

5 Why vſe ye all one colour, more thã other chriſtian men doe? What betokeneth that ye been clothed all in one manner clothing?

If yee ſay it betokeneth loue and charitie, certes then ye be oft hypocrites, when any of you hateth another, and in that that ye wol be ſaid holy by your clothing.

Why may not a freer weare clothing of another ſect of freers, ſith holineſſe ſtondeth not in the cloths?

6 Why hold ye ſilence in one houſe more thã another, ſith men ought euer all to ſpeake the good and leaue the euil?

Why eat you fleſh in one houſe more than in another, if your rule and your order be perfect, and the patron that made it?

7 Why get ye your diſpenſations to haue it more eaſie? Certes, either it ſeemeth that yee be vnperfect, or he that made it, ſo hard, that ye may not hold it. And liker, if ye hold not the rule of your patrons, ye be not then her freers, and ſo ye lie vpon your ſelues.

8 Why make you as dede men, when yee be professed, and yet ye be not dede, but more quicke beggars than you were before? and it seemeth evil a dede man to go about and beg.

9 Why will ye not suffer your nouices hear your councels in your chapter house, ere that they haue ben professed, if your councels been true, and after Gods law?

10 Why make yee you so costly houses to dwell in? sith Christ did not so, and dede men should haue but graues, as falleth it to dede men, and yet ye haue more courts than many lords of England: for ye now wenden throgh the realme, and eche night will lig in your own courts, and so now but right few lords doe.

11 Why heire you to ferme your limitors, giuing therefore each yeare a certain rent, and will not suffer one in anothers limitation, right as yee were your selues lords of countries?

Why be ye not vnder your bishops visitations, and leegemen to our king?

Why aske ye no letters of brotherheads of other mens praiers, as ye desire that other mē should aske letters of you?

If your letters be good, why grant ye them not generally to all maner of men for the more charitie?

12 Howe ye make any man more perfect brother for your prayers, than God hath by our beleeue? by our baptisme and his owne grant? if ye now, certes thē ye be aboue God.

Why make ye men beleeue that your golden trentall sung of you to rake therefore ten shillings, or at least fiue shillings, will bring soules out of hell, or out of purgatorie? if this be sooth, certes yee might bring all soules out of paine, and that will ye nought, and then ye be out of charitie.

13 Why make ye men beleeue, that he that is buried in your habit, shal neuer come in hel, and ye weet not of your selfe whether yee shall to hell or no? and if this were sooth ye should sell your high houses to make many habites for to saue many mens soules.

14 Why steal ye mens children for to make hem of of your sect, sith that theft is against Gods hests, and sith your sect is not perfect? yee know not whether the rule that yee bind him to, be best for him or worst.

15 Why vnderneme yee not your brethren for their trespasse after the law of the Gospell, sith that vnderneming is the best that may be? but ye put them in prison oft, when they do after Gods law, and by S. Augustines rule: If any doe amisse, and would not amend him, ye should put him from you.

16 Why coueit ye shrift, and burying of other mens parishens, & none other sacrament that falleth to christian folke?

Why busie ye not to heare to shrift of poore folke, as well as of rich lords and ladies, sith they now haue more plentie of shrift fathers than poore folke now?

Why say ye not ỹ gospel in houses of bedred men, as ye do in rich mens, that mowe goe to church and heare the gospell?

Why couet you not to burie poor folk amōg you? sith that they been most holy (as ye faine that ye ben for your pouertie.)

17 Why will ye not be at her diriges as ye haue ben at rich mens? sith God praiseth him more than he doth other men.

What is thy prayer worth? sith thou wilt take therefore, for all chapmen yee need to bee most wise for dread of simonie.

What cause hast thou, that thou wilt not preach the gospel, as God saith ỹ thou shouldst? sith it is the best lore and also our beleeue.

Why be ye euill apaid that secular priests should preach the gospell? sith God himselfe hath bodden hem.

18 Why hate ye the gospell to be preached, sith ye be so much hold therto? for ye win more by peare with In principio, than with all the rules ỹ euer your patrones made, and in this minstrels ben better than ye, for they contrarien not to the mirths that they maken, but yee contrarien the gospell both in word and deed.

19 Freer, when thou receiuest a penie for to say a masse, whether sellest thou Gods bodie for that penie, or thy praier, or els thy trauell? if thou takest thou wolt not trauell for to say the masse, but for the penie, that certes if this be sooth, then thou louest too litle meed for thy soule: and if thou sellest Gods bodie, other thy prayer, then it is very simonie, and art become a chapman worse than Iudas, that sold it for thirtie pence.

20 Why writest thou hir names in thy tables that yeueth thee mony? sith God knoweth al thing: for it semeth by thy writing, that God would not reward him, but thou writest in thy tables God would els forgotten it.

Why bearest thou God in hand & slanderest him that he begged for his meat? sith he was Lord ouer all, for then had he beene vnwise to haue begged, and haue no need thereto.

Freer, after what lawe rulest thou thee? where findest thou in Gods lawe that thou shouldest thus beg?

What manner men needeth for to beg? for whom oweth sith men to beg?

Why beggest thou so for thy brethren?

If

If thou saiest, for they haue need, then thou doest it for the more perfection, or els for the least, or els for the meane. If it be the most perfection of all, then should all thy brethrē do so, and thē no man needed to beg but for himself, for so should no man beg but him needed. And if it be the least perfection, why louest thou thē other men more than thy selfe? For so thou art not well in charitie, sith thou shouldest seek the more perfection after thy power, liuing thy self most after God. And thus leauing that imperfection, thou shouldst not so beg for thē. And if it is a good mean thus to beg as thou doest, then should no man do so, but they been in this good meane, & yet such a mean granted to you may neuer be grounded on Gods law, for then both lerd & leaud that ben in meane degree of this world, should go about and beg as ye do. And if all should do so, certes well nigh all the world should go about & beg as ye done, and so should there be ten beggers against one peuer.

Why procurest thou men to peue thee their almes, and saiest it is so needful, and thou wilt not thy selfe win thee that need?

22 Why wilt thou not beg for poore bedred men, that bin poorer thā any of your sect, that liggen & mow not go about to help himselfes, sith we be all brethren in God, and that brethered passeth any other that yee or any man could make, and where most need were, there were most perfection, either els yee hold them not your pure brethren, but worse, but then ye be vnperfect in your begging?

Why make ye so many maisters amōg you, sith it is against the teaching of Christ and his Apostles?

23 Whose ben all your rich courts that yee han, & all your rich iewels? sith ye seen that ye han nought ne in proper ne in common. If ye saine they ben the popes, why gather yee then of poore men & lords so much out of the kings hand to make your pope rich? And sith ye sain that it is great perfection to haue nought in proper be in common, why bee ye so fast about to make the pope, that is your father, rich, and put on him imperfection? sithen yee saine that your goods been all his, and he should by reason be the most perfect man, it semeth openlich that ye been cursed children so to slander your father, & make him imperfect. And if yee saine that the goods be yours, thē do ye ayenst your rule; & if it be not ayenst your rule, then might ye haue both plough & cart, & labour as other good men done, and not so to beg by losengery, and idle as ye done. If yee say that it is more perfection to beg, than to trauell or to worch with your hand, why preach ye not opēly, and teach all men to do so? sith it is the best & most perfect life to ỹ help of their souls, as ye make childrē to beg that might haue bin rich heirs.

Why make ye not your feasts to poore men, and peueth him pefts, as yee done to the rich? sith poore men han more need than the rich.

What betokeneth that ye goe twaine and twaine togither? if ye be out of charitie, ye accord not in soule.

Why beg ye and take salaries therto more than other priests? sith hee that most taketh, most charge hath.

24 Why hold ye not S. Francis rule and his testament? sith Francis saith, that God shewed him this liuing and this rule: & certes if it were Gods will, the pope might not for do it; or els Francis was a lier, that saied in this wise. And but this testament that he made, accord with Gods will, or els erred: he is a lier that were out of charitie: & as the law saith, he is accursed that letteth the rightful last will of a dead man. And this testament is the last will of Francis that is a dead man, it seemeth therefore that all his freers been cursed.

25 Why will ye not touch no coined money with the crosse, ne with the kings head, as ye done other iewels both of gold & siluer? certes if ye despise the crosse or the kings head, thē ye be worthy to be despised of God and the king: and sith ye will receiue money in your hearts, and not with your hands, and it seemeth that yee hold more holinesse in your hands than in your hearts, and then be false to God.

26 Why haue ye exempt you frō our kings lawes, and visiting of our bishops more than other christen men that liuen in this realme. if ye be not guiltie of traitorie to our realme, or trespassers to your bishops? But ye will haue the kings lawes for the trespasse doe to you, and ye will haue power of other bishops more than other priests, & also haue leaue to prison your brethrē as lords in your courts more thā other folks han that ben the kings leegemen.

27 Why shal some sect of you freers pay ech a yere a certaine to her generall prouinciall or minister, or els to her souereines: but if he steal a certaine number of children (as some men saine) and certes if this ben sooth, then yee bee cōstreined vpō certein pain to do theft against Gods commaundement, Non furtum facies.

28 Why be ye so hardie to grant by letters of fraternitie to men & women, that they shall haue part and merite of all your good deedes, and ye weten neuer whether God bee apayed with your deeds because of your sinne? Also yee witten neuer whether that man or woman be in state to bee saued or damned, then

shall he haue no merit in heauen for his owne deeds ne for none other mans. And all were it so, that he shold haue part of your good deeds: yet should hee haue no more than God would giue him after that he were worthie, and so much shall each man haue of Gods yeft without your limitation. But if ye will say that ye been Gods fellowes, and that he may not doe without your assent, then be ye blaspheners to God.

29 What betokeneth that yee haue ordeined, that when such one as ye haue made your brother or sister, and hath a letter of your seale, that letter mought bee brought in your holye chapter, and there be rad, or els yee will not pray for him. And but ye willen pray especially for all other that were not made your brethren or sistren, then were ye not in right charitie, for that ought to be commen, and namely in ghostly things.

30 Freer, what charity is this, to ouercharge the people by mightie begging, vnder colour of preaching or praying, or masses singing? Sith holy write biddeth not thus, but euen the contrarie: for all such ghostlye deedes should be done freely, as God yeueth thē freely?

31 Freer what charitie is this, to beguile children or they commen to discretion, & bind hem to your orders, that ben not grounded in Gods law, against hir friends will? Sithen by this follie beene many apostataes, both in will and deed, and many beene apostataes in hir will during all her life, that would gladly be discharged, if they wist how, and so many ben apostataes, that shoulden in other states haue been true men.

32 Freer, what charitie is this, to make so many freers in euery country to the charge of the people? sith persons and vicars alone, ye secular priests alone, ye monkes and cannons alone, with bishops aboue them, were ynough to the church to doe the priests office. And to adde more than ynough, is a foule errour, and great charge to the people, and this openly against Gods will, that ordained all thyngs to be done in weight, number, and measure. And Christ himselfe was apaied with twelue apostles and a fewe disciples, to preach and doe priests office to all the whole world, then was it better doe than is nowe at this time by a thousand dele. And right so as foure fingers with a thombe in a mans hand, helpeth a mā to worch, and double number of fingers in one hand should let him more, and so the more number that there were passing the measure of Gods ordinaunce, the more were a man letted to worch: right so (as it seemeth) it is of these new orders that ben added to the church, without ground of holy write and Gods ordinance.

33 Freer, what charity is this, to the people to lie, and say that ye follow Christ in pouertie more than other men done? and yet in curious and costly housing, and fine and precious clothing, and delicious and liking feeding, and in treasure and iewels, & rich ornaments, freers passen lords & other rich worldly men, and soonest they should bring her cause about (be it neuer so costly) though Gods law be put aback.

34 Freer, what charitie is this, to gather vp the books of holy write, and put hem in treasorie, and so emprison thē from secular priests and curats, & by this cautell let hem to preach the gospell freely to ỹ people without worldly meed, & also to defame good priests of heresie, and lien on hem openly for to let hem to shew Gods law by the holy gospell to the christian people?

35 Freer, what charitie is this, to faine so much holines in your bodily clothing (that ye clepe your habit) that many blind fools desirē to die therein more than in another? and also that a freer that leueth his habit late founden of men, may not be assoiled till he take againe, but is apostata as ye saine, and cursed of God and man both? The freer beleeueth truth, and patience, chastitie, meekenesse and sobrietie, yet for the more part of his life he may soon be assoiled of his priour, and if he bring home to his house much good by the yeare (bee it neuer so falsely begged and pilled of the poore and needie people in cōtries about) he shall be hold a noble freer, O Lord whether this be charitie?

36 Freer, what charity is this, to preache vpon a rich man, and to intice him to bee buried among you from his parish church, & to such rich men giue letters of fraternitie confirmed by your generall seale, and therby to bear him in hand that he shal haue part of all your masses, mattens, preachings, fastings, wakings, & all other good deeds done by your brethren of your order (both whilest he liueth, and after that he is dead) & yet ye witten neuer whether your deeds be acceptable to God, ne whether that man that hath that letter be able by good liuing to receiue any part of your deeds, and yet a poore man (that ye wite well or suppose in certen to haue no good of) ye ne giuē to such letters, though he be a better man to God thā such a rich man: neuertheless, this poore man doth not retch therof. For as mē suppose, such letters and many other that freers behoten to men, be full false deceits of freers, out of all

reason,

reason, and Gods law and Christian mens faith.

37 Freer, what charitie is this, to be confessors of lords and ladies, and to other mightie men, and not amend hem in hir liuing? but rather as it seemeth, to be the bolder to pill hir poore tenants and to liue in lechery, and there to dwell in your office of confessor for winning of worldlie goods, and to be hold great by colour of such ghostly offices? this seemeth rather pride of freers, than charitie of God.

38 Freer, what charitie is this, to fain that who so liueth after your order, liueth most perfectlie, & next followeth the state of Apostles in pouertie and penance, and yet the wisest and greatest clerkes of you wend or send, or procure to the court of Rome to be made cardinals or bishops of the popes chaplens, and to be assoiled of the vow of pouertie and obedience to your ministers, in the which (as ye fain) standeth most perfection and merit of your orders, and thus ye faren as Pharisees that fain one and do an other to the contrarie.

Why name ye more the patron of your order in your Confiteor whē ye begin masse, thā other saints, Apostles, or Martyrs, that holy church hold more glorious than hem, & clepe hem your patrons and your auowries?

Freer, whether was S. Francis in making of his rule that he set thine order in, a foole and a liar, or else wise and true? If ye fain that he was not a foole, but wise: ne a liar, but true: why shew ye contrarie by your doing, when by your suggestion to the Pope ye said; that your rule ꝑ Francis made was so hard, that ye mow not liue to hold it without declaration and dispensation of the pope, and so by your deed? Me let your patron a foole that made a rule so hard that no man may well keepe, and eke your deed proueth him a liar, where he saith in his rule, that he tooke & learned it of the holy Ghost. For how might ye for shame pray the pope vndo that the holy ghost bit, as when ye prayed him to dispense with the hardnesse of your order?

Freer, which of the foure orders of friers is best to a man that knoweth not which is the best, but would faine enter into the best, and none other? If thou saiest that thine is the best, then saiest thou that none of the other is as good as thine, and in this ech freer in the three other orders wooll say that thou liest, for in the self same maner ech other freer wooll say that his order is best. And thus to ech of the foure orders bin ꝑ other three contrary in this point: in the which if any say sooth, that is one alone, for there may but one be the best of foure. So followeth it, that if ech of these orders answered to this questiō as thou doest, three were false, and but one true, and yet no man should wite who that were. And thus it seemeth, that the most part of freers bin or should be liars in this point, and they should answere thereto. If you say that another order of the freers is better thā thine, or as good; why tooke ye not rather thereto as to the better, when thou mightst haue chose at the beginning? And eke why shouldst thou be an apostata to leaue thine order and take thee to that is better, and so why goest thou not from thine order into that?

Freer is there any perfecter rule of religion than Christ Gods sonne gaue in his gospell to his brethren? Or than that religion that S. James in his epistle maketh mention of? If you say yes, then puttest thou on Christ (that is the wisedome of God the father) vnkunning, vnpower, or euill will: for then he could not make his rule so good as an other did his. And so he had be vnkunning, that he might not so make his rule so good as an other man might, and so were he vnmightie, & not God, as he would not make his rule so perfect as an other did his, and so he had bin euill willed, namely to himselfe.

For if he might and could, and would haue made a rule perfect without default, and did not, he was not Gods sonne almighty. For if any other rule be perfecter, than Christes, thē must Christes rule lacke of that perfection by as much as the other weren more perfecter, and so were default, and Christ had failed in making of his rule: but to put any default or failing in God, is blasphemie. If thou say that Christes rule, and that religiō which S. James maketh mention of, is perfectest; why holdest thou not thilke rule without more? And why clepest thou the rather of S. Francis or S. Dominiks rule or religion or order, than of Christes rule or Christes order?

Freer, canst thou any default or assigne in Christes rule of the gospell (with the which he taught all men sikerly to be saued) if they kept it to her ending? If thou say it was too hard, then saiest thou Christ lied; for he said of his rule: My yoke is soft, & my burden light. If thou say Christes rule was too light, that may be assigned for no default, for the better it may be kept. If thou saist that there is no default in Christes rule of the Gospell, sith Christ himself saith it is light and easie: what need was it to patrons of freers to adde more thereto? and so to make an harder religion to saue freers, than was the religion of Christes

apostles

apostles and his disciples helden and were saued by. But if they wouldon that her freers saten aboue the apostles in heauē for the harder religion that they keepen here, so would they sitten in heauen aboue Christ himselfe, for their more and streict observations, then so should they be better than Christ himself with mischance.

Go now foorth and fraine your clerks, and ground ye you in Gods law, and gif Iacke an answer, and when ye han assoiled me that I haue said sadly in truth, I shall soile thee of thine orders, and saue thee to heauen.

If freers kun not or mow not excuse hem of these questions asked of hem, it seemeth that they be horrible giltie against God, and hir euen christian; for which gilts and defaults it were worthy that the order that they cal their order were fordone. And it is woonder that men susteine hem or suffer hir liue in such maner. For holie write biddeth that thou do wel to the meeke, and giue not to the wicked, but forbed to giue hem bread, least they be made thereby mightier through you.

Chaucers wordes vnto his owne Scriuener.

ADam Scriuener if euer it thee befall,
Boece or Troiles for to write new,
Under thy long locks thou maist haue the scall,
But after my making thou write more trew,
So oft a day I mote thy werke renew,
It to correct and eke to rubbe and scrape,
And all is through thy negligence and rape.

Et sic est finis.

Thus endeth the workes of Geffrey Chaucer.

THE STORIE OF THEBES,

Compiled by IOHN LIDGATE, Monke of BVRIE.

The Prologue to the Storie of Thebes.

WHen bright Phebus passed was the Ram
Midde of Aprill, and into the Bull came,
And Saturne old, with his frostie face,
In Virgine taken had his place,
Melancolike, and slough of motion,
And was also in the opposition
Of Lucina the Moone, moist and pale,
That many shoure fro heauen made auaile,
When Aurora was in the morrow redde,
And Iupiter in the Crabs hedde
Hath take his paleis, and his mansion,
The lustie time, and ioly fresh season,
When that Flora the noble mightie queene
The soile hath clad in new tender greene,
With her floures crafftely ment,
Braunch & bough with red & white depeint,
Fleeting the Baume on hils and on vales,
The time in sooth when Canterburie tales,
Complet and told at many a sundry stage
Of estates in the pilgrimage,
Eueriche man like to his degree,
Some of disport some of moralitie,
Some of knighthood, loue and gentillesse,
And some also of parfite holinesse,
And some also, in sooth of ribaudrie,
To make laughter in the companie,
Ech admitted, for none would other greue,
Like as the Cooke, the Miller, and the Reue,
Aquite hemselfe, shortly to conclude
Boistously in her tearmes rude,
When they hadden well dronken of the boll,
And eke also with his puled noll,
The Pardoner beardlesse all his chin,
Glasie eyes, and face of Cherubin,
Telling a tale, to anger with the Frere,
As openly the storie can you lere
Word by word, with euery circumstance,
Echone twixt and put in remembrance,
By him that was, if I shall not faine,
Floure of Poetes, throughout all Bretaine,
Which soothly had most of excellence
In Rhetorike, and in eloquence,
Rede his making, who list the trouth find,
Which neuer shall appallen in my mind,
But alway fresh been in mine memorie,
To whom be youe prise, honour, and glorie
Of well seeing, first in our language,
Cheefe Registrer in this pilgrimage,
All that was told, forgetting nought at all,
Feined tales, nor thing historiall,
With many prouerbes diuers and vncouth,
By rehearsaile of his sugred mouth,
Of ech thing keeping in substaunce
The sentence hole, without variaunce,
Voiding the chaffe, soothly for to saine,
Enlumining the true piked greine,
By crafftie writing of his sawes swete,
Fro the time that they did mete.

First the Pilgrimes soothly euerychone,
At Tabarde assembled one by one,
And fro Southwerke, soothly for to sey,
To Canterburie riding on her wey,
Telling a tale, as I rehearse can,
Liche as the host assigned euery man,
None so hardie, his bidding disobey,
And thus while that the pilgrimes ley
At Canterburie, well lodged one and all,
I not in sooth what I may it call,
Hap or Fortune, in conclusioun,
That me befell, to enter into the toun,
The holy saint plainely to visite,

After my sickenesse bowes to acquite,
In a Cope of blacke, and not of grene,
On a palfray, slender, long, and iene,
With rusty bridle, made not for the sale,
My man tofore me, with a bold male,
That of Fortune tooke mine Inne anone,
Where the pilgrims were lodged euerychone,
The same time her gouernour the host,
Stonding in hall, full of wind and bost,
Liche to a man wonder sterne and fers,
Which spake to me, and saied anon Dan Piers,
Dan Dominike, dan Godfray, or Clement,
Ye be welcome newly into Kent,
Thogh your bridle haue nother boos ne bell,
Beseeching you, that ye will tell
First of your name, and what countre,
Without more, shortly that ye be,
That looke so pale, all deuoid of blood,
Upon your head a wonder thredbare hood,
Well arrayed for to ride late?

I answered, my name was Lidgate,
Monke of Burie, nie fifty yeare of age,
Come to this toune to doe my pilgrimage,
As I haue hight, I haue thereof no shame.
Dan Iohn (qd. he) well brouke ye your name,
Thogh ye be sole, beeth right glad and light,
Praying you to soupe with vs this night,
And ye shall haue made at your deuis
A great pudding, or a round hagis,
A franche moile, a tanse, or a froise,
To been a Monke, slender is your toise,
Ye haue been sicke, I dare mine head assure,
Or let feed in a faint pasture,
Lift vp your head, be glad, take no sorrow,
And ye should home ride with vs to morrow,
I say, when ye rested haue your fill,
After supper sleepe will doen none ill,
Wrap well your head clothes round about,
Strong nottie ale will make you to rout,
Take a pillow, that ye lie not low,
If need be, spare not to blow,
To hold wind, by mine opinion,
Will engender Colles passion,
And make men to greuen on her rops,
When they haue filled her maws & her crops,
But toward night eat some Fennell rede,
Annis, Commin, or Coriander sede,
And like as I power haue and might,
I charge you rise not at midnight,
Though it so be the Moone shine clere,
I will my selfe be your Orlogere
To morrow early when I see my time,
For we will forth parcell afore prime,
Accompanie parde shall doe you good,
What looke vp Monke, for by Cockes blood
Thou shalt be merry, who so that say nay,
For to morrow anone as it is day,
And that it ginne in the East to daw,
Thou shalt be bound to a new law,
At going out of Canterbury toun,
And lien aside thy prolestioun.
Thou shalt not these, nor thy selfe withdraw,
If any mirth be found in thy maw,
Like the custome of this company,
For none so proud, that dare me deny,
Knight nor knaue, Chanon, Priest, ne Nonne
To tell a tale plainely as they conne,
When I assigne, and see time opportune,
And for that we our purpose will continue,
We will homeward the same custome vse,
And thou shalt not plainely thee excuse:
Be now well ware, study well to night,
But for all this, be of heart light,
Thy wit shall be the sharper and the bet.
And we anon were to supper set,
And serued well vnto our pleasance,
And soone after by good gouernance,
Unto bed goeth euery manner wight.
And toward morrow, as soon as it was light,
Euery pilgrime, both bet and worse,
As bad our host, tooke anone his hors,
When the Sunne rose in the East full clere,
Fully in purpose to come to dinere
Unto Osping, and breake there our fast.
And when we werne fro Canterburie past,
Nought the space of a bowe draught,
Our host in hast hath my bridle raught,
And to me saied, as it were in game,
Come forth dan Iohn, by your christen name,
And let vs make some manner mirth or play,
Shete your portz a twentie deuill way,
Is no disport so to patere and say,
It will make your lips wonder dray,
Tell some tale, and make thereof a tape,
For by my Rouncie thou shalt it not escape,
But preach not of none holinesse,
Sinne some tale of mirth or of gladnesse,
And nodde not with thine heaue becke,
Tell vs some thing that draweth to effect,
Onely of ioy make no lenger let.
And when I saw it would be no bet,
I obeyed vnto his bidding,
So as the law me bound in all thing,
And as I coud, with a pale cheare,
My tale I gan anone, as ye shall heare.

Finitur Prologus de Thebes.

Et sequitur quoque pars prima libri.

Here

Here beginneth the hystorie of the destruction of the Citie of Thebes.

SIrs (qd. I) sith of your courtesie
I entred am into your companie,
And admitted a tale for to tell,
By him that hath power to compell,
I meane our host, gouernour and guide
Of you echone riding here beside:
Though that my wit barrain be and dull,
I will rehearse a storie wonderfull,
Touching the siege and destruction
Of worthy Thebes, the mightie roiall toun,
Built and begonne of old antiquitie,
Upon the time of worthy Iosue,
By diligence of king Amphion,
Cheefe cause first of his foundation,
For which his fame, which neuer shall away,
In honour floureth yet vnto this day,
And in story remembred is and praised,
But how the wals were on height reised,
It is wonder and marueile for to here,
But if you list I shall you platly lere
The manner hole, platly in sentence,
Under support of your patience,
As write mine author, and Bochas both two,
Rede her bookes, and ye shall find it so,
How this king, this prudent Amphion,
With his sweetnesse and melodious soun,
The citie built that whylome was so strong,
By Armonie of his sweet song.
And vertue onely of the werbles sharpe
That he made in Mercuries Harpe,
Of which the strengs were not touched soft,
Whereby the wals reised were aloft,
Without craft of any mans hand,
Full yore ago, midde of Greekes land,
Which is a thing of Poets told,
Neuer pleine nother of yong nor old,
But as Bochas list to specifie,
Cleare expouning this darke Poesie,
Sith Mercurie, god of eloquence,
Yaue by the might of heauenly influence,
Unto this king, at his natiuite,
Through glad aspects, that he should be
Most excellent, by craft of Rhetorike,
That in this world was none to him like,
Which signifieth to hem that ben prudent,
The Musicall, the lustie instrument,
I meane the Harpe most melodious,
Youe to this king by Mercurious,
And his song, this author can you teach,
Was nothing but the crafty speach
Of this king, yealled Amphion,
Whereby he made the countries enuiron
To haue such lust in his words sweet,
That were so pleasaunt, fauourable, and meet
In her eares, that shortly there was none
Disobeisant with the king to gone,
Whereseuer that him list to assigne:
His chere, his port was eft so benigne,
That through his stering and exhortation
With him they went first to build this toun,
And forsooke eche man his countrie.
By one assent to make this citie
Royall and rich, that liche was none,
And thus the wals, made of lime and stone,
Were reised first by singing of this king,
Liche as Poetes feine in her writing,
Passing rich and royall of entaile,
Here may ye see how much may auaile
The goodlihede, and the lowlinesse of a king,
And specially in cheare and in speaking
To his lieges, and to bearen him faire
In his apport, and shew him debonaire,
And not to been to strange ne solein,
In countenaunce outward, ne disdein,
Which causeth oft, who that can aduert,
Great hatred in the peoples hert,
And therupon priuely will rowne,
When a Prince doeth vpon hem frowne,
Shortly deme for all his excellence,
Emong hemselfe out of his presence,
Eucriche conclude liche his fantasie,
And thus full oft gendred is enuie
In folkes hearts, of solein te and pride,
For such as list not ones to looke aside,
To reward hem when they low loute,
And againe kind it is out of doute,
That any head, by reeson of the wise,
Should the foot of disdaine despise,
Which beareth him vp, who so can take heed,
And sustemeth in his most need,
As his piller, and his supportaile:
For finally, ne were the poortaile
Her bearer vp, and supportation,
Farewell Lordship and domination,
Throughout the land, of euery high estate:
Wherefore me seemeth, more is fortunate
Of Mercurie the swote sugred Harpe,
Then Mars sword whetted kene a sharpe,
More accepted, with aspects good,
Than is this God, with his lookes wood:

What the goodlihead of a Prince auaileth, to win the hearts of his people.

For humble speech, with glad countenaunce,
May a Prince soothly aduaunce,
Emong his people hearts for to win
Of inward loue, which will not twin,

Then gold, richesse, pride, or tirannie,
Other disdaine, daunger, or surquedie,
For of lords, clerkes can report,
But that loue her crowne doe support,
The fine is not, in conclusion,
I take record of king Amphion,

Example good of king Amphion.

That built Thebes, by his eloquence,
More than of pride, or of violence,
Noble and rich, that like was no where none,
And thus the wals made of lime and stone,
Were reised first by singing of this king,
Like as Poets feinen in her writing.

How after the opinion of some authours King Cadmus built first the citie of Thebes.

But soothly yet, some expositours
Grounding hem vpon old authours,
Saine, that Cadmus, the famous old man,
Full long afore the citie first began,
And the ground of building sette,
And the bounds by compasse out mette,
With thongs out kerue of a Buls side,
Which enuiron, stretch might wide,
To get in land a full large space,
Whereupon to build a dwelling place,

How the countrey of Boece tooke first his name of a Buls skin, and after called Thebes. And how King Cadmus was exiled out of Thebes, by prowesse of King Amphion.

And called was the soile thus getten in,
Whylome Boece, of the Buls skin,
The name after into Thebes tourned:
But Cadmus hath not there long sojourned,
Like in store as it is compiled,
For shortly, he fro thence was exiled,
Neuer after for to dwell in the toun,
By the knighthood of this Amphion,
Which vp perfourmeth, rich for the nones,
The citie Thebes, of mightie square stones,
As I you told a lite heretofore,
And Cadmus thus his kingdome hath lorne,
Sceptre and crowne, and his power totall,
Now haue I told vnto you ground of all,
That ye well know by information
Clerely the pith and the exposition
Of this matter, as clerkes can you tell,
It were but vaine longer for to dwell,
To tarry you on this mattere,
Sith my tale, which that ye shall here
Upon our way, will last a long while,
The space in sooth as I suppose of vii. mile:
And now ye know first how Amphion
Built and began this citie and this toun,
Reigning there long after as I rede.
Of him no more, for I will procede
To my purpose, that I first began,
Not telling here how the line ran

How the line of Amphion by discent, was conueighed to King Laius.

Fro king to king, by succession,
Conueying doune by the stocke of Amphion
Seriously by line all the discent:
But leaue all this, plainely of intent
To tell forth, in bookes as I rede,
How Laius by processe gan succede

Here beginneth the storie of King Laius, and Iocasta his wife.

TO beare the Crowne in this mightie land,
Holding the sceptre of Thebes in his hand,
Manly and wise during all his life,
And Iocasta called was his wife:
Full womanly the story saith certaine
For a time, though she were barraine,
Till Laius in full humble wise,
To haue a child, did sacrifice
First to Apollo in his chaire so bright,
And Iupiter, that hath so great a might,
Beseeching hem with deuout reuerence,
To graunt only through her influence,
That his request executed may be,
And specially to goddesses three
He besought, Pallas, and Iuno,
And Diane, for to helpe also,
That he be not defrauded of his boone:
And his prayer accepted was full soone,
That finally through his rites old,
Euen like as his heart would,
The Queene Iocasta hath anone conceiued,
Which when the king fully hath perceiued,
He made in hast, him list not to abide,
Through his kingdome messengers ride
Fro coast to coast, the story can diuise,
For Diuinours and Philosophers wise,
For such as were famous Phisiciens,
And well expert Astronomiens,
To come in hast vnto his presence,
To find out shortly in sentence
By craft onely of calculation,
The childs fate and disposition,

How

How the Astronomiens and Philosophers of Thebes calcled out the fate of Edippus.

And thereupon to yeue a iudgement,
The root I take, at the ascendent
Truly sought out by minute and degre,
The selfe houre of his natiuite
Not forpet, the heauenly mansions
Clearely searched by smale fractions,
First by seconds, terces, and eke quartes,
On Iugrime stones, and on white cartes
Ipziued out by dilligent labour,
In tables correct, deuoid of all errour,
Iustly sought, and found out of both two,
The yeares collect, and expause also,
Considzed eke by good inspection,
Euery houre and constellation,
And each aspect and looke eke diuers,
Which were good, and which also peruers,
Where they were toward, oz at debate,
Happie, wilfull, oz infoztunate:

The cursed constellation and disposition of the heauen, and the nativitie of Edippus.

And finally, in conclusion
They found Saturne in the Scozpion,
Heauie chered melancolike and loth,
And wood Mars furious and wzoth,
Holding his sceptre in the Capzicozne,
The same houre when this child was bozne,
Uenus direct, and contrarious,
And depzessed in Mercurious hous,
That the dome and iudgement finall
Of these clerkes, to speake in speciall
By fatall sozt, that may not be withdzaw,
That with his swerd his father shall be slaw,

How the fate of Edippus disposed, that he should slea his owne father.

There may no man helpe it ne excuse,
On which thing the king gan sore muse,
And cast he would on that other side
Againe her dome, foz himselfe pzouide
Shape away, and remedie tofozne,
Bidding the quene when the child wer bozne,
Without mercie oz moderly pite
That he be dead, ie may none other be,
And in all hast, like as he hath sent,
She obeied his commaundement
With wofull heart, and pitous looke,
And face pale, her yong sonne she tooke,
Tender and grene both of flesh and bones,
To certaine men ozdained foz the nones,
Fro point to point in all manner thing,
To execute the bidding of the king,
They durst not delay it, noz abide,
But to a fozest that stood there beside,
They tooken her way, and fast gan him speed,
The kings will to perfozme indeed,
Hauing thereof passing heauinesse:
But when that they behold the fairenesse
Of the child, and excellent beautie,
In her heart they had great pitie,
And plainly cast, emong hem was no strife,
That the child should haue his life,
And anone high vpon a tree,
In place that no man might it see,
They heng him vp, the stozy can rehearse,
But first his feet they gan thzough perce,
And on bowes tender, tough, and smale,
They knitte him vp, shortly this is no tale,
Him to pzeserue from beasts wild and rage,
And after that they tooken her voyage
Toward Thebes, in all the hast they may:
But of foz.une, thilke same day
With her hounds searching vp and doun,
The hunts went of king Polibon
Thzough the fozest, gan foz to find
Some afozne, and some come behind,
And gan search and seeke wonder sore
Emong the hils and the holts hore,
And as they rengen the trenches by and by,
They heard a noise, and a pitous cry

How the hunts of king Polibon found the child in the forrest, and presented him vnto the King.

Of this child, honging on a tree:
And all at ones thzough hem foz to see,
And left not, till they haue him found,
And tooke him doune, and his feet vnbound,
And bare him home vnto Polibon,
King of Archadie, the famous region:
And when that he the child first can ice,
Of his woundes he had great pitee
To behold his tendersect so blede,
And called him Edippus, as I rede,
Which is to same plainly, this is no fage,
Bozed the feet, as in that language.
And first the king in his royall hall
Made his men a nozice foz to call,
This young child to foster and to keepe
With her milke, that he mought ne weepe,
And his Leeches he charged eke also,
Till he were whole, her deuoir foz to do,
Fully in purpose, foz this child was feire,
After his day to maken him his heire,
Foz cause onely, who so taketh heed,
Sonne had he none, by line to succeed,
And that he had a wife oz none,
I find it not, and therefore I let it gone,
But by pzocesse of daies and of yeres,

This Edippus, emong his playing feares,
Was in port passing full of pride,
That none with him might in peace abide.
In heart he was so inly furquidous,
Melancolike and contrarious,
Full of despite, and of high disdaine,
That no wight durst shortly him withsaine,
Till on a day, he gan with one debate,
To whom he had specially great hate,
Which of rancour, and of hastie tene,
As he that might his pride not sustene,
Gan vpon him cruelly to braid,
And vnto him felly thus he said:
Whereto (qd. he) art thou so proud of port,
Contraire also euer in any disport,
Froward and fell, lasting euer in one,
As thou were lord of vs euerichone,
And presumest fully in working,
Like as thou were sonne vnto the King,
And descended of his royall blood?
But whether so thou be wroth or wood,
Thou art nothing, if thee list take heede,
Appertaining vnto his kinrede,
But in a forrest founden and vnknow
Whē thou wer yong, therefore beare thee low,
And vtterly remember thee if thee list,
Thy birth and blood are both two vnwist,
This is the fine shortly of my tale,
Wherewith Edippus gan to wexe pale,
And chaunge also cheare and countenaunce,
And gan apeint in his remembraunce
Word by word, and forgat right nought,
And felly mused on this, and aboue thought,
And eft he would, without more tarrying,
The trouth enquire of Polibon the King:
And when he saw opportune space,
And the King in a secret place,
He him besought lowly on his knee,
To his request benignely to see.

The request of Edippus vnto the King Polibon.

And that he would plainly, and not spare,
Of his birth the true ground declare,
And make him sure of this thing anone,
If he were his very sonne or none?
And Polibon onely of gentillesse,
When he beheld the great heauinesse
Of Edippus, and the wofull paine,
He gan dissimule, and in a manner faine,
Liche as he had ben verely his heire:
But more and more he falleth in dispeire,
And downe ayen on knees gan fall,
Him conjuring by the Gods all,
To tell trouth, and nothing to hide,
Affirming eke he will not abide
Lenger with him, but riden and enquere,
Till time he may the very sooth lere
In any part of hap or of fortune,
And for that he was so importune
In his desire, the King without abode
Curiously told him how it stode,

The answere of the King vnto Edippus.

In a forrest first how he was found
Vpon a tree, by the feet ybound,
And how he cast in conclusion
To make him King of that region
After his day, shortly for to tell,
But Edippus would no lenger dwell,
But tooke leaue, and in hast gan ride
To a temple fast there beside
Of Apollo, in story as is told,
Whose statute stood in a chaire of gold
On wheeles foure, burned bright and shene,
And within a spirit full vncleane
By fraud onely, and fals illusion,
Answere yaf to euery question,
Bringing the people in full great errour,
Such as to him did false honour,
By rites vsed in the old dawes,
After the custome of Paganims lawes,
And Edippus with full humble chiere
To Apollo made his priere,
Beseeching him on his knees low
By some signe, that he might know
Through euidence, shortly comprehended
Of what kinred that he was descended:
And when Edippus by great deuotion
Finished had fully his orison,
The fiend anon, within inuisible,
With a voice dredefull and horrible,
Bad him in hast take his voyage
Toward Thebes, where of his linage
He hearen shall, and be certified:
And on his way anone he hath him hied
By hastie iourney, so is his horse constrained
Day by day, till he hath attained
Vnto a castle, Pilotes ycalled,
Rich and strong, and wele aboue ywalled,
Adiacent by site of the countrie
And apertinent to Thebes the citie,
King Laius being there present,
For to hold a manner of turnement,
With his knights yong and courageous,
And other folke, that were desirous
To preue hemselfe, shortly for to tell,
Who that by force other might excell,
Or get a name, through his prowesse,
Euerich of hem did his busines
On horsebacke, and eke on foot,
All be that some found it full vnsoot,
Rather a play of warre than of peace:
Where Edippus put himselfe in preace,

Is he that was aie ready to debate,
Enforcing him to enter in at gate,
Maugre all tho that him would let,
And in the preace, of aucnture, he met

How Edippus slough his Father by ignoraunce, at the Castell of Pilotes.

King Laius, and cruelly him slough,
Though the storie telleth not hough,
Ne no wight can of all the company,
By no signe, it verily aspy,
By whose hond the King was slaw,
For Edippus, gan him in hast withdraw,
And kept him coy of entencioun,
Great was the noise and pitous soun,
In the castell, for slaughter of the king,
Dole and complaint, sorrow, and weeping.
But for they saw, that heauines and thought,
Ayenst death auaileth lite or nought,
They ordaine with rites full royall,
For the feast called Funerall,
And eke the custome of the daies old,
The corps they brent into albes cold,
And in a vessell round made as a ball,
They closed him in gold and metall,
And after that did her busie cure,
In Thebes to make a Sepulture,
And richly, hem list no lenger let,
The albes they did enclose and shet,
Of this matter there is no more to sayen,
But to Edippus I will retourne ayen,
Which him enhasteth aie from day to day,
Toward Thebes in all that euer he may,
Brenning in hart as whote as any fire,
The fine to know, of his fatall desire,
But for that he failed of a guide,
Out of his way went ler aside,
Through a wild and a wast countree,
By a mountaine that stood vpon the see.

How Edippus passed by the hill, where the Monster lay, that was called Sphinx.

Where that Mōsters, of many diuers kind
Were conuersant, in story as I find,
Emong which soothly there was one,
So inly cruell that no man durst gone,
For dread of death forth by that passage,
This Monster was so mortall in his rage,
Which had also by discripcion,
Body and foot, of a fierce Lion.
And like a maid, in soth, was head and face.

The destruction of the foule Monster.

Fell of his looke and cruell to manace,
And odious of countenaunce and sight,
And as I rede Sphinx that Monster hight.
Worse than Tigre, Dragon, or Serpent,
And I suppose by Enchauntement,
He was ordained on the hill to bide,
To slea all tho that passeden beside,
And specially, all that did faile
To expounc his misty deuinaile,
His probleme eke, in words plaine and bare,
Without auise fully to declare:
Or with the life he might not escape,
This is very soothly plainly and no iape:
And if that he by declaration,
Haue thereupon cleare exposicion,
He should in hast, there was none other mene,
Slain this Monster for all his cruell tene,
There may of mercy be none other graunt.
But of all this Edippus ignorant,
This dreadful hill, standing on a roch,
Or he was ware, ful nigh gan approch,
Wore perilous platly than he wend:
And sodainly the Monster gan descend,
To stoppen his way and letten his passage,
Thus abiding with a fell courage.

The words of the foule Monster.

Saied, I haue in hart inly great disport,
That fortune hath brought the to my port,
To make a preeue if thou may endure,
The fatall end of this aucnture,
Set at a fine, soothly, by daies old:
And by and by all the case him told,
Charging him to be well ware and wise,
Get the palme and beare away the prise,
Touching this thing set atweene vs twaine,
Of life or death, which we shall dreine,
And this Monster, with a despitous cheare,
His probleme gan thus as ye shull heare.

The probleme that Sphinx put to Edippus.

There is a beast merueilous to see,
The which in sooth at his natiuitee,
Is of his might so tender and so greene,
That he may himselfe not sustene
Upon his feet, though he had it sworne,
But if that he be of his moder borne,
And afterward by proceese of age,
On foure feet he maketh his passage,
And then vpon three if I shall not faine,
And alderlast, he goeth vpright on twaine,
Diuers of port and wonderfull of cheares,
Till by length of many sondry yeares,
Naturally he goeth ayen on three,
And sithen on foure, it may none other bee,
And finally this is the trouth plein,
He recouereth kindly ayein,

To the matter which that he came fro,
Lo here my probleme is all ido,
Muse hereupon without warre or strife,
It to declare, or els lese thy life.
And when Edippus can this thing aduert,
Well assured in his manly hert,
Gan in his harte, serch vp and doun,
And of prudence cast in his reasoun
By great auise what thing this may bee,
Seing also, that he may not flee,
And how there was counsaile non ne rede,
To tell trouth or els to be dede,
And by full good deliberacion,
Thus he answered, in conclusion:
Thou Sphinx (qd. he) false and fraudolent,
Thou foule Monstre, thou dragō, thou serpēt,
That on this hill like as I conceiue,
Liest in waite folkes to deceiue,
But trust well for all thy sleghty witt,
Thy false fraude shall anon be quitt,
Me liste not to whispre neither roune,
But thy probleme I shall anon expoune,
So openly, thou shalt not go therefro,
Lo this it is take good heed thereto:

How Edippus expouned the probleme, that Sphinx put to him.

Thilke beast thou spake of her tofore,
Is euery man in this world ibore,
Which may not go his lummes be so soft,
But as his moder beareth him aloft
In her armes, when he doeth crie, or weepe:
And after that he ginneth for to creepe
On fower feet, in his tender youth,
By experience as it is ofte couth,
Aforne reckened his hands both two:
And by proceſſe thou maiest consider also,
With his two feete for all thy fell tene,
He hath a staffe himselfe to susteine,
And then he goeth shortly vpon three,
And alderlast, as it must needs bee,
Voidyng his staffe he walketh vpon tweine,
Til it so be through age he attaine
That liste of youth wasted be and spent,
Then in his hand he taketh a potent,
And on three feete thus he goeth ayen,
I dare affirme thou maiest it not withsein.
And sone after through his vnweldie might,
By influence of natures right,
And by experience as euery man may know,
Like a child on fower he crepeth low,
And for he may here no while sojourne,
To yearth ayen he must in hast retourne,
Which he came fro, he may it not remew,
For in this world no man may eschew,
This very sothe shortly and no doubt,
When the whele of kind cometh about,
And naturally hath his cours ironne,
By circuite as doeth the shere sonne,
That man, and child, of high and low estate,
It gaineth not to make more debate,
His time ilette that he must line,
When Atropos, of malice doeth vntwine,
His liues thred, by Cloto first compounded.
Lo here thy probleme is expounded,
At euery metyng as I toke on honde,
To the law that thou must needs stonde,
And in all haste of mine hondes dete,
For of reason thou canst it not withsete.
And this Sphinx awaped and amate,
Stood all dismaied and disconsolate,
With chere doun cast heauie as any ledde,
And Edippus anone smote of the heedde
Of this fende stinking and vnswete,
And the countree set holly in quiete,
Whereby he hath soch a price wonne,
That his fame in euery coast is ronne,
Through al the lond ỹ this mōstre was slaw:
And line right to Thebes he gan draw,
Well receiued for his worthinesse,
For his manhood and his prowesse,
And for they seigh he was a seemely knight,
Well fauoured in euery mans sight,
And saw also Thebes, the mighty toun,
Not onely they but all the regioun,
Were destitute of a gouernour,
Ayen her foon hauing no succour,
Hem to defend, but the Queene alone,
Emong hemselfe making full great mone,
For there was none as bookes specifie,
The Sceptre and croune to occupie,
For which the Lordes all by one assent,
Within the toune set a parlement,
Shortly concluding if it might been,
Prudently to treate with the Queen,
Namely they that held hem selfe most sage,
To condescend by way of mariage,
She to be ioyned to this manly knight,
Passing prudent and famous eke of might,
Most holie man, as they can discerne,
The worthy eiree to keepe and gouerne:
And through counsail of the lords all,
To their desire plainly she is fall,
And accorded without more tarying,
That of Thebes Edippus shall be king.
By full assent was none that saied naie,
And time set, ayen in a certain daie,
Emong hem silfe, and finally deuised,
The wedding was in Thebes solempnized,
Full rially, that needs must vnthriue,
Onely for he, his moder tooke to wiue,
Unwist of both he was of her blood,
And ignorant shortly how it stood,
That he tofore had his father slawe,
For which this wedding was against ỹ law,

And

And tofore God is neither faire ne good,
Nor acceptable blood to touch blood,
Which cause hath be of great confusion,
In many a lond, and many a region,
Ground and root of vnhap and mischaunce,
The fine concluding alway with vēgeaunce,
As men haue sein by clere experience,
And holy writ recordeth in sentence,
How Herode kilfly in his life,
By violence tooke his brothers wife,
For she was fayre and pleasaunt to his sight,
And kept her still by force through his might,
Although to her title had he non,
And for her sake the holy man sainct John,
For his trouth in prison lost his hedde,
Wherefore I rede euery man take hede,
Whether so he be Lord, Prince, or king,
That he beware to eschue soch wedding,
Ere ỹ the swerde of vengeance him manace,
Lest he lese hap, fortune, and grace,
Taking enlample in all maner thing,
Of Edippus, in Thebes crouned king,
All be that he wrought of ignoraunce,
Full derke and blind of his wofull chaunce,
And if vnwist, that he of innocence,
As ye haue herde fell in soch offence,
For which he was punished & brought low,
What are they worthy that her errour know,
And from the knot list not to absteine,
Of such spousaile to God and man vnclene,
I can not sein ne more thereof deuise,
Demeth your self that prudent been, & wise,
And eke Edippus, haueth emong in mind,
Of whom the wedding like as ye may find,
Unhappy was and passing odious,
Infortunate, and eke vngracious,
I am werie more thereof to write,
The hatefull processe also to endite,
I passe ouer fully of entent,
For Imeneus, was not there present,
Nor Lucina, list not there to shine,
Ne there was none of the Muses nine,
But one accord to maken melodie,
For there song not by heauenly armonie,
Neyther Clio, ner Caliope,
None of the sustren in nomber thrise three,
As they did when Philolate,
Ascended vp high aboue the skie,
To be wedded, this Lady vertuous,
Unto her Lord the God Mercurius,
And as Martician, inamed de Capelle,
In his booke of wedding can you tell,
There concluding in his marriage,
The Poete, that whilom was so sage,
That this Lady called Sapience,
Iwedded was vnto Eloquence,
As it sat well by heauenly puruiaunce,
Hem to be ioyned by knot of alliaunce,
But both two soothly of entent,
At wedding in Thebes were absent,
That caused after great aduersitie,
For finall end of that solempnitie,
Was sorrow and wo, and destruction,
Utter ruine of this roiall toun,
There may no man helpe it ne succour,
For a time in ioy though they floure.

The names of the people, being at the wedding of the king Edippus, and of Iocasta the Queene.

But at his wedding plainly for to tell,
Was Cerberus, chief porter of hell,
And Herebus, fader to Hatred,
Was there present with his holle kinred,
His wife also with her browes blacke,
And her doughters, sorow for to make,
Hidously chered and vgly for to see,
Megera, and Theliphonee,
Alecto eke, with Labour and Enuie,
Drede, Fraude, and false Tretcherie,
Treason, Pouert, Indigence and Nede,
And cruell death in his rent wede,
Wretchednesse, Compleint, and eke Rage,
Fearfull, Pale, Dronkenesse, croked Age,
Cruell Mars, and many a Tigre wood,
Brenning Ire, and vnkind blood,
Fraternall hate deepe set in the roote,
Sauf onely Death, that there nas no boote,
Allured othes at fine Untrew,
All these folke were at weddyng new,
To make the toune desolate and bare,
As the storie after shall declare:
But aie in Thebes, with his walles strong,
Edippus reigneth many a day and long,
And as mine aucthor write in words plain,
By Iocasta, he had sonnes twain,
Ethiocles, and also Polimite,
And in bookes as sondrie clerkes write,
Doughters twoo, full goodly on to see,
Of which that one hight Antigonee,
And that other called was Imein,
Of her beautie, inly souercin.
Edippus aie denoid of warre and strife,
With Iocasta ledde a merie life,
Till fortune of her iniquitie,
Had enuie of his prosperitie,
For when he shone most rich in his renoun,
From her whele she plunged him adoun,
Out of his ioy into sodein wo,
As she is wont frowardly to do,
And namely hem that setten her affiaunce,
Of hartely trust in her variaunce:
For when the king passing of great might,
Sat with the quene vpon a certain night,
Casuelly, when his folke echone,

Out

Out of chamber sodeinly were gone,
Ere he was ware Iocasta gan behold,
The carectes of his wounds old,
Upon his feet, emprented wonder depe,
Tournyng her face brest out for to wepe,
So secrely, he might it not espie,
And she anon fell into a fantasie,
Aie on this thing musing more and more,
And in her bedde gan to sighen sore,
And when the king conceiueth her distresse,
He gan enquere of her heauinesse,
Fully the cause and thoccasion,
For he will wite in conclusion,
What her eileth, and why she fared so.
My Lord (qd. she) without wordes mo,
Percell cause of this sodein rage,
Is for that I in my tender age,
Had a Lord, inamed Laius,
King of this toune, a man right vertuous,
By whom I had a sonne right wonder feire,
Likely to been his successour and heire,
But bicause his Diuinours told
At his birth sothly that he should,
If he had life, by fatall destinee,
Slaen his fader it might none other be:
For which the king his fate to eschue,
Bad men in hast as him thought due,
To slea the child, and haue thereof no roth,
And I anon bad without sloth,
To certain men vp pein of iudgement,
To execute the commaundement
Of the king as I yaue hem in charge,
And forth they gone to a forest large,
Adiacent vnto this countree,
Persing his feet, and heng him on a tree,
Not performyng the execucion,
On him they had such compassion,
Left him there, and resorted home ayen,
Beyng in doubt and vncertein,
At their repeire as they tolden all,
Of this child what afterward is befall,
Saufe they said huntes had him found,
Which ladden him forth & his feet vnbound,
But to what coast they coud not declare:
Which percell is of mine euill fare,
Ground and cause of mine heauy chere,
Considered eke the woundes that appere
Upon you feet, & wot not what they mene:
And o thing aie is at mine hart greene,
My Lord alas but of new date,
King Laius slaine was but late,
At a Castell nigh this countree,
Upon your comming into this citee,
All this iweied and rekened into one,
Maketh mine hart as heauie as a stone,
So that I can counsell none ne red,
And with that word the king lift vp his hed,
And abreid with sharpe sighes smert,
And all this thing by order can aduert,
Curiously by good auisement,
And by signes clere and euident,
Conceiueth well and sore gan repent,
It was himself that Iocasta ment:
And when the king sigh in maners pleine,
By her Goddes she gan him constreine,
To shew out the cause of his affray
And it expoune and make no delay,
Croppe and roote shortly why that he
Entred first into that countre,
Frō whens he came and from what region
But he her put in delusion,
As he had doen it for the nones,
Till at last he brast out at ones,
Unto the Queene, and gan a processe make,
First how he was in the forest take,
Wounded the feet, and so forth euery thing,
Of his cherishing with Polibon the king,
And holle the cause why he him forsooke,
And in what wise he the way tooke
Toward Thebes as Apollo bad,
And of fortune how that he was lad
Where that Sphinx kept the Mounteine,
And how that he also slowe in certeine,
King Laius at Castell gate,
Toward night when it was full late,
And how to Thebes that he gan him spede,
To find out the stocke of his kinrede,
Which vnto him gan wexe couth,
For by processe of his greene youth,
He found out wele by rekening of his life,
That she was both his moder, and his wife:
So that all night and suyng on the morow,
Betweene hem two began a new sorrow,
Which vnto me were pitous for to tell,
For thereupon yif I should dwell,
A long space it would you occupie,
But ye may read in a Tragedie

Tragediæ Senece de Egipto
Reg. Thebax.

Of Morall Senek fully his ending,
His dooll, his mischief, and his compleining,
How with sorrow, and vnweldie age,
This Edippus fell in dotage,
Lost his witte and his worldly delite,
And how his sonnes had him in despite,
And of disdaine tooke of him no keepe,
And eke bookes saine, his iyen out he wepe,
And as mine aucthour liketh to deuise,
As his sonnes rebuke him and despise,
Upon a day in a certaine place,
Out of his hedde, his iyen he gan race,
And cast at hem, he can no other boote,
And of malice they trade him vnder foote,

Fully

Fully deuoid both of loue and dread,
And whē Edippus for miſchief was thus ded
Within a pitte made in the earth low,
Of crueltie his ſonnes gan him throw,
Worſe then Serpent, or any Tigre wood,
But of curſed ſtocke commeth vnkind blood,
As in ſtorie ye may rede heretofore,
Although the Roſe grow out of the thorne.
Thus of Edippus when he was blind & old,
The wretched end I haue you plainly told.
For which ſhortly to man and child I rede,
To be wele ware and take hede,
Of kindly right and of conſcience,
To doe honour and due reuerence

How euery man ought of duty, to doe reuerence to his Father and Mother, or els there will fall vengeance.

To father and moder of what eſtate they bee,
Or certaine els they ſhall neuer thee:
For who that is not to hem debonaire,
In ſpeach, in porte, for to treat hem faire,
Hem to obeie, in honeſtie and drede,
And hem to cheriſh of what they haue nede,
I dare affirme excepting none eſtate,
That he ſhall firſt be infortunate,
In all his werke both on Sea and lond,
And of what thing that he take in hond,
For the time froward to him and contraire,
Waſt of his goods plainly and appaire,
Finde plentie of conteke, warre, and ſtrife,
Unhappy end and ſhortneſſe of life,
And graceleſſe of what he hath to do,
Hatred of God, and man alſo:
Therefore no man be thereof reeheles,
But make your mirrour of Ethiocles,
And his brother called Polimite,
Which in ſoch things greatly were to wite,
As ye ſhall here of hem how it fill,
And when we been deſcended doun this hill,
As I paſſed here the lowe vaile,
I ſhall begin the remnaunt of my tale.

Explicit prima pars iſtus Codialli.

Immediate ſequitur ſecunda pars eiuſdem.

PAſſed ỳ Thorpe of Broughton on the blee,
By my Kalender I gan anon to ſee,
Through the Sunne, ỳ full clere gan ſhine,
Of the clocke that it drew to nine,
And ſawe alſo as ſiluer dropes ſhene,
Of the dewe like perles on the grene,
Vapoured vp into the aire aloft,
When Zepherus with his blowing ſoft,
The weder made luſtie, ſmooth, and faire,
And right attempre was the holſome aire:
The ſame houre all the holle route
Of the pilgrimes riding round aboute,
In my tale when I gan procede,
Rehearſing forth as it was in dede,
When Edippus buried was and graue,
How his ſonnes the kingdome for to haue,

How the ſonnes of Edippus, debated for the croune.

Emong hemſelfe by full mortall hate,
For the croune, gonne for to debate,
Which of hem iuſtly ſhall ſucceede,
And the Scepter of the toune poſſede,
Auerting nought, neither to right ne wrong,
But eche of hem to make his partie ſtrong,
And his querele proudly to ſuſteine,
From whoſe harts was deuoided clene,
Of brotherhood the faithfull aliaunce,
Falſe couetiſe ſo made hem at diſtaunce,
Fully werching into deſtruction,
And ruine of this noble toun,
So hote brent of hatred and enuie,
Of both two through pompous furquedie,
That neither would pleinly in a poinet,
Other forbeare, they ſtode in ſoch diſioinct,
Like as they had of birth been foreins:
Till of the toune the noble citezeins,
Knights, Barons, with many a worthy lord,
Shope a way to make hem of accord,
And to ſet hem in quiete and in pees:
But for his part this Ethiocles,
Alledge gan, that he was firſt borne,
For which he ought of reaſon go toforne
In the citee, to be crouned king,
Sith by law there was no letting,
For vnto him longeth the heritage
By diſcent, and by title of age.

The controuerſie of the two brethren.

But Polimite of full high diſdaine,
All openly gan reply againe,
And for his part ſaid in eſpeciall,
Reaſon was none that he ſhould haue all,
Both Regalie and Dominatioun,
And the lordſhip wholly of the toun,
And he right nought out of the citie,
But liue in ſile and in pouertie,
Concluding without fere or drede,
Rather than it ſuffer, he would be dede,
And thus alas, through her enuious ſtrife,

At ende euerich lost his life,
At great mischief as ye shall after here,
But thilke time the Lords all in fere,
Full busily did her diligence,
By great auise, and full high prudence,
To set hem in quiet and in rest,
Counsailyng hem plainly for the best,
To leue her strife, of wisedome and of reason,
And condescend to some conclusion,
Which to both might most auaile.
And finally through her gouernaile

The common vnion, betweene these two brethren.

The Lordes all, tho being present,
Haue hem brought to been of one assent,
Of one hart, as brother vnto brother,
Euerich of hem to reigne after other,
Yeere by yeere as it commeth about,
So that the toun shall absent him out,
Fully that yeere and himself gie,
By his manhood and his chiualrie,
Haunt himself, in deeds Martiall,
While his brother in his See riall,
Holdeth his Sceptre the curee to gouerne:
And when the yeere his cours hath run yerne,
And is come out, he shall haue repeire,
To reigne in Thebes like as Lord and heire,
There to receiue fully his dignitee,
While that other voideth the curee,
Paciently taking his auenture,
Till he ayen his honour may recure,
Thus enterchange, euery yeere they shall,
That one ascendeth that other hath a fall,
They must obey of hart and take it well,
Like as that one resorteth of the wele,
For this was holle the composicion
Betweene the brethren, and conuencion
Fully knit vp by great auisement,
To forze the Goddes by othe of Sacrament,
Neuer after to grutche ne to varie,
But accomplish shortly, and not tarie,
Like as thaccord, enrolled in the toun,
From point to point, made mencioun.
But alderfirst by reason of his age,
Ethiocles had the auantage,
To reigne aforne, and weare the croune,
Polimite him hasting out of toune,
During that yere it may none other be,
Whiles his brother satte in his rialte,
Full richely vpon Fortunes whele,
And rode him forth armed bright in stele.
This Polimite forthly as I rede,
Himselfe alone on a riall stede,
Without guide all the long day,
Being aferde to keepe the high way,
In his hart hauing suspecion,
To his brother, of malice and treason,
Lest he pursue through fals & vnkind blood,
To haue him dedde for couetise of good,
That he alone might haue possessioun,
During his life fully of the toune:
For which in hast, hauing no felaw,
Polimite aside gan him withdraw,
By a forest ioyning to the See,
Knowing right nought the site of the countre,
Full of hilles and of high Mountcines,
Craggie Roches, and but few plenes,
Wondre dreadfull and lothsome of passage,
And therewithall full of beasts rage,
Holding his way of hert nothing light,
Mate and wery, till it draweth to night,
And all the day beholding enuiron,
He neither saw Castel, Toure, ne Toun,
The which thing greueth him ful sore,
And sodenly the see began to rore,
Winde and tempest hidiously arise,
The raine doun bete in full grisly wise,
That many a beast therof was adrad,
And nigh for fere gan to were madd,
As it sempte by the wofull sownes
Of Tigres, Beres, Bores, and Liones,
Which for reluce, hem selfe for to saue,
Euerich in hast, draweth vnto his Caue,
But Polymite, in this tempest huge,
Alas the while, findeth no refuge,
Ne him to shrowde saw nowhere no succour,
Till it was passed almost midnight houre
A large space, that the sterres clere,
The cloudes voided, in heauen did appere,
So that this knight out of the Forest large,
Gan approch, into the londe of Arge.

How Polimite first came into the lond of Arge.

Seing a palaice mighty of building,
Of which Adrastus, called was the king,
A lusty man, rich, and wondre sage,
And pronne was somdel into age,
Borne of the Ile that called is Chion,
And somtime Sonne of the king Cholon,
And for his witte in story as is couth,
He chosen was in his tendre youth,
Of Arge to be crouned king,
Chiefe of all Greece, be record of writing,
Not by descente nor succession,
And but alonely of free election,
He held of Arge the Sceptre in his hand,
As most worthy of all Greekes land,
Loued and drad, for wisdome and Justice:
And as the story plainly can deuise,
This worthy king had doughters two,
Passing faire, and right good also,
It were to long, her beaute to describe.

Argiue

Argiue and Deiphile, the doughters tweine of king Adraſtus.

And the eldeſt called was Argiue,
Deiphile ynamed the ſecond:
And Adraſtus, like as it is found,
This worthy king had ſonne none,
To ſuccede after he be gone,
For which he was during all his life,
Triſte in hert and paſſingly penſife,
But holy his truſt and his hope ſtood,
By alliance of ſome worthy blood,
Brought in by mene of his doughters twein,
That he ſhalbe releſſed of his peine,
Through recomfort of ſome high Mariage,
And ſothly yet full oft in his courage,
He troubled was by occaſion,
Of a ſweuene and of a viſion,

The dreame of king Adraſtus of a wild Boore and a fears Lion.

Shewed to him vpon a certein night,
For as him thought, his inward ſight,
While he ſlept by clere inſpection,
A wild Booze and a fers Lion,
Pollede ful, theſe beſtes in her rage,
His doughters two by bond of Mariage,
In ſhort time within a certein day:
Which brought his hert in full great affray.
☞ But thing in ſoth that deſtine hath ſhape,
Here in this world ful hard it is teſcape,
And meruailous a man to eſchue his fate.
And Polimite of whom I ſpake late,
With the tempeſt bete, & all bereined,
By grace oncly the Citie hath atteined,
Where Adraſtus full ſtately of degree,
Thilke time held his roiall ſee,
The troubled night, merke and obſcure,
Hath brought this knight only by auenture,
Through the Citie encloſed with a wall,
Unto the palaice chief and principall,
Where as the king in his chambre aloft,
Lay in his bed and ſlept wonder ſoft,
Eke al his folke had her chambres take,
Like as Fortune parauenture had ſhape,
The ſelfe time becauſe it was ſo late,
And caſuely the porter at gate,
As it had by right for the nones,
And in a porch built of ſquare ſtones,
Full mightely enarched enuiroun,
Where the domes and ples of the toun
Were executed, and lawes of the king,
And there this knight without more taryng,
Wery and mate, from his ſtede alight,
Hanging the reine in all the haſt he might,
Upon his arme, ſure him for to keepe,
And leid him doun and gan anon to ſlepe,
As him ſemed that time for the beſt:
And while that he lay thus for to reſt,
Of auenture there came a knight riding,
One of the worthieſt of the world liuing,
Curteis, lowly, and right vertuous,
As ſaith mine Auctour, called Tideus,
Virous in armes and manly in werking,
Of his birth Sonne vnto the king
Of Callidoine, a lond of great renoun,
As he alas, out of that regioun
Exiled was, for he his brother ſlow,
As the ſtage of Thebes writ the manere how,
Al be that he to him no malice ment:
For on a day as they on hunting went,
In a foreſt for harte and for hind,
So as he ſtood vnder a great lind,
And caſuely lete his Arow ſlippe,
He ſlough his brother called Menelippe.
Through mortall ſort his hand was begiled,
For which he was baniſhed and exiled,
As the law narow ſette his charge:
As for this caas he came firſt to Arge,
Into the porch where Polimite did ſlepe,
Of auenture ere he toke any kepe,
The ſame night hidouſly beſein,
With the tempeſt of thonder and of rein,
And felt alſo anoy and great damage,
Through the foreſt holding his paſſage,
As Polimite had do tofore,
In perrell oft likely to be lore,
With beſtes rage ſet on euery ſide,
Till of grace without any guide,
He rode through Arge the great mighty toun,
Streght vnto the palaice, & to the chief don-geon,
Like as I told, where Polimite lay,
And at his comming made a great affray.
For hee was blind through derkeneſſe of the night,
And him to guie he ne fond no light,
When he came in, of priket ne of torche,
Till he vnwarely entred in to the porche,
And would haue take there his herbergage:
But Polimite ſterte vp in a rage,
Sodenly awaked as I rede,
With the nyng of his proud ſtede,
And firſt of all when that he beheld,
A knight armed, and on his breſt a ſheld,
And gan the manere of this ray aduerte,
Of verray ire vpon his horſe he ſterte,
And cruelly gan Tideus enquere,
Whens he come, and what he did there,
And bad in haſt his anſwere to deuiſe.
And Tideus in full humble wiſe,
Anſwered ayen of verray gentilleſſe,
And ſaid, in ſoth of high diſtreſſe
Of the tempeſt and the derke night,
He driuen was, like an errant knight,
Of need onely and great neceſſitie,

And him constrained of great aduersitie,
To take lodging where so that he might,
And in that Court therfore he alight,
Without more thinking noncoutrage,
Ne to no wight meaning no damage.
Then Polimite of malice, and of pride,
Told him shortly he should not abide,
Ne lodge there though he had it sworne,
For I (qd. he) toke it vp before,
And will it keepe during al this night,
I sey thee platly maugre all thy might.
(Qd. Tideus) then, it is no curtesie,
Me to deuoid but rather villenie.
Yef ye take hede that seeme a gentil knight,
And as I suppose ye haue no title of right,
To this lodging by way of heritage,
More than haue I, for all your fell rage,
And parde yet it shal be no disease,
Till to morow though ye do me ease,
Of gentillesse onely with your leue,
To suffre me it shall but litel greue,
But aye the more Tideus spake faire,
Polimite was froward and contraire,
And shortly saith, it geineth not to striue,
That of force he shall deuoid bliue,
Or vtterly atwene hem both two,
This thing to trie he must haue do.
And Tideus seing no better mene,
Ful like a knight in stele armed clene,
Without abode fast gan him spede,
Wondre liuely for to stride his stede,
And thus these knights pompous & elate,
For litel cause fellen at debate.

How Tideus and Polimite striuen for her lodging.

And as they ronne togider on horsebacke,
Either on other first his spere brake,
And after that full surquedous of pride,
With sharpe swerdes they togider ride,
Full irously these mighty Champions,
In her furie, like Tygres or Lions,
As they hurtel, that al the palaice shooke,
And king Adrastus out of his sleepe wooke,
And made in hast his Chambreleins call,
And through ẏ Court his worthy knights al,
Commaunding hem to descend and see,
And report what it might bee,
This wonderful noice in his Court by night,
And when he seigh two straũg knights fight,
In plates thicke, and bright maile,
Without Iudge, they had great meruaile,
And were dismaied of this vncouth thing,
And as they found told to the king,
And Adrastus for darknesse of the night,
From his chambre with many torches light,
Into the Court is descended downe,
All his meine stonding enuiron,
Of these knights hauing great wondre,
And of manhode he put hem first asondre,
Hem commanding like a gentill king,
To leuen her strife and cessen off fighting,
And entred in with a knightly looke,
And first frõ hem her swerdes both he tooke,
Affirming eke as to his fantasie,
It was a rage and a great folie,
So wilfully her liues ieopart,
Withouten Iudge her quarel to depart,
And specially in the derke night,
When neither might of other haue sight,
Charging hem vp peine of her lyfe,
To disseuere and stinten of her stryfe.
And tho Tideus in all the hast he might,
Full humbly from his steed alight,
And right mekely with chere & countenaunce,
Put him holly in the gouernaunce
Of Adrastus, in all manere thing,
And Polimite eke made no tariyng,
To high him also, and would not withsey
The kings bidding, lowly to obey,
So as him ought with due reuerence:
And as they stood both in his presence,
He gan enquere first of her estate,
The cause also why they were at debate,
Of her Countrees sothly, and her age,
And asked hem eke touching her linage,
By descent of what stocke they were born?
And Tideus, his answere yaue beforn,
Told plainly and made no lesing,
How he was sonne vnto the king,
Of Calcidoine, and rightfull heire thereto,
And of his exile the cause he told also,
As ye haue herd in the story rad,
And Polimite with chere and face sad,
Unto the king touching his Countree,
Said he was borne in Thebes the Citee,
And Iocaste the great famous queene,
His moder was without any wene,
But of his father whilom king and lord,
For very shame he spake neuer a word,
Onely, for yif I shall not feine,
His fader was, and brother, both tweine,
The which in soth he was full loth to tell,
And eke the king would him not compell,
Of gentillesse but bad without blame,
Of his birth for to haue no shame,
For holly the caas he knew euery dele,
Touching his kin he knew ẏ groñd full wele,
Like as it was by full cleere report:
Enforcing him for to do comfort,
With all his might, and all besie peine,
This manly king, to these knights tweine,
And to hem said, before him as they stood,
He wist well that of full woorthy blood
They were descended, touching her kinred,

And

And made in hast his officers lede,
The straunge knights being at debate,
Thrꝛough his palaice,to chambꝛe of estate,
Ech by himself foꝛ to take his ease,
And euery thing in soth ỹ might hem please,
Was offred hem like her estates,
And when they were disarmed of her plates,
Cushens,Greues,and her Sabatons,
Her Harnets voided,and her Habergeons,
Two mantels vnto hem were brought,
Frette with perle,and rich stones wrought,
Of cloth of gold,and Violet crimsin,
Full richely furred with Ermin,
To lap hem in ayens the cold morrow,
After the rage of her nights sorrow,
To take her rest till the sonne arise,
And when the king in full prudent wise,
First of al he was not rebeles,
The knights herts foꝛ to sette in pees,
That euer after I dare affirme it wele,
Ech was to other trew as any stele,
During her life both in word and dede,
Undꝛe a knotte bound of brotherhede.
And Idꝛastus the worthy king famous,
A feast made rich and plenteous,
To these knights,himselfe thereat present,
And after mete full goodly he hath sent,
This noble king,foꝛ his doughters dere,
Of gentillesse foꝛ to make chere,
To the knights come fro so ferre:
And like in soth as Lucifer the sterre,
Gladeth the morrow at his bꝛising,
So the ladies at her in comming,
With the stremes of her eyen clere,
Goodly apport and womanly manere,
Countenances,and excellent faireneſſe,
To all the Court brought ten in gladnesse,
Foꝛ the freshnesse of her heauenly cheres,
So agreable was vnto the straungeres,
At her entree, that in especial.
Hem thought it like a thing celestiall,
Enhasting hem in full knightly wise,
Ayenst hem goodly to arise,
And as they mette with humble countenaũce,
Ful conningly did her obseruaunce,
Hem conueying in to her sitting place,
But sothely I haue leiser none ne space,
To reherse and put in remembꝛaunce,
Holly the manere of her daliaunce,
It were to long foꝛ you to abide,
But well I wot that the god Cupide,
By influence of his mighty hond,
And the feruence of his fiꝛy bꝛond,
Her meeting first foꝛtuned hath so wele,
That his arowes of gold,and not of stele,
Yperced han the knights herts twene,
Thrꝛough the bꝛest with such a lusty peine,
That ther abode sharpe, as spere,oꝛ launce,
Depe yfitched the point of remembꝛaunce,
Which may not lightly rased be away,
And thus in ioy they dꝛiue foꝛth the day,
In pley and reuel foꝛ the knights sake,
And toward night they her chambꝛe take,
At due time as her fader bad,
And on her weie the knights hem lad,
Reuerently vp by many a staire,
Taking leue gan anon repaire
To her lodging in ful stately a Toure,
Assigned to hem by the herbeiour,
And after spices plenty, and the wine,
In cuppes great,wrought of gold full fine,
Without tarying, to bedde straight they gon,
Touching her rest whether they sleepe oꝛ non,
Demeth ye louers, that in such maner thing,
By experience haue fully knowledging,
Foꝛ it is not declared in my booke,
But as I find,the king all night wooke,
Thoughtfull in hert the stoꝛie specifies,
Musing soꝛe and full of fantasies,
First aduerting the great worthinesse
Of these knights and the semelinesse,
Her lusty youth,her soꝛce,and her manhode,
And how they were come of roial blode,
And this he gan to reuolue about,
And in his hert hauing a maner of doubt,
Atwene two hanging in a balance,
Whether he should make an aliance,
Atween his doughters & the knights twaine,
Foꝛ one thing ay his hert gan constreine,
The remembꝛaunce of his auision,
Of which alone made is mencion,
Touching the Lion,and the wild Boꝛe,
It needeth not to reherse it no more,
Casting alway in his fantasie,
What it might clerely signifie,
This darke dꝛeame,that was hid and close.
But on the morrow Idꝛastus vp arose,
And to the Temple the right way he tooke,
And gan pray deuoutly on his booke,
To the goddes of his dꝛeme to specifie,
And they him bede homward foꝛ to hie,
And to behold in the knights sheldes,
The fell beasts painted in the fields,
Which shall to him be cleere inspection,
Full plainly making declaracion
Of his dꝛeme which he had on the night:
And Idꝛastus enhasted him full right,
In her sheelds wisely to behold,
Where that he saw, as the goddes told,
In the sheelds hanging vpon hookes,
The beasts rage with her mostall crookes,
And to purpos like as write Bochas,
Polimite ful streite enbꝛaced was,
In the hide of a fierce Lioun,
And Tideus aboue his Habergeoun,
A gipoun had,hidous sharpe and hoor,

wrought of the briſtels of a wild Boore,
The which beaſts as the ſtory lere,
Were wrought and bete vpon her baneres,
Diſplaide brode whan they ſhould fight,
Wherefore the king whan he had a ſight,
At his repayre in hert was full glad,
And with a face full demure and ſad,
With his lords that he about him had,
To the temple he the knights lad,
And whan they had with all circumſtaunces,
Of rites old done her obſeruaunces,
Home to the Court they retourne ayein,
And in hall, rich, and well beſein,
This worthy king of hert liberall,
Made a feaſt, ſolempne and riall,
Which in deintees ſurely did excell,
But it were vein euery cours to tell,
Her ſtraunge ſewes and other ſoteltees,
Ne how they ſat like her degrees,
For lacke of time I let ouerſlide.
And after meate, Adraſtus tooke aſide
The knights two, and like a prudent man,
In ſecree wiſe thus his tale he gan.

How Adraſtus ſpake to the knights in ſecret touching the marriage of his daughters.

Sirs (qd. he) I ne doubt it nought,
That it is freſh & grene ay in your thought,
How that firſt by goddes ordinaunce,
And after next through fates purueiance,
And by werking of fortunes hond,
How ye were brought in to this lond,
Both twaine, but now this laſt night,
Of whos comming I am full glad and light,
Firſt in my ſelfe ſhortly to expreſſe,
When I conſider and ſee the likelineſſe
Of your perſons with the circumſtaunces,
And holle the maner of your gouernaunces,
Seing full well whereto ſhould I feigne,
Yee been likely hereafter to atteigne
To great eſtate and habundance of good,
Through your birth and your rial blood,
Ye may not faile but ye haue wrong,
For ye are both manly and right ſtrong:
And for to ſet your hertes more at reſt,
My purpoſe is I hope for the beſt,
So that in you be no variance,
To make a knot as be alliance,
Atwene you and my doughters two,
If your herts accord wele thereto,
And for I am fully in deſpeire,
To ſuccede for to haue an heire,
Therefore ye ſhall haue poſſeſſion,
During my life of halfe my region,
Forth with in hond, and all after my day,
There is no man that thereto ſhal ſay nay,
And ſothly after when that I am graue,
Eche of you ſhall his part haue,
Of this kingdome as I haue prouided,
This is to ſay, it ſhall be diuided,
Atwene you two euerich to be crouned,
Your proparties be equite compounded,
So egaly, in euery mans ſight,
That eche of you enioy ſhall his right,
And in your witte ye ſhall the lond amend,
And of manhood knightly it defend,
Ayens our enemies and our mortall foon,
And for the dayes paſſed been and goon,
Of my deſires and my luſty youth,
I am full ſet for to make it couth,
That ye ſhall haue like mine opinioun,
The gouernaunce of all this Regioun.
To this entent me ſeemeth for the beſt,
Ye to gouerne and I to liue in reſt,
Fully to follow the luſt of my deſires,
Hunte, and hauke, in woods and riuers,
Whereſo euer I haue thereto pleaſance,
And for to haue none other attendance,
Unto nothing but to mine eaſe,
For which shortly pli it agree and pleaſe,
That I haue ſaid to you that ben ſo wiſe,
And be according vnto your auiſe,
Declareth not but in wordes plein,
That you ſeemeth peue anſwere ayen.
And when Adraſtus, had his tale fined,
Tideus with hed full low enclined,
As he that was a verray gentill knight,
With his power and his full might,
Full humbly thanked the king,
Touching his profre and ſo high a thing,
And for his party ſaid he would aſſent,
Fully of hert neuer to repent,
To all that euer the king hath ſaid:
And Polimite was alſo appaid,
In the ſtory as it is comprehended,
On euery part fully is holle deſcended,
The kings will to fulfill in dede,
From point to point and there vpon procede,
Whether ſo that euer they winne or leſe,
And Tideus made his brother cheſe,
Of gentilneſſe and of curteſie,
Which that was moſt to his fantaſie,
Of the Siſters for to haue to wiue,
And he in ſoth choſen hath Argiue,
Which eldeſt was full womanly to ſe,
And Tideus tooke Deiphile,
Of her beaute moſt ſouereigne excellent.
Adraſtus throughout his lond hath ſent,
For his lords and his Baronage,
To be preſent at the mariage
Of the knights, and make no letting,
And they eche one come at his bidding,
In goodly wiſe, meke and full benigne,
Ayein the day that he did aſſigne,

And

And thidze come full many a luſty knight,
Full wele beſein, and many a lady bzight,
From euery coſte and many a freſh ſquier,
The ſtozy ſeith and many a communer,
To behold the great rialte,
And the manere of this ſolempnite,
But to tell all the circumſtaunces,
Of iuſt reuel, and the diuers daunces,
The feaſts riche, and the yeftes great,
The peinfull ſighes and the feruent heat,
Of loues folke, bzenning as the glede,
And deuiſe of many a ſolein wede,
The touches ſtole, and the amozous lokes,
By ſotell craft leide out lines and hokes,
The ſelous folke to traien and begile,
In their awaites with many a ſondzy wile,
All this in ſoth deſcriuen I ne can,
But wele I, the newe fame ranne,
This meane while with ſome ſwift paſſage,
Unto the Thebes, of this marriage,
And be repozt trew and not fained,
Tho when thereof the eares hath attained,
Mine Auctour wzit of Ethiocles,
Touching the honour, and the great encres,
Of Polimite highly magnified,
And that he newly was allied,
With Adzaſtus in the lond of Arge,
The which thing he greatly gan to charge,
Dzeading inly, that this Marriage
Shall after time turne to his dammage,
Soze muſing, and caſting vp and doun
The great power and the high renoun
Of Adzaſtus, the which of Greeks lond
Had all the power ſoget to his hond,
Leaſt that he foz Polimites ſake,
Would vpon him a new warre make,
But if that he like the conuentioun,
At time ſet deliuer vp the toun
To his bzother, by bond of oth ſwozne,
And by couenaunt aſſured here tofozne,
If ye remember, late as I you told,
Which he was in purpoſe foz to hold,
But foz his beſt, caſt him foz to vary,
And thereupon liſt no lenger tary,
Liche his deſires to ſhape remedies,
And firſt he ſent foz his next allies,
In whom he had his moſt affiaunce,
Foz his lozds, that had gouernaunce
Of his kingdome, to come to him anon,
And when they weren preſent euerichon,
He ſaid plainly wening foz the beſt,
That his hert ſhall neuer be in reſt,
But in ſozrow and in a maner of dzead,
Till his bzother vtterly be dead,
That he in Thebes in his roiall ſete,
Might alone reigne in quiete,
He meant himſelfe, ſhozily and none other,
Unpertourbed of Polimite his bzother,
And at his counſeil diuerſe of entent,
I find wzitten thze folkes were preſent,
Some in ſoth that faithfull were and trew,
And ſome alſo that can change of new,
And other eke that betwene tweine,
Couertly could vndze colour feine.

Commendation of trouth.

The firſt ſeid, aboue all thing,
Trouth ſhould long vnto a king,
Of his wozde not be variable,
But plein & hool, as a contre ſtable.

How trouth is preferred in the booke of Eſdre aforne Kings, women, and wine.

Foz trouth firſt without any wene,
Is chief piller that may a king ſuſteine,
In ioy and honour foz to lede his life,
Foz trouth ſometime had a pzerogatife,
As of Eſdze, the booke can ſpecifie,
Recozd I take of pzudent Neemie,
That wozthy kings foz all her great pzide,
Wine, and woman, been eke ſet aſide,
With all power and dominacion,
Hauing reward in compariſon,
To trouths might, and trouths wozthineſſe,
Foz as Eſdze pleinly doth expzeſſe,
Who ſo taketh hede in the ſame place,
The influence ſothly and the grace,
Of trouth alone this old Neemie,
Gat him licence to redifie
The walles newe of Hieruſalem,
Which is treaſure chief of euery Realme,
Foz Salomon wzite, how ỹ things tweine,
Trouth, and mercy, linked in a cheine

Trouth and mercy preſerue a king from all aduerſitie.

Pzeſerue a king, like to his degree,
From al miſchiefe and al aduerſitee:
Alas therefoze that any doubleneſſe,
Variaunce, oz elles vnſtikerneſſe,

Chaunge nor doubleneſſe ſhould not be in a King.

Change of wozd oz mutabilite,
Fraud oz diſceite, oz inſtabilite,
Should in a king haue domination,
To cauſen after his deſtruction.
Of kings redeth the ſtozie doun by rowe,
And ſeeth how many haue ben ouertrowe,
Thzough her falſhod, from foztunes whele,
Foz vnto God, it pleaſeth neuer adele,

A king to be double of entent,
For it may happe that the world is went,
Ful oft ſith, by ſleight of her werking.
But thus the truth God ſeeth in euery thing,
Right as it is, for there may be no cloude
Tofore his ſight, trouth for to ſhroude,
It may be clipſed and derked by deceipt,
By falſe engine ligging in aweite,
As a ſerpent for to vndermine.
But at laſt it will cleerly ſhine,
Who ſ faith nay, & ſhew his bright beames,
For it in ſoth of kingdomes and of realmes,
Is bearer vp and conſeruatrice,
From al miſchief and ſothfaſt mediatrice,
To God aboue who ſo liſt to ſe,
To keepe a king in proſperite,
On euery ſide as I afferme dar,
For which ye kings & lords beeth wele war,
Your beheſts iuſtly for to hold,
And thinketh how Thebes, with his walles
Deſtroied was platly this is no les. (old,
For the doubleneſſe of Ethiocles,
That with his people ſore after bought,
Onely for that he nat by conſeil wrought,
Of hem that were both trew and wiſe,
Him liſt not werke by her auiſe,
But left trouth, and ſet his fantaſie,
To be gouerned by falſe flatterie.

The counſell of falſe flatterers.

That bad him thinke how he was a knight,
And to hold of force more than of right,
During his life the lordſhip of the toun,
And not to leſe his poſſeſſion,
For no bonde nor heſtes made tofore,
But let his brother blowe in an horne
Where that him liſt, or pipe in a rede:
This was the counſeil platly and the rede,
Of ſoch as liſt not to ſay the ſoth,
But falſly flatre, with her words ſmoth.
And whan they hadde holle her tale fined,
Ethiocles fully is enclined,
Whoſoeuer therat laugh or weepe,
Like her counſeil, poſſeſſion to keepe,
who that ſaith nay, or grutcheth there ayein,
Hym to contraire, him thought was but vein.

How the yeere was come out that Ethiocles reigned in Thebes.

But in this wile that the sheene ſonne,
The xii. ſignes round about had ronne,
Sith Ethiocles by iuſt rekening,
In Thebes was crouned lord and king,
Holding the Sceptre and the Diademe,
That by reaſon as it would ſeeme,
The time was full complete and the ſpace
Of couenant he ſhould void his place,
And Polimite eke his iourney make,
Toward Thebes poſſeſſion to take,
Of due title but he had wrong,
Which thought in ſoth, ý yere was wonder long:
Of his exile or that it come about
And for he had in hert a maner of doubt,
Leaſt in his brother were falſehed found,
To acquite himſelfe like as he was bound,
To Adraſtus he gan declare his herte,
Beſeching him this matter to aduert,
And there vpon to yeue counſeil ſone,
Touching his right what was beſt to done,
Whether it were beſt to go or to abide,
Or like a knight, manly to ride,
Himſelf alone and make no meſſage,
For to chalenge his rightfull heritage,
Within Thebes either by pees or ſtrife,
And thereupon to ieoperd his life,
Thus was he ſet, for all his fers brother:
But Adraſtus ſothly thought another,
Bet was to ſend, than himſelf to gone,
Leſt he were trapped among his mortal fone,
Hauing his brother ſuſpect in this caas,
That by fraude or be ſome failas,
He would werke his deſtruction,
If he were hardy to entre into the toun,
For which he bad him prudently take heed,
Fully concluding how it were more ſpeed,
That ſome other be to Thebes ſent,
To perceiue fully thentent
Of Ethiolus inward by ſome ſigne,
And if that he his crowne will reſigne,
For thilke yeere like as he made his oth,
And whan he knew how his purpoſe goth,
Thereupon to werken and proceede,
And thus Adraſtus, wiſely gan him rede.

How Tideus tooke vpon him to doe the meſſage of Polimite his brother.

And while they treat vpon this mattere,
Tideus with a manly chere,
Saied vtterly for his brothers ſake,
This meſſage he would vndertake,
With whole thempriſe of thenbaſſiate,
Were it welefull or infortunate,
He will not ſpare whatſoeuer betide.
But Adraſtus, on that other ſide,
And Polimite in concluſion,
Were contraire to that opinion,
And ſaied ſoothly as hem thought right,
Sith that he was ſo well a proued knight,
And diſcended of ſo worthy blood,
That they nold for none yearthly good,
For all Thebes with the regalty,
Put his body in ſuch ieopardy:
But al this thing auaileth him right nought,

For

For he will forth, how deare that it be bought,
Taking leaue firſt of all the eſtates,
And armed him in maile, and ſure plates,
And ſhope him forth vpon his iournie,
Who made then ſorrow, but Deiphile.

The ſorrow of Deiphile, when Tideus went toward Thebes the citie.

With bitter teares dewed all her face,
Full oft ſithes, ſwouning in the place,
Triſt and mourning in her blacke wede:
And when ſhe ſaw that he tooke his ſtede,
So inwardly encreaſe gan her mone,
Seeing her lord ſo riding forth alone
Upon his way, this worthy Tideus:
And in all haſt, the ſtory telleth vs,
He ſpeedeth him ſo, making no delaies,
That in the ſpace of few daies
The high toures of Thebes he gan ſee,
And entred is into that citee,
Wiſely enquiring where the pallaice ſtode,
And like a knight thider ſtreight he rode,
Marked full well in many a mans ſight,
Like Mars himſelfe, in ſtele armed bright,
Till he attained hath the cheefe dongeon,
Where as the king held his manſion,
And throgh the palaice with a knightly looke,
Into the hall the right way he tooke,
From his ſtede, when he light adoun,
Not aferde, but hardie as Lioun,
Where as the king, with lords a great rout,
In the hall ſitting round about,
He entred in, moſt manfull of courage,
To execute the fine of his meſſage,
And as him thought, conuenient and due,
Full cunningly he gan the king ſalue,
Requiring him of kingly excellence,
In goodly wiſe to yeue him audience,
And not diſdaine, neither in port ne chere,
Sith he was come as a meſſangere,
From Polimite his owne brother dere,
Ginning his tale thus as ye ſhall here.

How wiſely and how knightly Tideus did his meſſage.

QUod he, vnto your worthineſſe
My purpoſe is breefly to expreſſe
The effect holly, as in ſentement,
Of the meſſage, why that I am ſent,
It were long proceſſe to make.
But of my mattere the very ground to take,
In eſchuing of prolixitie,
And void away all ſuperfluitie,
Sith your ſelfe beſt ought to vnderſtond
The cauſe fully, that we haue on hond,
And eke conceiue the entent of my meaning,
Of rightwiſeneſſe longing to a king:
Firſt conſidered, if that ye take hede,
When Edippus the old king was dede,
How that your ſelfe, and your brother blinde,
For the crowne contagiouſly gan ſtriue,
As mortall foen, by full great hatrede,
Which of you two ſhould firſt ſucceede,
Till that ye were by meanes reconciled,
Ye to reigne, and he to been exiled
Out of this toune for a yeares ſpace,
And then ayeine reſort into his place,
To reigne as king, and ye to bowen out,
So as your tourne by proceſſe cõmeth about,
Eueriche of you patiently tendure
The entrechaunging of his auenture,
Who were put out, or ſtood in his eſtate,
Thereupon to make no debate,
Liche the couenaunt and conuentioun,
Enrolled vp by lords of the toun,
Which of reaſon may not be denied,
Sithen ye haue a yeare occupied:

The requeſt that Tideus made in the name of Polimite, vnder the title of convention.

Polimite requireth you of right,
To acquite you as a true knight,
In eſchuing of mortall warre and ſtrife,
Sith ye had a prerogatife,
As eldeſt brother, for to reigne afore,
And thinketh how that ye arne ſworne
Your oth to keepe, and make no tarrying,
Holly aduerting, liche a prudent king,
That trouth is more in compariſon,
Than all the treaſour of your region,
More acceptable vnto God and man,
Than all the richeſſe that ye reken can,
Wherefore in haſt, and let there be no ſlouth,
Quiteth your ſelfe iuſtely in your trouth
Unto your brother, auoiding this citee,
And let him reigne in his royall ſee,
The crowne of Thebes a yeare to occupie,
Then will all Greece praiſe and magnifie
Your high renoun, and may ſay none other,
But ye acquite you iuſtly to your brother:
This whole theffect of all that I will ſain,
Anſwer expectant what ye will ſend ayain.
When Tideus had told his tale,
Ethiocles triſte and wonder pale,
His conceit firſt in maner hath refreined,
Diſſimuling vnder colour feined,
Shewing a chere in maner debonaire,
To his intent wonderly contraire,
Inward in hart, wood and furious,
Tourning his face towards Tideus,
He gan abreid and at laſt out ſpake,
And euen thus vnto him he ſpake.

The anſwere of King Ethiocles.

I haue great maruelle (qd. he) in my thought,
Of the meſſage which that thou haſt brought,
That my brother, as thou haſt expouned,
Deſireth ſo in Thebes to be crowned,
Hauing regard to the abundaunce,
The great plenty, and the ſuffiſaunce,
That he hath now with the king of Arge,
That me ſeemeth he ſhould little charge
To haue Lordſhip or dominioun
In the bounds of this little toun,
Sith he reigneth ſo freſhly in his flours,
Surmounting all his predeceſſours,
By new encreaſe, through fortunes might:
Wherfore in heart I am right glad and light,
Fully truſting, if I had nede,
To his helpe, that without drede,
Like a brother, that I ſhould him find
To me ward faithfull, true, and kind,
Suppoſing plainely euermore,
Of this reigne he ſet but little ſtore,
Nor caſteth him not for ſo ſhort a while,
As for a yeare his brother to exile,
To liue in pouertie, and in great diſtreſſe,
He will not ſuffer it of his high nobleſſe,
It were no token of no brotherhede,
But a ſigne rather of hatrede,
To interrupt my poſſeſſion
Of this little poore Region.
All that he ſpake, who ſo could aduart,
Of very ſcorne rooted in his hart,
As hem ſeempt, the ſtory can you teach,
By the ſurplus ſoothly of his ſpeach,
He might no lenger him reſtreine,
But plainely ſaied, as betwene vs twene,
I meane thus, Polimite and me,
There is no bond nor ſurete,
Ne faith ymade, that may him auaile,
As he claimeth, to yeue the gouernaile
Of this citie, neither yeare ne day,
For I ſhall let him, ſoothly if I may,
That he ſhall not by title of his bond,
Reioyce in Thebes halfe a foot of lond,
Let him keepe that he hath wonne,
For I purpoſe, as I haue begonne,
To reigne in Thebes henceforth all my liue,
Maugre all hem that thereayen ſtriue,
And in deſpite of his friends all,
Or the counſaile that him liſt to call,
Let him be ſure, and know this right wele,
His manacing I drede neuer a dele,
And likerly, as to my deuiſe,
It ſheweth well that thou art not wiſe,
But ſuppreſſed with a mancre of rage,
To take on thee this ſurquedous meſſage,
And preſumeſt to doe ſo high offence,
So boldely to ſpeake in my preſence,
But all in fere, auaile ſhall right nought,
For the tithings that thou haſt brought,
Shall vnto him be diſencreace,
He better were to haue been in peace,
Than of folly and preſumption,
Ayenſt me to ſeech occaſion,
For I liue, and thereto here mine hond,
As I ſaied erſt, he winneth here no lond,
While the wall of this toune may ſtond,
For plainely I doe thee to vnderſtond,
That they ſhall firſt be beat down full low,
And all the toures to the earth ythrow,
Ere he in Thebes haue any thing ado,
Lo here is all, retourne and ſay him ſo.

When Tideus ſaw the feruent ire
Of the king, with anger ſet on fire,
Full of deſpite, and of Melancolie,
Conceiuing eke the great fellonie
In his appoint, like as he were wood,
This worthy knight a little while ſtood
Sad and demure, ere he would ought ſeine,
But at laſt thus he ſaied ayeine.

The knightly anſwere that Tideus yaue ayeine to the King.

Certes (qd. he) I conceiue of new,
About thee thy counſaile is vntrew,
I dare it ſaine, and vow it at beſt,
Ne thou art not faithfull of thy beheſt,
Stable of thy word ẏ thou haſt ſaid toforne,
But deceiuable, and falſely eke forſworne,
And eke periurate of thine aſſured oth:
But whether ſo be that thou be leke or wroth,
I ſay thee ſhortly, hold it for no fage,
All this ſhall tourne vnto thy damage,
Triſt it well, and in full cruell wiſe
All Greekes lond ſhall vpon thee ariſe,
To be auenged, and manly to redreſſe
The great vntrouth and the high falſenеſſe
Which ẏ thou haſt ayen thy brother wrought,
It ſhall full deare after this be bought,
And verily indeed, as thou ſhalt lere,
King Adraſtus will meddle in this matere,
And all the Lords about him enuiron,
That bounden be to his ſubiection,
Princes, Dukes, and many a noble knight,
In ſuſteining of thy brothers right,
Shall on a day with ſpere and with ſhield
Ayenſt thee be gadred in a field,
Knightly to preue all by one aſſent,
That thou art falſ, and double of entent,
Of thy promiſe atteint, and eke outraied,
And leue me well, it ſhall not be delaied,
But in all haſt execute in deede:
Like thy deſert, thou ſhalt haue thy meede,
For God aboue, and his rightwiſeneſſe,

Such

Such open wrong shall in hast redresse,
And of his might all such collusion
Reforme ayeine, and all extortion,
For this the fine, Falshood shall not baile,
Ayenst trouth in field to holden battaile,
Wrong is crooked, both halt and lame,
And here anone in my brothers name,
As I that am his next allie,
At his querele, shortly I defie,
Fully auised, with all mine hole entent,
And ye Lords, that been here present,
I you require of your worthinesse,
To say trouth, and beare witnesse
When time commeth, and iustly to record,
How your king falsely gan discord
From his best, of false variaunce,
And thinke on, how ye of faith and ligeaunce
Are bound echone, ye may not go therefro,
For to obey and serue both two
This next yeare, now anon following,
As to your lord, and to your true king
Polimite, though he be now absent,
By iust accord made in Parliament,
At your deuise, which sitten here a row,
Engrossed was vp, as it is well know,
And enrolled onely for witnesse
In your Registers, to void all falsenesse,
That none of you vary may of new
From that I say, but if he be vntrew,
For which I rede your selfe to acquite,
Let no time lenger lie in respite,
But at ones, without more tarrying,
Of manly force fet home your king,
Maugre your fone, like as ye are bound,
And let in you no slouth be found,
To put him iustly in possession,
This is my counsaile, in conclusion.

How manly Tideus departed from the King.

When Tideus had his message saied,
Like to the charge that was on him laied,
As he that list no lenger there soiourne,
Fro the king he gan his face tourne,
Not astonied, nor in his heart aferde,
But full proudely layed hond on his swerde,
And in dispite, who was leke or loth,
A sterne pace through the hall he goth
Through the court, and manly toke his stede,
And out of Thebes fast gan him spede,
Enhasting him, till he was at large,
And sped him forth toward the lond of Arge.
Thus leaue I him riding forth a while,
Whiles that I retourne ayeine my stile
Unto the king, which in the hall stood
Emong his lords, furious and wood,
And his heart wroth, and euill apaied,
Of the words that Tideus had saied;
Specially hauing remembrance
On the proud dispitous defiance,
Whiles that he sat in his royall See,
Upon which he would auenged bee
Full cruelly, what that euer befall,
And in his ire he gan to him call
Theefe Constable of his Chiualrie,
Charging him fast for to hie,
With all the worthy choise of his household,
Such as he knew most manfull and bold,
In all hast Tideus for to sue,
To forre or he out of his lond remue,
Up peine of life, and leting of her head,
Without mercy anon that he be dead.

How falsely Ethiocles laied an ambushment in the way, to haue slaine Tideus in his repaire.

And of knights fifty were in number,
Mine author saith, vnwarely him to comber,
Armed echone in maile and thicke stele,
And there with hall yhorsed wonder wele,
At a posterne forth they gonne to ride,
By a gein path, that lay out aside,
Secretly, that no man hem aspie,
Onely of treason, and of fellonie,
They hast hem forth all the long day,
Of cruell mallice for to stop his way,
Through a forrest, all of one assent,
Full couertly for to lay a bushment
Under an hill, at a strait passage,
To fallen on him at more auauntage,
The same way that Tideus gan draw,
At thilke mount where ỳ Sphinx was slaw,
He nothing ware, in his opinion,
Of the compassed conspiration,
But innocent, like a gentle knight,
Rode aye forth, till it drow to night,
Sole by himselfe, without companie,
Hauing no man him to wise or gie,
But at last, liking vp his hede,
Toward eue he gan to take hede,
Wid of his way, right as any line,
Thought he saw ayenst the Moone shine
Shields fresh, and plates burned bright,
The which enuiron, cast a great light,
Imagining in his fantasie,
There was treason or conspiracie,
Wrought by the king, his iourney for to lette,
And of all that he nothing sette,
But well allured in his manly hart,
List not ones aside to diuart,
But kept his way, his shield vpon his brest,
And cast his spere manly in the rest:

How

How worthie Tideus outraied fiftie knights, lying in await for to ſlaen him.

And the firſt platly that he mette,
Thꝛough the body ꝓudly he him ſmette,
That he fell dead, cheefe maiſter of hem all,
And then at ones they vpon him fall,
On euery paas, by compaſſe enuiron,
But Tideus thꝛough his high renoun,
His bloody ſwerde let about him glide,
He ſleeth and killeth vpon euery ſide,
In his ire and his moꝛtall tene,
That meruell it was how he might ſo ſuſtene
Ayenſt hem all, on euery halfe beſet,
But his ſwerde was ſo ſharpe whet,
That his fomen found it full vnſoot,
But he alas was made light on foot,
By foꝛce grounded in full great diſtreſſe,
But of knighthood and of high ꝓoweſſe
Up he roſe, maugre all his foe,
And as they came, he ſlough hem one by one,
Like a Lion rampant in his rage,
And on this hill he found a narrow paſſage,
Which that he tooke, of full high ꝓudence,
And liche a Boꝛe, ſtanding at his defence,
As his fomen ꝓoudely him aſſaile,
Upon the plein her blood he made to raile,
All enuiron, that the ſoile waxe redde,
Now here, now there, as they fellen dedde,
That here lay one, and there lay two oꝛ thꝛee,
So mercileſſe in his crueltee
Thilke day he was vpon hem found,
And at ones his enemy did confound,
Where as he ſtood, this mightie champion,
Beſide he ſaw, with water tourned doun,
An huge ſtone, large, round, and ſquare,
And ſodainly ere that they were ware,
As it had lien there foꝛ the nones,
Upon his foen he rolled it at ones,
That ten of hem wenten vnto wꝛacke,
And the remenaunt amaſed, dꝛew aback,
Foꝛ one by one they went to miſchance:
Thus finally he bꝛought to outrance
Hem euerychone, Tideus as blithe,
That none but one left of hem alithe,
Himſelfe yhurt, and ywounded kene,
Thꝛough his harneis bleeding on the grene,
The Theban knights in cõpas round about,
In the valley ſlaine all the whole rout,
Which pitouſly againe the Moone gape,
Foꝛ none of hem ſhoꝛtly might eſcape,
But dead echone, as they haue deſerued,
Saue one except, the which was reſerued
By Tideus, of this entention,
To the king to make relation,
How his knights haue on her iourney ſped,
Euerich of hem his life left foꝛ a wed,
And at meeting how they haue hem boꝛne,
To tellen all, he allured was and ſwoꝛne
To Tideus, full lowly on his knee,
By which enſample openly ye may ſee,

How trouth with little multitude hath euer in the fine, victorie of falſhood.

Ayens trouth falſhood hath no might,
Figh on quereis, not grounded vpon right,
Without which may be no victoꝛie,
Foꝛ euery man, haue this in memoꝛie,
That great power, ſhoꝛtly to conclude,
Plentie of good, oꝛ great multitude,
Sleight, oꝛ engine, foꝛce, oꝛ fellonie,
Arne too feeble to hold a champartie
Ayenſt trouth, who that liſt take heed,
Foꝛ at end falſhood may not ſpeed
Endure long, ye ſhall find it thus,
Recoꝛd I take of woꝛthy Tideus,
That arted his hond thꝛogh trothe excellẽce,
Fiftie knights ſlough in his defence,
But one except, as I late told,
Swoꝛne and aſſured, with his hand vphold,
The king tenfoꝛme how they were attaint:
And Tideus of bleeding was wonder faint,
Mate and weary, and in great diſtreſſe,
And ouerlaied of very feebleneſſe,
But as he might tho himſelfe ſuſtene,
He tooke his hoꝛſe ſtanding on the grene,
Woꝛthed vp, and foꝛth he gan to ride
An caſtie paas, with his wounds wide,
And ſoothly yet, in his opinion,
He was alway aferde of treaſon,
But anguiſhous and full of buſie peine,
He rode him foꝛth, till he did atteine
Into the bounds of Ligurgus lond,
A woꝛthy king, and manly of his hond,

How Tideus all to wounded, came into Ligurgus lond.

And he full pale onely foꝛ lacke of blood,
Tideus ſaw where a Caſtle ſtood,
Strong and mightie, built vpon a roche,
Toward which faſt he gan appꝛoche,
Conueighed thider by clearneſſe of the ſtone,
That by night, ayens the Moone ſhone,
On high toures, with creſtes Marciall,
And ioyning almoſt to the wall,
Was a gardein, little out beſide,
Into which Tideus gan to ride
Of aduenture, by a gate ſmall,
And there he found, foꝛ to reken all,
A luſtie Erber, vnto his deuiſe,
Sweet and freſh, like a Paradiſe,
Very heauenly of inſpection,

And

And firſt of all he alight adoun,
The goodly place when that he beheld,
And from his necke he voided hath his ſheld,
Drew the bridle from his horſe hede,
Let him go, and tooke no manner hede,
Through the garden that encloſed was,
Him to paſture on the ſoot gras,
And Tideus more heauy than is Ledde,
Upon the herbes greene, white, and redde,
As him thought that time for the beſt,
He laied him downe for to take his reſt,
Of wearineſſe, deſirous to ſleepe,
And none await his body for to keepe,
And with dreames grudged euer emong,
There he lay till the Larke ſong
With notes new, high vp in the aire,
The glad morrow rodie and right faire,
Phebus alſo caſting vp his beames,
The high hils gilt with his ſtreames,
The liuer dew vpon the herbes round,
There Tideus lay vpon the cold ground,
At vpriſt of the ſhene Sunne,
And ſtoundmeale his greene wounds runne
Round about, that the ſoile depeint
Was of the greene with the red meint.

How Ligurgus doughter found Tideus ſleeping in the herber, all for-wounded.

And euery morrow, for holeſomnes of aire,
Ligurgus doughter did make her repaire
Of cuſtome aye emong the floures new
In the garden of many a diuers hew,
Such ioy had ſhe for to take hede,
On her ſtalkes for to ſeene hem ſprede,
In the alures walking to and fro:
And when ſhe had a little while go,
Her ſelfe alone caſting vp her ſight,
She beheld where an armed knight
Lay to reſt him on the herbes cold,
And him beſide ſhe gan eke behold
His mighty ſtede walking here and there,
And ſhe anon fell in a manner fere,
Specially when ſhe ſaw the blood
Spread on the greene, about there ſhe ſtood,
But at laſt ſhe caught hardineſſe,
And womanly gan her for to dreſſe
Toward the knight, hauing a manner drede,
And great doubt leaſt that he were dede:
And of her will ſoothly this was chiefe,
That ſhe thought for to make a priefe,
How that it ſtood of this man full oft,
And forth ſhe goeth, and toucheth him ſoft,
Where as he lay, with her hondes ſmale:
And with a face deadly bleike and pale,
Liche as a man adawed in a ſwough,
He vp ſtert, and his ſwerde drough,
Not fully out, but put it vp ayeine,
Anone as he hath the Lady ſeine,
Beſeeching her onely of her grace,
To haue pitie on his treſpace,
And rew on him of her womanhede,
For of a frad he was fall in drede,
Leaſt he had been aſſayled of new
Of the Thebanes, preued full vntrue,
For drede of which he was ſo rechleſs,
Full humbly him yeelding to the pees,
Trift in himſelfe, þ he paſſed had his bounds.
And when that ſhe ſaw his mortall wounds,
She had routh, of very gentilleſſe,
Of his diſeaſe and his diſtreſſe,
And bad he ſhould be nothing diſmaied,
Nor in heart ſorrifull nor affraied,
Diſcomfort him in no manner thing,
For I (qd. ſhe) am doughter to the king
Called Ligurge, which greatly me delite
Euery morrow this garden to viſite,
It is to me ſo paſſingly diſport,
Where fore (qd. ſhe) beth of good comfort:

How womanly the Ladie acquitte her to Tideus in his diſeaſe.

For no wight here touching your voyage,
Shall hinder you, ne doe you no damage,
And if ye liſt of all your auenture
The plaine trouth vnto me diſcure,
I will in ſooth doe my buſineſſe,
To reforme your greeuous heauineſſe,
With all my might, and whole my diligence,
That I hope of your great offence,
Ye ſhall haue helpe in your aduerſite,
And as ferrefoorth as it lieth in me,
Truſteth right well, ye ſhall no faut find:
And when he ſaw that ſhe was ſo kind,
So womanly, ſo goodly and benigne,
In all her port by many a diuers ſigne,
He vnto her by order will not ſpare,
His auentures fully to declare
In Thebes firſt touching his meſſage,
And at hill of the woodie rage,
Of his wounds and of his hurts ſore,
It were but vaine to rehearſe it more,
By and by he told it euerydele,
The which in ſooth ſhe liked neuer adele,
But had routh and compaſſion
Of his miſcheefe, wrought by falſe treaſon,
Riding in haſt, that he ſhould her ſue,
And womanly, as her thought due,
To a chamber ſhe led him vp aloft,
Full well beſeene, there in a bed right ſoft,
Richly abouten apparrailed,
With cloth of gold all the floure trailed
Of the ſame, both in length and drede,
And firſt this Lady, of her womanhede,

Her

Her women did bid, as goodly as they can,
To be attendant vnto this wounded man,
And when he was vnarmed to his ſhert,
She made firſt waſh his wounds ſmert,

How Tideus was refreſhed in the Caſtle of the Ladie.

And ſerch hem well with diuers inſtruments,
And made ſette ſundrie ointments,
And Leeches eke, the beſt ſhe coud find,
Full craftely to ſtaunch him and to bind:
And euery thing that may doen him eaſe,
To ſuage his peine, or his wo tapeaſe,
Was in the Court and in the Caſtle ſought,
And by her bidding to her chamber wrought,
And for his ſake, ſhe hath after ſent
For ſuch deintes, as were conuenient,
Moſt nutritife by Philickes lore,
Hem that were ſeke or wounded, to reſtore,
Making her women eke to taken keepe,
And await on him on nights when he ſleepe,
And be well ware, that nothing aſtart,
That was or might be luſtie to his hart.
And with all this, ſhe prayed him abide,
Till he were ſtrong and mighty for to ride,
In the Caſtle to play him and diſport,
And at leiſer home ayeine reſort,
When he might by welde him at his large,
But all for nought he will home to Arge,
Tooke his leaue on the next day,
Without abode to haſt him on his way,
Lowly thanking vnto het goodneſſe,
Of her freedome and bounteous largeſſe,
So womanly that her liſt take heed,
Him to refreſh in his great need,
Behoting her with all his full might,
He would be her ſeruant and her true knight
While he liueth, of what ſhe will him charge,
And forth he rode till he come to Arge,

How Tideus repeired is home to Arge.

In full great haſt, and would no where dwell,
But what ſhould I rehearſe, either tell,
Of his repaire, the coaſts or the pleines,
The great roches, or the high mountaines,
Or all the manere of his home comming,
Of the meeting, nor the welcomming,
Nor the ioy that Adraſtus made,
Nor how his ſuſter or his wife were glade,
Nor how that they, whereto ſhould I write,
Enbraced him in her armes white,
Nor the gadering about him, or the prees,
Nor the ſorrow that Polimites
Made in himſelfe to ſee him ſore wounded,
His greeuous hurts, his ſores eke vnſounded,
His deadly looke, and his face pale,
Of all this to ginne a new tale,
It were in ſooth a manner idleneſſe,
Nor how himſelfe in order did expreſſe,
First how that he in Thebes hath him borne,
Ne how the king falſely was forſworne,
Nor of thawait nor treaſon that he ſette,
When fiftie knights on the way him mette,
As ye haue heard all the manere how,
Without which my tale is long ynow:
But Adraſtus made men to ſeach
In euery coaſt for many a diuers Leach,
To come in haſt, and make no tarrying,
Upon a peine, by bidding of the king,
To doen her craft, that he were recured,
And of his force in euery part aſſured.
And they echone ſo her cunning ſhew,
That in ſpace of a dayes few
He was all whole made of his ſickneſſe,
There was tho ioy, & then was ther gladneſſe,
Throughout the court, & through al the town,
For euery man hath ſuch opinioun
In Tideus, for his gentilleſſe,
For his manhood, and his lowlineſſe,
That he was hold the moſt famous knight,
And beſt beloued in euery mannes ſight,
Throughout Greece in euery region.
But now muſt I make a digreſſion,
To tell ſhortly, as in ſentement,
Of thilke knight that Tideus hath ſent
Into Thebes, onely to declare
Of the great miſcheefe and the euill fare,
Unto the king, how it is befall,
The open trouth of his knights all,
How Tideus hath ſlaine hem euerychone,
That ſaue himſelfe, there eſcaped none,
Which was reſerued frō ſhedding of his blood,
The king to tell plainely how it ſtood:
And when he had rehearſed euery poynt,
Ethiocles ſtood in ſuch diſioynt,

How Ethiocles ſore was aſtonied, when he heard the death of his knights.

Of hatefull ire he wext nigh wood,
And in his teene and in his fell mood,
Of cruell malice to the knight he ſpake,
And felly ſeid, that it was for lacke
Only of manhode, & through her cowardiſe,
That they were ſlaine in ſo mortall wiſe,
And hanged be he high by the necke,
That of your death or of your ſlaughter recke,
Or you compleine, eyther one or all,
Of the miſcheefe that is you befall,
I doe no force that none of you aſtert,
But ſigh vpon your falſe coward hert,
That o knight hath through his renoun
Brought you all to confuſioun,
Full graceleſſe and full vnhappy to:

Nay(qd.this knight)it is nothing so.
It is thine vnhap plainly,and not ours,
That so many worthy warriours,
Which all her life neuer had shame,
Except this querele,taken in thy name,
That grounded was,and rooted on falsenesse,
This was cause in very soothnesse,
Of our vnhap,I wot wele,and none other,
With thine vntrouth done vnto thy brother,
And that thou were so openly forsworne,
And percell cause,why that we were lorne,
Was fals breaking of thine assured oth,
And tho the king,mad almost for wroth,
In purpose was for to slea this knight,
Onely for he said vnto him right,
The which alas,both at eue and morrow,
Suppressed was with a deadly sorrow,
Renning aye in his remembraunce,
With the pitous and vnhappie chaunce
Of the great mischeefe and misauenture,
Touching the death and discomfiture
Of his fieres,and of himselfe also,
That the shamefast importable wo
So was on him,with such a mortall strife,
That he was weary of his owne life,
Hent he hath a sword,and aside start,
And rone himselfe euen to the hart,
The king himselfe being tho present:
And the rumour and the noise is went
Through Thebes,of the wood rage,
By such as weren ioyned by linage
To the knights,slaine at hill,
That all at ones of one heart and will,
They wold haue arisen throughout the Citie,
Upon the king auenged for to be,
Which of her death was cheefe occasioun:
But the Barons and Lords of the toun
Ful busie were this rumour and disease,
Of high prudence,to stint and appease,
In quiete euery thing to sette:
And after that,the bodies home they fette
Of the knights,like as ye haue herd
Afore yslaine,with the bloodie sword
Of Tideus,full sharpe whet and ground,
And in the field,so as they hem found,
Onely of loue,and of affectioun,
Solemnely they brought hem to the toun,
And like the manere of the rites old,
They were first brent into ashes cold,
And each one yburied,like to his degre,
Lo here the kalends of aduersite,
Sorrow vpon sorrow,and destruction,
First of the king,and all the region,
For lacke onely,like as I you told,
That behests truly were not hold:
The first ground and root of this ruine,
As the story clearely shall determine,
And my tale hereafter shall you lere,
If that you list the remnaunt for to here.

Finitur pars Secunda, Sequitur pars Tertia.

Cruell Mars,full of Melancolie,
And of thy kind,hote,combust,and drie,
As the sparkles shewen from so ferre,
By the streames of the red sterre,
In thy Sphere as it about goth,
What was cause that thou were so wroth
With hem of Thebes,through whos feruēt ire
The Citie brent,and was set on fire,
As bookes old well rehearse conne,
Of cruell hate,rooted and begonne,
And engendred,the story maketh mind,
Onely of blood corrupt and vnkind,
By infection,called originall,
Causing a strife dredefull and mortall,
Of which the mischeef through al Grece ran,
And king Adrastus alderfirst began,
Which hath him cast a conquest for to make
Upon Thebes,for Polimites sake,
In knightly wise there to preue his might,
Of full entent to recure his right.
And first of all he sette a Parlement,
And hath his letters and messengers sent
Through Greece,to many sundry kings,
Hem to enhast,and make no lettings,
And round about,as made is mention,
He sent also to many a region
For Princes,Dukes,Earles,and Barons,
To taken vp in cities and in tounes,
And to chesen out the most likelyest,
And such as weren preued for the best,
As of manhood,and send hem vp ech one,
And in her hond receiue her pay anone,
With Adrastus to Thebes for to ride,
And tho lords that with him abide

The great purueyaunce of King Adrastus toward the Citie of Thebes.

In houshold still,haue her leaue take
To riden home,her retourne to make
In her countries,as they were of degre,
To sustene hem,to take vp meine,
And to make hē strōg with knights & squeres,
With speres,bows,and arbalasteres,
In all the hast possible that they may,
And to returne in her best array,

At tearme set, full manly to be seine
Tofore Arge moustren in a pleine:

The Kings and Princes that come to Adrastus.

And as I rede full worthy of degre,
Thider come first Prothonolope,
The which was by record of writing,
Of Archade, sonne vnto the king,
And full prudent found in warre and pees:
There came also the king Gilmichenes,
As I find, full famous of renoun,
Thider come eke the king Ipomedoun:
And passing all of knighthood and of name,
And excelling by worthinesse of fame
The noble king, called Campaneus,
Came eke to Arge, the story telleth thus,
Proued full wele, and had riden fer:
And thider come the king Meleager,
King Genor eke, that held his royall fee,
Mine author saith, in the lond of Greece:
King Locris, and king Pirrus,
And eke the king called Tortolonus,
And renouned in many a region,
There come the king called Palenon,
Oft assayed, and found a manly knight,
That with him broght in stele armed bright,
Full many worthy out of his countre.
And Tideus most knightly for to see,
That noble man, that worthy werriour,
As he that was of worthinesse the flour,
Master and Mirrour by prowes of his hond,
Hath sent also into the mightie lond
Of Calcedoine, of which he was heire,
That is his kindome, both rich and feire,
Charging his counsaile and officers also,
In all the hast that it may be do,
To seeken out the best werriours
Of famous knights and proued souldeours
Throgh al the lond, & leid on hem this charge
Without abode for to come to Arge:
And they obey full lowly his bidding,
Enhasting hem, and made no letting,
But sped hem fast vpon her iournie.
And from Thebes the mighty strong citie,
Came doun knights, with many another mã,
Maugre the king, to helpe what they can,
Considred first his falshood and treason,
Ymeued onely of trouth and of reason,
Polimites, as they were swore of yore,
To his Crowne iustly him restore:
And when they were at large out of the toun,
Unto Arge they be descended doun,
And like her oth, and her assurance,
As they were bound only of ligeance,
To him they come in full lowly wise,
Lowly to doen what him list deuise.
And when he had her trouth full conceiued,
He hath to grace goodly hem receiued,
Assigning hem her place amid the hoast,
Assembled there, from many a diuerse coast:
That finally, in this companie
Ygadred was the floure of Chevalrie,
Ychosen out of all Greekes lond,
The most knightly and manfull of her hond,
That as I trow, sith the world began,
There was not seene so many a manly man,
So wele horsed with spere and with shield,
Togider semebled soothly in a field:
There men might see many straunge guises
Of arming new, and vncouth deuises,
Euery man after his fantasie,
That if I should in order specifie,
Euery peece longing to armure,
And thereupon doe my busie cure,
It were in sooth almost a dayes werke,
And the tearmes also been so derke,
To rehearse hem clearely, and to rime,
I passe ouer for lacke of time,
And tell I will forth of her lodging,
How Adrastus the noble worthy king,
Hath euery lord like to his degree,
Received wele within the citee,
And there they had like to her pleasaunce,
Of what needeth fulsome habundance,
For men and horse plenty of vitaile,
Commaunding that nothing ne faile,
That all these noble worthy werriours,
Both high and low and poore souldiours,
Yserued were of what they haue need,
For Adrastus presently tooke heed,

That it auaileth a King, to pay his people truely her sond.

Full lich a king, touching her tearme day,
That they tofore were serued to her pay,
He was so free he list nothing restraine,
And no man had cause to complaine,
For hunger, thrust, ne for indigence,
But all thing ready was vnto her presence:
And in a Prince it is ful great repriefe,
To suffer his people liue at mischiefe,
It is ful heauy and greuous in her thought,
If he habound and they haue right nought,
He may not both possede body and hart,
He to be rich and seene his people smart,
He may the body, of power wel constraine,
But her heart hath a full long raine,
Maugre his might, to louen at her large,
There may no king, on hearts set a charge,
Ne hem coarten from her libertee,
Men saine ful often how that thought is free,
For which ech prince, Lord, and gouernour,
And specially ech conquerour,
Let him beware for all his high nobleste,

That

That bountie, freedome, plentie, and largesse,
By one accord, that they his bridle lede,
Least of his people, when he hath most nede,
He be defrauded, when he is but alone,
Then is too late for to make his mone,
But in his Court let him first deuise
To exile Scarcehead and Couetise,
Then is likely with freedome if he ginne,
Loue of his people euermore to winne,
To reigne long in honour and contune,
Aye to encrease by fauour of Fortune,
And his enemies manly to oppresse,
For loue is more than great richesse.

How loue auaileth more to a king, than gold or richesse.

Gold faileth oft, but loue will abide,
For life or death by a lords side,
And the treasour shortly of a king
Stondeth in loue aboue all thing,
Farewell lordship both morrow and eue,
Specially when loue taketh his leue,
And who so list it Mirrour for to make
Of knightly freedome, let him ensample take
Of Adrastus, the manly king famous,
So liberall and so bounteous
Unto his people at all times found,
Which made him strong, his fomē to cōfound,
And loue only, his enemies to werrey,
All Greece made his bidding to obey,
Of one accord to knightly by his side,
All at ones to Thebes for to ride,
For vengence, sith they were so strong,
The great iniurie and importable wrong
Unto his sonne, and to his next allie,
As ye tofore haue heard me specifie.
But whiles Greekes rest a time in pees,
I will resort vnto Ethiocles,
Which in Thebes warely hath espied,
By his friends as he was certified
Of the Greekes wholly the ordinaunce,
Her purpose eke, and her purueyaunce,
And thereof had in heart a manner drede,
And first he tooke his counsaile and his rede

How Ethiocles made him strong ayenst the comming of the Greekes.

Of the Lords and Barons of the toun,
And of the wisest of his regioun,
How he might maken resistence,
Manly to stonden at defence,
To be so strong that there were no dout:
And in the countries adiacent about,
And eke also in forreine regions
He hath withhold all the champions,
And thereupon he sent out his espies,
And his friends, and his next allies,
And all the worthy, dwelling enuiroun,
Young, fresh, and lusty, he gadred to the toun,
Maskewed his wals and his toures,
And stuffed hem with manly souldeours,
Round about he set many gonnes,
Great and small, and some large as tonnes,
In his hastie passing feruent heat,
He spent his treasour, and yaue yefts great
Unto knights, and worthy men of name,
And euermore to encrease his fame,
He yaue to lords iewels manyfold,
Clothes of Ueluet, Damaske, and of gold,
To get him hearts, soothly as I rede,
To helpe him now in his great nede,
And prudently purueyed him tofore
Of flesh, of fish, of wine, and of corne,
Set his Captaines early and late
With full great stuffe stonding at euery gate,
And made also by werkemen that were trew,
Barbicans and Bulwerkes strong and new,
Barreres cheines, and ditches wonder deepe,
Making his auow the citie for to keepe,
While he liueth, despite of all his fone,
And by his gods of mettall and of stone,
Full oft he swore both of hert and thought,
That it shall first full deare ben yebought,
And many a man, with polax, sword, & knife,
Before this towne shall first lese his life,
And there shall eke many sides blede,
Ere that his brother possibly possede
The toun in pees, like as Greekes wene:
But at end the trouth it shall be sene,
Let him beware, and wele tofore prouide,
For Adrastus on that other side
For his partie was not negligent,
But on a day held his parlement,
All his lords sitting enuiron,
To driue shortely a pleine conclusion,
And vp tapoint the fine of her entent,
But some thought it full expedient,
Ere they procede, to werke by thauise
Of one that was full prudent and wise,
And circumspect in his werkes all,
A worthy Bishop into age fall,
And called was soothly by his name
Amphiorax, of whom the great fame,

How the Bishop Amphiorax was sent for to come vnto the Greekes.

Through all the lands, both East and South,
Among the Greekes passingly was couth,
A man in sooth of old antiquitie,
And most accept of authoritie,
First by reason of his high estate,
And eke he was so fortunate,
And in his werkes was also secre

With the gods, knowing her priuite,
By graunt of whom, as bookes specifie,
He had a spirit of trew prophecie,
And could afore full openly diuine
Things begon, how they should fine,
And eke by craft of calculation,
Neue a doome of euery question,
And had in Magike great experience,
And fine coud by heauenly influence,
And by meuing of the high sterres,
A finall doome of contcke and of werres,

The prophesie of Amphiorax the Bishop.

And wist well, as his gods told,
That if Greekes forth her iourney hold,
It tourne shall platly, this is no fage,
To great mischeefe and great damage
Of hem echone, and in especiall,
The most blood, right of the blood royall
Through all Greece, it may not be withdraw,
In this voyage shortly shall be slaw,
And of him, why the Greekes wente,
Who that euer wept him or bemente,
This is the fine, and may not be succoured,
Of the earth he should be deuoured
Quicke as he was, he knew it in certaine,
And for he saw there nas none other gaine,
To saue his life, nor no bette defence,
Than vtterly to withdraw his presence,
Praying his wife for him to prouide,
If he were sought, that she would him hide,
And womanly for to keepe him close,
And of trouth conceiling his purpose,
For all his trust, touching his greuaunce,
Was full set in her purueyaunce,
I hope to God, that he there not drede
Of no deceit, in her womanhede,
She was so true, as women been echone,
And also close and mute as a stone,
That she ne would, as the mill stood,
Discuren him for no worlds good.
But finally, the Greekes of entent,
In all his drede haue for this Bishop sent,

How the wife of Amphiorax, of conscience to saue her oth, discured her husband.

And soughten so long, ere they might him find,
For cause his wife was to him so kind,
That so surely hath locked vp his corps,
But for she had a manner remors
In her selfe, greuing her conscience,
Dreding to fall in great offence,
Least her soule were in perill lorne,
When she by oth compelled was and sworne,
They requiring, if she coud tell,
Where her lord the Bishop should dwell,
Which to discure, her heart was full loth,
Till time she gan remember on her oth,
And coud a trouth of custome nat deme,
And had also great conscience to lie,
Wonder heauy, with a sorrifull face,
Maugre her lust, taught hem to the place,
Where as he was shitte vp in a toure,
All alone, hauing no succour,
They fell on him, ere that he was ware,
And set him vp in a full rich chare.
A foole he was to ieoparde his life,
For to discure his counsaile to his wife,
And yet he was full sorry for his sake,
And specially when she saw him take:
But I hope that her heautnesse
Gan tasswage full soone by processe
In short time, when that he was gone,
There is no tempest may lest euer in one:
But this Bishop by very force and might
Unto Greekes conueyed was full right,
This hore grey in his chaire sitting,
And they full glad weren of his comming,
Hauing a trist and full opinion,
Through the cause and occasion
Of his wisedome and his sapience,
And by vertue of his high prescience,
They should eschue all aduersitie
Possible to fall, as in her iournie,
And as the story fully hath deuised,
Full circumspect, and right wele auised,
He hath pronounced in the parlement,
Before the Lords, and the President,
His cleare conceit in very sikernesse,
Not entriked with no doublenesse,
Her dismall dayes, and her fatall houres,
Her auentures, and her sharpe shoures,
The froward sort, and vnhappie stounds,
The complaint of her deadly wounds,
The wofull wrath and the contrariousnesse
Of fell Mars, and his crueltie,
And how by meane of his grey mood
There shall be shed all the worthy blood
Of the Greekes, it may not been eschued,
If her purpose be execute and sued,
There is no more, this shall be the fine,
The high noblesse shall draw to decline
Of Grekes blood, in mischeefe, sorrow, & wo,
And with all this, I my selfe also,
As my fate hath before disposed,
Deepe in the ground I shall be enclosed
And locked vp in the derke vale
Of cruell death: lo this was the tale
That the Bishop to Adrastus told,
Him counsailing his purpose to withhold,
In eschuing of more mischeefe and sorrow,
For all his gods he tooke to borrow,
If the Thebans and the Greekes meet,
The fine thereof shall be so vnsweet,

That

That all Greece after shall it rew,
warning hem, if they the mischeefe knew
That shall follow, which no man may lette,
They would abstaine a siege for to sette
Unto Thebes, and her purpose leue.
With whose wordes ỹ lords gan hem greue,
And therein had but full small delite,
And euerich of heartely high despite,
They abreide, and seid he was vntrew,
And a contreuer of prophecies new,
And eke also, for all his long berd,
An old dotard, a coward, and aferd,
And of rancour gonne to defie
Both his calcling and his Astronomie,
And shortely said, they tooke therof none hede,
He will no thing gouerne hem by his rede.
This was the clamour & noise in euery coast
Of high and low, throughout all the hoast,
And specially of the poore souldiours,
And of lords reigning in her flours,
And of the estates effectuelly I mene,
Which of age were but tender and grene,
That haue not had of Marces influence
Of the werre great experience.
Here if ye list ye may consider and see,
Of coueiting, great aduersitee,
How that youth no perill cast afore,
Till he in mischeefe suddainly be lore,
There as age prouideth euery thing,
Ere he begin to casten the ending.

How Age and Youth been of diuerse opinions.

Youth is gouerned by a large reine,
To stert forth, and can him not refreine,
But of head set on all at ones,
As he that hurteleth ayenst hard stones,
Broseth himselfe, and vnwarely perbraketh:
But Age expert, nothing vnderaketh,
But he tofore by good discretion
Make a due examination,
How it will tourne either to bad or good:
But youth, as fast as stirred is the blood,
Taketh empzises of hasty wilfulnesse,
Joy at ginning, the end is wretchednesse.
The old prudent in all his gouernaunce,
Full long afore maketh purueyaunce:
But youth alas by counseil will not werke,
For which full oft he stumbleth in the derke.
Thus selde is seene, the trouth to termine,
That age and youth draw by o line,
And where that folly hath domination,
Wisedome is put in subiection:

How that wisdome without supportation auaileth little or nought.

Like as this bishop with al his high prudēce,
For cause he might haue none audience,
All his wisedome and his prophecie
Of the Greekes was holden but follie,
For though Plato and wise Socrates,
Horall Seneke, and Diogenes,
Albumaser, and prudent Theolonce,
And Tullius that had soueraintee
Whylome in Rome as of eloquence,
Though all these, shortly in sentence,
Were aliue, most cunning and expert,
And no man list her counsaile to aduert,
Nor of her sawes for to taken heed,
What might auaile, and it come to need:
For where as prudence can find no succour,
And prouidence hath no fauour,
Farewell wisedome, and farewell discretion,
For lacke onely of supportation.
For vnsupported with his lockes hore,
Amphiorax sighen gan full sore,
With hed enclined, & many an heuy thought,
When ỹ he saw his counsail stood for nought:
For vtterly, the Greekes, as I told,
Haue fully cast her iourney for to phold,
Made hem ready, and gonne for to hostey
Toward Thebes, the citie for to werrey,
And in Greece will no lenger tarry,
And forth with hem Amphiorax they carry,
Set in his chaire with a dolefull herte,
When he wist he might not astert
Of his fate the disposition,
And hosteying into the region
Of Ligurge, Greekes can approche
A sundry lond, with many a craggie roche,
But all the way soothly that they gone,
For horse ne man water was there none,
So drie were the valleyes and the pleines,
For all that yeare they had had no reines,
But full great drought, as made is mention,
And all the lond searching enuiron,

The great mischeefe that the Greeks had for default of water.

They nother found Well ne Riuere,
Hem to refresh, nor water that was clere,
That they alas no refute ne conne,
So importable was the shene Sonne,
So hote on hem, in foulds where they ley,
That for mischeefe men and horse they dey,
Gaping full dry vpward into the South,
And some putten her swerdes in her mouth,
And speare heads, in story as it is told,
Assuage her thurst with the yron cold,
And of his life full many one despeired,
In this mischeefe is home ageine repeired:
Till on a day worthy Tideus,
And with him eke the king Campaneus

Of purpose rode throughout the countree,
If they might any water see,
From coast to coast, both ferre and nere,
Till of fortune they entred an herbere,
With trees shadowed fro the sunne shene,
Full of floures, and of hearbes grene,
Wonder holesome of sight and aire,
Therein a lady, that passingly was faire,
Sitting as tho vnder a Laurer tree,
And in her armes a little child had she,
Full gracious of looke, and of visage,
And was also wonder tender of age,
Sonne of the king, borne to succede,
Called Ligurgus, in story as we rede,
Whose hearts ioy, and worldly eke disport,
All his mirth eke, pleasance, and comfort,
Was in this child of excellent fairenesse:
And this lady, mirrour of semelinesse,
All sodainly, as she cast vp her sight,
Upon his stede saw an armed knight,
Greatly abashed, gan her anon remue,
But Tideus gan after fast to sue:

How Tideus complained to the lady in the herber for water.

And said fuster, beth nothing dismaied
In your selfe, displeased, nor affraied,
For we are come onely to this place,
You to beseech of mercy and of grace,
Us to succour in our great need,
Declaring you how it stand indeed:
Here fast by, almost at hond,
The worthiest of all Greekes lond,
Kings, Princes, be lodged in the field,
And many other with polax and with shield,
Which in mischeefe, perill, and great drede,
For want of water, are likely to be dede,
For there was none of high ne low degree,
In all our hoast, now passed dayes three,
That dranke alas, I except none estate,
Our fate is so infortunate,
Praying you of womanly pitee,
Benignely and graciously to see,
How of Greece all the cheualrie
Of her liues stonds in iopardie,
That ye would of womanhood tell,
If ye know any riuer, spring, or well,
Specially now in our care,
Of gentillesse vnto vs declare,
Lo here is all, if ye lust to heare,
That I will seine, mine owne fuster deare.
And when this lady, inly vertuous,
The complaint heard of worthy Tideus,
Of very pitie chaungeth chere and hew,
And in her heart vpon his wo gan rew,
And full goodly, seeing his distresse,
Said vnto him in all his beautie.

How the Lady courteously taught Tideus to the well.

Certes (qd. she) if I were at large,
Touching this child, which I haue in charge,
I should in hast of all that doth you greue,
To my power helpe you and relcue,
Onely of routh, and of compassion,
And leue all other occupation,
Conuey you, and be your true guide,
To a riuer, but little here beside,
But I dare not so much me assure,
This little child to put in aduenture,
I am so fearefull from it to depart,
But for your sake yet I shall doe part
My life, my death, of true affection,
To prouide for your saluation:
Tooke the child, and leid it in her lap,
And richely in clothes gan it wrap,
And couched it among the herbes sote,
And leid about many an holesome rote,
And floures eke, both blew and rede,
And suppriscd with a manere of drede,
With Tideus forth anon she went,
As she in routh, that no treason ment,
And on her wey would neuer dwell,
Till she him brought to a right faire well,
And to a riuer of water full habound,
But who was glad, and who was tho iocond
But Tideus, seeing the riuer,
Which in all hast sent his messanger
To Adrastus, and bad him not abide,
But downe descend to the riuer side,
With all his hoast, licour for to haue
At this riuer, her liues for to saue.
And they enhasted hem, making none abode,
All at ones to the Riuer rode,
For to drinke, they had so great lust
Of appetite, for to staunch her thrust,
And some dranke, and found it did hem good,
And some were so feruent and so wood
Upon the water, that in likernesse,
Through vndiscreet and hasty greedinesse,
Out of measure the water so they drinke,
That they fell dead euen vpon the brinke,
And some naked into the Riuer runne,
Only for heat of the Summer Sunne,
To bathen hem, the water was so cold,
And some also, as I haue you told,
I meane tho that prudent were and wise,
The water dranke in measurable wise,
That of the thrust they haue before endured,
They were refreshed fully, and recured:
And Greekes then, of high and low degree,
For her profite, and her commoditee,
Compasse the riuer, Cristalin of sight,
Of one accord they her tents pight,

To

To reſt hem there in reles of here peine,
Onely the ſpace of a day or tweine.
And whiles Grekes vpon the riuer lay,
This Tideus vpon the ſame day,
Full knightly hath done his diligence,
This yong lady with great reuerence,
To Adraſtus goodly to preſent,
At whoſe comming the king himſelfe went,
Again her, ſhe falling doun on knees,
All the ſtates tho preſent and degrees,
Of Grekes lond abſent was not one,
And in his armes tooke her vp anon,
Thanking her of her beſineſſe,
Of her labour, and her kindneſſe,
Behoting her like as he was hold,
If any thing plainly that ſhe wold,
That he may don ſhe ſhould it redy find,
And alſo Greekes all, the ſtory maketh mind,
Of the ſtates being tho preſent,
Thanked her with al her holle entent,
For the freſhing done to many a Greke,
And for her part they behight her eke,
With her bodies and goods both two,
What her liſt commaund hem for to do,
To be redy partly and not faile.
And here my Auctour maketh reherſaile,
That this lady ſo faire vpon to ſe,
Of whom the name was Iſiphile,
To Adraſtus told as ye may rede,
Lineally, the ſtocke of her kinrede,
Sometime how ſhe a kings doughter was,
Reherſing to him all the holle caas,
Firſt how that ſhe out of her countree went,
Shortly for ſhe wold nat aſſent,
To execute a conſpiracion,
Made by the women of that region,
A thing contraire agein all right,
That ech of hem vpon a certein night,
By one accord ſhal warely take kepe,
Fader brother, and huſbands in her ſlepe,
With knives ſharpe, and raſours kene,
Kitte her throtes in that mortall tene:
Unto this fine as Bochas tell can,
In all that land be not found a man,
But ſlaine echone, to this concluſion,
That women might haue domination,
In that kingdome, and reigne at liberte,
And on no parties interrupted be.
But for this lady paſſing debonaire,
To this matere was froward and contraire,
Kept her fader that he was not ſlawe,
But from the death preſerued & withdraw,
For which alas ſhe fled the Countree,
And of a Pirat taken in the See,
To king Ligurgus brought in all her dred,
And for her trouth and her womanhed,
To her he tooke his yong child to keepe,
Which in the herber ſhe left alone to ſlepe,
When Tideus ſhe brought to the well.
And by Iaſon, ſome bookes tell,
That this lady had ſonnes two,
When that he, and Hercules alſo,
Toward Colchos, by her countree came,
For to accompliſh the conqueſt of the Ram,
But who that liſt by and by to ſee,
The ſtorie holle of Iſophilee,
Her fadres name of which alſo I write,
Though ſome ſein, he named was Thoas,
And ſome bookes Uermos eke him call,
But to know the auentures all,
Of this lady Iſophile the faire,
So faithfull ape and inly debonaire,
Loke on the boke that John Bochas made,
Whilom of women with Rhetoriques glade,
And direct by full ſouereigne ſtile,
To faire Jane, the Queene of Ceſile,
Rede there the Rubrike of Iſophile,
Of her trouth and of her bounte,
Full craftily compiled for her ſake.
And when that ſhe her leue hath take
Of Adraſtus, homeward in her weie,
Tideus gan her to conuey,
To the Gardein till ſhe is repeyred,
But now alas my matere is deſpeired,
Of all ioy, and of all wilfulneſſe,
And deſtitute of all mirth and gladneſſe,
For now of wo begin the ſharpe houres,
For this lady hath found among the floures

How the Child was ſlaine of a foule Serpent in the herber.

Her litel Childe turned vp the face,
Slaine of a Serpent in the ſelfe place,
Her taile burled with ſcales ſiluer ſhene,
The venim was ſo perling and ſo kene,
So mortall eke the perilous violence,
Cauſed alas through her long abſence,
She was to ſlow homeward for to hie:
But now can ſhe, but wepe, waile, and crie,
Now can ſhe nought but ſigh and compleine,
And wofully wring her hondes tweine,
Dedly of looke, pale of face and chere,
And gan to rende her gilt treſſes clere,
And oft ſithe gan to ſay alas,
I wofull wretch vnhappy in this caas,
What ſhal I do or whider ſhall I tourne,
For this the fine if I here ſotourne,
I wote right wel, I may it not eſcape,
The piteous fate that is for me ſhape,
Socour is there none, ne none other rede,
Liche to my deſert but that I mote be dede,
For through my ſlouth and my negligence,
I haue alas done to great offence,
That my guilte, I may it not excuſe,
Shal to the king of treaſon me accuſe,

Through my offence and slouth both two,
His sonne is ded and his heire also,
Which he loued more than al his good,
For treasour none so nigh his hert stood,
Nor was so depe graue in his courage,
That he is likely to fallen in a rage,
When it is so mine odious offence,
Reported be vnto his audience,
So importable shall be his heauinesse,
And well wot I in verray sothfastnesse,
That whē the queene hath this thing aspied,
To mine excuse it may not be denied,
I doubt it nat there geineth no pite,
Without respite she will auenged be,
On me alas as I haue deserued,
That from the death I may not be preserued,
Nother by bill nor by supplicacion,
For the rage of my transgression,
Requireth death, and none other mede.
And thus alas she quaking in her drede,
None other helpe ne remedy can,
But dreint in sorow to the Grekes she ran,
Of hertely woo, face, and chere distreined,
And her cheekes with weping albereined,
In hie affray distraught and furious,
Tofore al thoste she came to Tideus,
Fell on knees and gan her compleint make,
And told pleinly that for the Grekes sake,
She must be ded, and shortly in substaunce,
Rehersing him, the ground of her greuaunce,
First how by traines of a false serpent,
The child was slaine when she was absent:
And when that he her mischief vnderstood,
In what disioint and perill that she stood,
Unto her full knightly he behight,
To helpe and further all that euer he might,
Her pitious woo to stinten and appease.
And for to find vnto her disease,
Hastie comfort, he went a full great paas
To Adrastus and told him all the caas,
Of this vnhappy wofull auenture,
Beseeching him to doon his help cure,
As he was bound of equite and right,
And eke aduertise and to haue a sight
How she quitte her to Grekes here tofore,
That they were likely to haue ben lorne,
The succour void of her womanhede,
For which he must of knighthood take hede,
To remedien this vnhappy thing.

And Adrastus like a worthy king,
Taquite him selfe, the story maketh mind,
To this lady will not be found vnkind,
Neither for coste ne for no trauaile,
But help was in all that might auaile,
To her succour considred all things,
And by thauise of al the worthy kings,
Of Grekes lond they ben accorded thus,
Princes, Dukes, and with hem Tideus,
To hold her way, and all at ones ride,
To Ligurgus dwelling there beside,
Of one entent if they may purchace,
In any wise for to get grace,
For this lady called Isophilee,
They would assay if it might be.
And to his palaice full rotally built of stone,
The worthy Grekes came riding euerichone,
Euery lord full freshly on his stede,
And Ligurgus example of manlyhede,
Anon as he knew of her comming,
Tacquite himselfe like a gentill king,
Agein hem went to mete hem on the way,
Ful wel beseen and in good aray,
Receiuing hem with a full knightly chere,
And to Adrastus, said as ye shall here:
Tolin (qd. he) and gan him to embrace,
Ye be welcome to your owne place,
Thanking hertely to your hegh noblesse,
That so goodly of your gentillesse,
Towards me ye list you to acquite,
Your selfe this day your Tolin to visite,
In this castell to take your lodging,
That neuer yet I was so glad of thing,
In all my life, and therto here my trouth,
And euermore there shall be no slouth,
That the chambres and the large toures,
Shall be deliuered to your herberiours,
That euery lord as he is of degree,
Unto his lodging assigned shall bee,
Your officers let hem selfe deuise,
Yt the housing largely may suffise,
To you and yours, stretchen and atteine,
That none estate haue cause to compleine,
And all your host lodged her beside,
Which ententifely vpon you abide,
Let hem fet by my auctorite,
Vitaile inough here in my cite,
And al that may hem succour or saue,
And at o word al that euer I haue,
Is full and holle at your commaundement.

How Adrastus and all the states of Grekes preiden Ligurgus for the life of Isophile.

(Qd. Adrastus) that is not our entent,
Nor no part cause of our comming,
For we be come all for another thing,
A certein gift of you to requere,
Benignely if ye list to here,
Which may Grekes passingly auaile,
Of our request if we do not faile,
Which we dare not openly expresse,
Without that ye will of your gentillesse,
Your graunt affirme, conferme, and ratifie,
Then were we bold it to specifie.
(qd. Ligurgus) what thing euer it be,

Not

Not excepted but onely things three,
The first is this, it touche not my life,
My yong sonne pleinly, nor my wife,
Take all my good and what ye list prouide,
Of my treasour, and set these thing aside,
All the surplus I compt nat a mite.
Then Adrastus astonied was a lite,
When Ligurgus in conclusion,
Of his sonne made exception.
And whiles they treat thus in fere,
There came forth one with a wofull chere,
Of face and looke, pale, and nothing red,
And loud crieth, the kings sonne is ded,
Alas the while that whilom was so feire,
After Ligurgus borne to ben his heire,
The which alas hath yolden vp the breath,
Of a Serpent stong vnto the death,
And with his wound new fresh and greene,
In the herber lieth that pitie is to seene,
And hath so lien almost all this day.
But when Ligurgus heard this affray,
And wist his child was dead and had no mo,
Little wonder though that he was wo,
For sodainly the importable smart,
Ran anon and hent him by the hart,

The sorow that king Ligurgus made for the death of his child, and the lamentation of the Queene.

That for constreint of his deadly peine,
Throughout he felt corsen euery veine,
The rage gan mine on him so depe,
That he could not but sobbe, sigh, and wepe,
And with the noise and lamentacioun,
The Quene distraught is descended doun,
And when she knew the ground of all this sor-
It needed her no teares for to borow, (row,
But twenty time vpon a row,
A swound she fell to the earth low,
And stoundmell for this mischaunce,
Still as a stone she lieth in a traunce,
But when the child into court was brought
To fore Ligurgus, alas I wite him nought,
Vpon the corps with a mortall face
He fell atones, and gan it to embrace,
Sore to grisse, and agein vp stert:
Then when Adrastus this thing can aduert,
Of kingly routh and compassioun,
From his eyen the teares fell adoun,
The kings, Dukes, that about stood,
Onely of pitie that is in gentill blood,
No power had, the teares to restreine,
That on her cheekes doune began to reine:
But all a day would not suffise,
All her sorowes in order to deuise,
First of the king, and the queene also,
To tellen al I should neuer haue do,
Not in the space almost of an houre.
But when the stormes and the teary shoure,
Of her weping was somewhat ouergone,
The litel corps was grauen vnder stone,
And Adrastus in the same tide,
Ligurgus toke a litel out a side,
And full wisely with his prudent speech,
The Queene present, gan him for to teech,
That so to sorow, auaile may right nought,
To murdre himself with his owne thought,
Ayenst death may be no recure,
Though in wo perpetually endure,
Al helpeth not when the soule is go,
And our life here, thus taketh heed thereto,
Is but an exile and a pilgrimage,
Ful of turment and of bitter rage,
Liche See renning to and fro,
Suing an Ebbe when the flood is do,
Litel space abiding at full,
Of whose sojourne the Pope yeueth no bull,
For king is none, Duke, ne Emperour,
That may him shroud ayenst his fatal shour,
Of cruel death when him list manace,
To marke a man with his mortall mace,
Then geineth not to his saluacion,
Neither franchise, ne protection,
And litel or nought may helpen in this caas,
Saufcondit eyther supersedeas,
For in this world who so loketh aright,
Is none so great of power nor of might,
None so rich, shortly nor so bold,
That he must die either yong or old,
And who in youth passeth his passage,
He escaped is all the wood rage,
All sorrow, all trouble of this present life,
Replenished with conteke warre and strife,
Which selde or neuer stondeth in surete:
Wherefore best is, as it seemeth me,
No man grutch, but of high prudence,
The sonde of God he taketh in patience,
And ye that been so wise and manly to,
Your selfe to drowne in torment and in wo,
For losse of thing, and ye list to see,
That in no wise may recured bee,
Is great folly and vndiscretioun.
And thus Adrastus hath conueyed doun
The substance whole of that he would say,
Till that he found a time for to pray
Conuenient for Isophile,
Beseching him for to haue pite,
Of that she hath offended his highnesse,
Not wilfully but of reckelesnesse,
First that he would his domes so diuide,
Mercy preferre and set right aside,
At request and prayer of hem all,
Of this vnhap and mischeefe that is fall,
By hastie rigour not to doe vengeaunce,
But thinke afore in his purueyaunce,

who

☞ Who to wretches doth mercy in her drede,
Shall mercy find when he hath most nede:
And sith he hath power might and space,
Let him take this lady into his grace,
For lacke of routh that she nat thus die.
But tho the Quene gan again replie,

How the Queene will algate haue the Serpent dead.

And platly said as in this matere:
Availeth neither request, nor prayere,
Pite, mercy, nor remission,
But if it be by this condition,
That the Serpent, cause of all sorow,
Through his labour lay his hed to borow:
This is finall and vtter recompence,
To find grace for her great offence,
Or elles shortly, shede blood for blood.
And when Grekes her answere vnderstood,
Of one accord in her best wise,
Toke on hem this auenturous empryse,
For loue onely of Isophile,
And gon to ride enuiron the contre,
By hilles, valeis, roches, and caues,
In diches darke, and in old graues,
By euery cost serching vp and doun,
Till at last full famous of renoun,
The worthy knight Parthonolope,
Was the first that happed for to se,
This hidous Serpent, by a Riuer side,
Great and horrible, sterne and full of pride,
Under a Roch by a banke lowe,
And in all hast he bent a sturdy bowe,
And therein set an Arowe filed kene,
And through the body spotted blewe & grene,

How Parthonolope slew the Serpent.

Full mightely he made it for to glide,
And hent out a swerde hanging by his side,
Smote of his hed and anon it hent,
And therwithal gan the Queene present,
Wherethrough parcel she gan tallwage:
And thus of prowesse and of high corage,
This manly man, this Parthonolope,
Hath reconciled faire Isiphile,
Unto grace fully of the Queene,
Her yre voided and her old tene,
And by Adrastus mediacion,
King Ligurgus graunted a pardon
To this lady, from all daunger fre,
She was restored to her liberte,
In his palaice al her life to dwell,
Though John Bochas the contrary tell:
For this auctour affirmeth out of drede,
That when the child was by the serpēt dede,
She durst not for her great offence,
Neuer after come in presence
Of Ligurgus, but of entention,
Fled anon out of that region,
At hart she tooke the childes death so sore:
What felle of her, find I can no more,
Than ye haue herde afore me specifie.
And the kingdome, but if bookes lie,

Nota, de Ligurgo Rege Tracee.

Of Licurgus, called was Trace,
And as I rede, in an other place,
He was the same mighty Champion,
To Athenes that came with Palamon,
Ayenst his Brother that called was Arcite,
Yled in his chaire with iiii. Bolles white,
Upon his hed a wreth of gold full fine.
And I find eke how Bachus god of wine,

Bacus, deus Vini.

With this king was whilom at debate,
Onely for he, pompous and elate,
Destruction did to his vines,
And for he first set alay on wines,
Meint with water, whē they were too strong:
And this Bacchus for the great wrong,
Brake his lims, and dreint him in the see:
Of Ligurgus, ye get no more of me,
But the trouth if ye list verifie,
Rede of goddes the Genealogie.

Nota, de duodecim arboribus in libro Bochacij de genealogia Deorum.

Lineally her kinred by degrees,
Ybranched out vpon xii. trees,
Hode by Bochas, Decertaldo called,
Among poetes in Italie stalled,
Next Fraunceis Petrarke suing in certein.
Now vnto Grekes I will retourne agein,
To tell forth shortly if I can,
Of her iourney, that they haue begon.
Here Adrastus hath his leaue take
Of Ligurgus with his browes blake,
And departing with seint Jhon to borow,
Made his wardes on the next morow,
So wel besein, so mighty and so strong,
Wondre early when the larke song,
With a trompet warned euery man,
To be ready in all the hast they can,
For to remue and no letting make:
And so they haue the right wey take
Toward Thebes the Grekes cuerichone,
That such a nombre gadred into one,
Of worthy knights, neuer afore was sein,
When they in feere were moustred in a plein,

And

And they ne ſtint by noꝛke occaſioun,
Till they be comen euen afoꝛe the toun,
And pight her tents pꝛowdely as I rede,
Under the walles in a grene Mede,
And when the Thebans were beſette about,
The manly knights would haue pꝛiked out,
And haue ſcarmiſhed in her haſty pꝛide,
With her fomen on that other ſide,
But by bidding of Ethiocles,
All thilke night they kept hemſelfe in pees,
Becauſe onely that it was ſo late,
With great wait ſet at euery gate,
Men of armes all the night walking
On the walles, by bidding of the king,
Leſt there were traine, oꝛ treaſon,
And on the toures, and in the chief dongeon,
He ſet men to make moꝛtall ſownes,
With bꝛaſen hoꝛnes, and loud Clariounes,
Of full entent the watches foꝛ to kepe,
In his warde that no man ne ſlepe.
And Grekes pꝛoudly all the long night,
Kindled fires and made full great light,
Set vp lodging vpon euery ſide,
Like as they ſhould euer there abide,
Compas the toun, there was no voide ſpace,
But all be ſet her fomen to manace,
And whiles they tofoꝛe the cite ley,
On euery coaſt they ſent out to foꝛreie,

The forreie that the Greekes made in the Countrey about Thebes.

Bꝛen townes, Thoꝛpes, and vilages,
With great rauing, making her pilages,
Spoile & robbe, and bꝛought home vitaile,
And all manere ſoꝛtes of beſtaile,
Shepe and Nete, in her cruell rage,
With houndes ſlaine all that was ſauage,
Herte and Hind, both Bucke and Do,
The blacke Bere, and the wild Ro,
The fat Swine, and the tuſky Boꝛe,
Carrying all home foꝛ the Grekes ſtoꝛe,
Wheate and wine, foꝛ her auantage,
Hay, and Otes, foddꝛe and foꝛage.
With the Kalendes, as hem thought due,
The Grekes gan the Thebans ſalue,
Miniſtring hem occaſions fell,
The ſiege ſet, ſhoꝛtly foꝛ to tell,
Of full entent in her hateful pꝛide,
Foꝛ life oꝛ death thereupon tabide,
Who ſo euer thereat be agreued,
Till they fully her purpos haue acheued,
There may thereof he made no reles.
And of all this ful ware Ethiocles,
Gan in partie greatly to merueile,
When he ſaw the great apparaile
Of the Grekes the Citee round about,
And in himſelfe had a manner dout,
Now at point, what was beſt to do,
Foꝛ thilke time it ſtode with him ſo,
That to ſome abiding in the toun,
He had in hert a great ſuſpecion,
Leſt toward him that they were vnſtable,
And to his Bꝛother in partie fauoꝛable.

The variaunce in Thebes among hemſelfe.

Foꝛ in the cite there was variaunce,
That vnto him was a great miſchance:
Foꝛ in his nede ſhoꝛtly he ne wiſt,
Vpon whom that he might truſt,
Foꝛ they were nat all of one entent,
Wheꝛfoꝛe he hath foꝛ his counſeil ſent,
All his loꝛds, and the old Queene,
Soch as he dempte that were pure & clene,
Holle of one heart and not variable,
Of old expert and alwey found ſtable,
Requering hem becauſe they were wiſe,
All openly to tellen her auiſe,
Where it were better pleinly in her light,
With his bꝛother to treaten, oꝛ to fight:
And ſome gaue a full blunt ſentence,
Which had of werre none experience,
Said it was beſt and not ben aferde,
To trie his right manly with the ſwerde:
And ſome alſo that were moꝛe pꝛudent,
Spake vnto him by good auiſement,
And liſt not ſpare but her conceite told,
How it was beſt his couenant to hold,
And to perfourme his heſt made tofoꝛn
To his Bꝛother, lich as he was ſwoꝛn,
So ỹ his woꝛd, the woꝛs make him to ſpede,
Be not found variant from the dede,
Foꝛ none hatred rancour ne pꝛide:
And tho the Queene toke him out aſide.

The words of the worthy Queene Iocaſta vnto Ethiocles.

Told him pleinly, it was full vnfitting,
Soch doublenelle to finden in a king:
And ſaid him eke, although he were ſtrong,
Vnto his Bꝛother he did wꝛong,
As al the towne will recoꝛd in dede,
And bere witnelle if it come to nede:
Wherefoꝛe let vs ſhape an other mene,
In this mattere while that it is grene,
Ere this querele, thus gon of volunte,
Turne in the fine to moꝛe aduerſite,
Foꝛ if it be darreyned by battaile,
Who truſteth moſt may full lightly faile,
And it is folie by ſhoꝛt auiſement,
To put a ſtrike in Hartes iudgement:

Foꝛ

For hard it is when a iudge is wood,
To treate atone him without losse of blood:
And if we put our mater holle in Marte,
Which with his sword his lawes doth coarte,
Then may it hap, where ye be glad or wroth,
Thou and thy Brother shull repent both,
And many another that is here present,
Of your trespas that ben very innocent,
And many a thousand percas shall compleine,
For the debate onely of you tweyne,
And for your strife shall find ful vnswote,
And for thou art ginner, ground and rote
Of this iniury and this great vnright,
To the goddes, that hereof han a sight,
Thou shall accompts and a reknning make,
For all tho that perishen for thy sake.
And now the cause driuen is so ferre,
Sodeinly pees either hastly werre,
Wot folow anon for the fatall chaunce,
Of life and death dependeth in balaunce,
And thou ne maist by no craft restreine,
That vpon one, platly of you tweine,
The sort mote fall like as it doth tourne,
Who so euer thereat either laugh or mourne,
And thou art driuen so narow to the stake,
That thou maist not mo delaies make,
But fight or treat this is the vtter fine,
By none engin thou canst it not decline,
An hasty caas, as folke sain that ben wise,
Redresse requereth by full short auise,
For to trete long now auaileth nought,
For to the point sothly thou art brought,
Either to keepe thy possessioun,
Or in all hast deuoid out of this toun,
Wher thou therwith be wroth or wel appaid,
Now note well all that I haue said,
And by my counsell wisely condescend,
Wrong wrought of old newly to amend,
The time is come it may be none other,
Wherefore in hast treate with thy brother,
And again him make no resistence,
But to thy lordes fully yeue credence,
By whos Counsell sithe they be so sage,
Let Polimite enioy his heritage,
And that shall tourne most to thine auaill,
Loo here is holle the fine of our Counsail.

The treatie that Ethiocles sent vnto his Brother.

And shortly tho for ire wroth,
Though he hereto froward was and loth,
According is, hearing al the prees,
If he algate shall treate for a pees,
It must be by this condicion,
That he will haue the dominacion,
First in chiefe to himselfe reserued,
As him thought he had it well deserued,
And saue to him holle the souereintee,
And vnder him in Thebes the citee,
He to graunt with a right good chere,
Polimite the reigne for a yeere,
Then tauoide and not resort agein,
For more to claime was all but in vein,
This would he done onely for her sake,
And otherwise he will none end make
With Greekes, what fortune euer befall.
And finally emong his lords all,
There nas not one of high or low estate,
That would gone on this Imbassiat,
Out of the towne ne for bet ne wors,
Till Iocasta made sadle her hors,
And cast her self to gon on this treate,
To make an end if it would be:
And this was done the morow right by time,
Upon the howre when it drew to prime,
And with her went, here ponge doughters
Antigone, and the faire Imeine, (tweine,
Of her meine full many one about,
At gate she was conueied out,
And of purpos she made first her went,
On horsebacke to King Adrastus tent,
He and his lords being all in fere,
And they receiue her with a right glad chere,
Shewing her, like to her degree,
On euery halfe full great humanite,
Polimitie riding from his place,
And humbly his moder gan embrace,
Kissed her, and then Antigone,
And eke Imeine, excellent of beaute,
And for that they passingly were faire,
Great was the pres, concours, and repaire
Of the ladies for to haue a sight:
And Iocasta proceedeth anon right,
To Adrastus the matere to propose,
And gan to him openly to disclose
The entent and will of Ethiocles,
And by what meane he desireth pees,
To him reserue, as she gan specifie,
The honour whole, and the regalie,
With sceptre & crowne, from him not diuided,
But whole to him, as he hath prouided,
And Polimite by this condition,
Under him to reigne in the toun,
As a soget by suffrance of his Brother.
But the Grekes thoughten all another,

The knightly answere of woorthy Tideus.

And specially worthy Tideus,
Pleinly affirming it should nat be thus,
For he will haue no conditions,
But set aside all exceptions,

Nothing

Nothing reserue as in speciall,
But hole the lordship regally and all,
Be Polimites it fully to possede,
In Thebes crouned verely in dede,
And rightfull king put in possession,
Like the couenaunts and conuencion,
Made of old assured and ensealed,
That shall not now, of new be repealed,
But stable and holle in his strength stond,
And let him platly so vnderstond,
And first that he deuoid him out of toune,
And deliuere the Sceptre and the croune
To his Brother, and make therof no more,
And shortly elles it shall be bought full sore,
Or this matere brought be to an end,
For Greekes be there none, ỹ shul hens wend,
Er that our right that is vs denied,
With life and death, darreined be and tried,
We will not erst from this toun remewe,
And if him list all this thing eschue,
And all mischicke stinten and appese,
To either part he may do great ese,
Thus I meane for his auauntage,
Deliuer vp hool the trew heritage,
To his brother for heire to endure,
And Greekes shall fully him assure,
By what bond that him list deuise,
The pere complete in our best wise,
To him deliuer ayen possession,
Without strife or contradiction,
And to this fine iustly hold vs to,
And if it fall that he will not so,
Let him not wait but onely after werre,
The houre is come we will it not deferre,
Lo here is all, and thus ye may report
To him ayein when that ye resort,
From which appointment we cast vs nat to varie,
And yet to him Amphiorax ỹ cõtrary
Full pleinly laid in conclusion,
This fine shall cause a destruction,
Of hem echone if it forth procede,
To be performed and execute in dede:
But thilke time for all his eloquence,
He had in soth but litell audience,
For whether so he ment good or ill,
King Adrastus bad him to be still.

And tho Iocasta, as wisedome did her teech,
Humble of her port with full soft spech,
Gan seech meanes in her fantasie,
If she might theire modifie
Of the Greekes, to make hem to encline,
In any wise her rancour for to fine,
She did her deuour, and her beste cure,
But then befell a wonder auenture,
Cause and ground of great confusioun,
Greekes perturbing and eke the toun,
And it to tell I may not asserte,
For which a while my stile I mote auert,

Of a tame Tygre dwelling in Thebes.

And shortly tell by description
Of a Tygre, dwelling in the toun,
Which from a kingdome, beside adiacent,
Out of Egipt was to Thebes sent,
Which beast, by record of scripture,
Is most swift, as of his nature,
And of kind also most sauage,
And most cruell when he is in his rage,
And as clerkes maken mention,
He of body resembleth the Lion,
And like a greyhound the mosell and the hed,
And of yen as any fire red,
Eke of his skin, written as I finde,
Like a Panther, conuersant in Inde,
With all manner hues and colours,
And is ful ofte deceiued with Mirrours,
By fraude of huntes and false apparance,
Shewed in glas withouten existence,
When his kindeles are by sleights take,
And he destreined, may no rescus make:
And like a lambe was this Tigre tame,
Ayenst kind, mine Auctour writ the same,
And this beast meruellous to see,
Was sent to Ismene and Antigone,
That vnto hem did great comfort,
And coud plete and make good disport,
Like a whelpe that is but yong of age,
And to no wight did no damage,
No more in soth than doth a litell hound,
And it was worth many an hundred pound,
Unto the king for ay in his greuaunce,
Ther was nothing ỹ did him more pleasaunce
That for no tresour it might not be bought,
For when that he was pensife or in thought,
It put him out of his heauinesse:
And thilke time the story doth expresse,
That Iocaste treated for a pees,
This tame Tigre in partie rekeles,
Out at gates in sight of many a man,
In to the field wildly out ran,
And casuelly renning to and fro,
In and out as doth the tame Ro,
Greekes weening that were yong of age,
That this Tigre had be sauage,
And cruelly besetting all the place,
Round about gan him to enchace,
Till he was ded and slaine in the field:
The slaughter of whom when ỹ they beheld,
The proud Thebans which on ỹ wals stood,
They ran doun furious and wood,

Wenting he be slaine of despite,
Taking her hors without more respite,
Fully purposed with Grekes for to fight,
The Tigres death tauenge if they might,
And forth they rode without gouernaile,
And full proudly Grekes gon assaile,
And of hatred and full high disdain,
Fellen on hem that han the Tigre slein,
And cruelly quitten hem her mede,
That many a Grecke in the grene mede,
By the force and the great might,
Of her fomen, lay slain in this fight,
The Tigres death so sore they abought,
So mortally Thebans on hem wrought,
That all the host in the field ligging,
Was astonied of this sodein thing.
And in this wise of rancour rekeles,
Out of Thebes rode Ethiocles,
And with him eke the worthy king Tremour,
Of his hond a noble werriour,
That made Grekes to forsake her place,
And to her tents gan hem to enchace,
And midde the field as they togider mette,
On horsebacke, with speres sharply whette,
Of verray hate and enuious pride,
Full many one was dead on either side:
The which thing when Tideus espieth,
Wood as a Lion to horsebacke he hieth,
As he that was neuer a deal aferd,
But ran on hem and mette hem in the berd,
And maugre hem in his cruelte,
He made hem flee home to her citte,
Hem pursuing of full deadly hate,
That many one lay slain at gate,
Saying vpright with her wounds wide,
That vtterly they durst not abide,
Tofore the sword of Tideus,
He was on hem so passing furious,
So many Thebans he rofe to the hert,
That whē Iocasta the slaughter can auert,
Polimite she preie gan full faire,
To make Grekes home again repaire,
And that they woulden stint to assaile,
For thilke time, and ceasten her battaile.
At whos request plainly and preire,
And at reuerence of his moder dere,
Polimite her hert to comfort,
Grekes made home ayein resort,
And Tideus to stinten of his chace,
And they of Thebes hasting a great pace,
Ful trist and heauy ben entred in to the toun:
And for the Tigre in conclusioun,
As ye haue herd first began the strife,
But many a Theban that day lost his life,
And recurcles hath yeuen vp the breath,
Of thauenging of the Tigers death.
And al this while duely as she ought,
The Queene Iocasta humbly besought,
King Adrastus holly of his grace,
Some meane were wisely to purchase,
To make a pees betwene the brethren twein,
And the tretee so prudently ordeine,
On either part that no blood be shad:
And thus Adrastus auised and right sad,
For Grekes partie answere paue anon,
That other end shortly gate she non,
Lich as the lordes fully ben auised,
Than Tideus to forn hath deuised.
And when she saw it may none other be,
She leue toke and home to the citte,
She is repaired, hauing to her guide,
Polimite riding by her side,
And Tideus led Antigone,
And of Archade, Protonolope,
The worthy king, did his beste peine
To be attendant vpon faire Ismeine,
Whos hert she hath to her seruice lured,
And he ayein hath portreied and figured
Wid of his brest, which lightly may not passe,
Holly the fetures of her freshly face,
Him thought she was so faire a creature,
And though that he durst him not discure,
Yet in his hart as ferforth as he can,
He hath auowed to be her true man,
Unwist to her plainly and vnknow,
How he was marked with Cupides bow,
With his arow sodainly werreied,
And to the yates the Ladies conueied,
Been entred in, for it drew to eue,
Grekes of hem taking tho her leue,
Though some of hem were loth to depart,
Yet of wisedome they durst not iopart,
Under a conduct to enter into the toun,
Lest it tourned to her confusioun,
Though some bookes the contraire sain,
But mine auctour is plaine there again,
And affermeth in this opinion,
That Tideus of high discrecion,
Of wilfulnesse nor of no folie,
Ne would as tho put in iopardie,
Neither himself ne none of his feres,
And the Ladies with her heauenly cheres,
Angelike of looke and countenaunce,
Liche as it is put in remembraunce,
At her entring from Grekes into the toun,
Polimite of great affectioun,
The queene besought, ỹ thilke night not fine
For tassaie if she might enclune,
Ethiocles of conscience and right,
To kepe couenaunt, as he hath behight
Full yore agone, with surplusage,
Lest the contraire come to damage,

First

First of himself and many another mo,
And thus from Thebes the Greeks ben ago,
To her Tents and rest hem all that night,
And Lucina the Moone shone full bright,
Within Thebes on the depe dongeon,
When Jocasta made relacion,
Unto the king and told him all the gise,
How that Greekes vtterly despise,
His proffer made by false conclusion,
Onely except the conuencion,
Of old engrossed by great purueiance,
Which is enrolled and put in remembrance,
Upon which they finally will rest,
Him counsailing her thought for the best,
To conforme him to that he was bound,
Lest in the fine falsnesse him confound,
But all her counsaile he set it at no price,
He dempt himself, so prudent and so wise,
For he was wilfull, and he was indurate,
And in his hart of malice obstinate,
And vtterly auised in his thought,
Within Thebes his brother get right nought.
And in his errour thus I let him dwell,
And of the Greekes forth I will you tell,
Which all that night kept hem self close,
And on the morow when Titan vp arose,
They armed hem, and gan hem redie make,
And of assent haue the felde itake,
With the Thebans, that day without doubt
For to fighten if they issue out,
And Adrastus in full thrifty wise,
In the field his wardes can deuise,
As he that was of all deceipts ware,
And richly armed in his chaire,
Amphiorax, came with his meinee,
Full renoumed of antiquitee,
And well expert bicause he was old.
And while that Greekes, as I haue you told,
Were beliest her wardes to ordeine,
Mid of the feld befell a case sodeine,
Full vnhappy, lothsome and odible,
For lich a thing that were inuisible,
This old bishop with horse and chare certein,
Disapered and no more was sein,
Onely of fate which no man can repell,
The yearth opened and he fell doune to hell.

How the Bishop Amphiorax, fell downe into hell.

With all his folke that vpon him abode,
And sodainly the ground that he on rode,
Closed ayein and gidre shette,
That neuer after the Grekes with him met,
And thus the Deuill for his old outrages,
Liche his desert payed him his wages,
For he full lowe is descended doun,
Into the derke and blacke regioun,
Where that Pluto is crouned and ishalled,
With his queene Proserpine ycalled,
With who this bishop hath made his mansion
Perpetuelly as for his guerdon,
Lo here the meede of Idolatrie,
Of rites old and false Maumetrie,
Lo what auailen incantacions,
Of exorcismes and coniurisons,
What stoode in stede his Nigromancie,
Calculation or Astronomie,
What vailled him the heauenly mansions,
Diuerse aspects or constellacions,
The end is not but sorrow and mischance,
Of hem that setten her vtter affiance,
In soch werkes superstitious,
Or trist on hem he is vngracious,
Record I take shortly for to tell,
Of this bishop sonken doune to hell:
Whose wofull end, doun in euery cost,
Such a rumour hath made in the host,
That the noise of this vncouth thing,
Is ironne and come vnto the king,
How this vengeance is vnwarely fall,
And he anon made a Trompet call,
All his people out of the field again,
And euerichone assembled vpon a plain,
For the king and also round him about,
Euerich man of his life in doubt,
Full pitiously gan to sorrow and loure,
Least that the ground hem al would deuoure,
And swelwen hem in his derke caue,
And they ne conne no recure hem to saue,
For neither force nor manhood doth auaile
In such mischeefe the value of a maile,
For he that wisest and could most,
To search and seeke thrughout the host,
Amphiorax, when he least wend,
To hell is sonken, and coud him not defend,
To him the time vnknowne and vnwist,
In whom whylome was all the Greeks trist,
Her whole comfort, and whole affiaunce,
But all at ones for this suddaine chaunce,
And this mischeefe, they gan hem to dispeire,
Home to Greece that they will repeire.
This was the purpose of hem euerichone,
And on the walles of Thebes late her fone,
Reioysing hem, of this vnhappy vze,
Sowning thereby greatly to recure:
And on her toures as they loken out,
They on Greekes enuiously gan to shout,
And of despite and great enmitee,
Bad hem fooles gone home to her countree,
Sith they han lost her comfort and succour,
Her false Prophete and her Diuinour,

Wherthrough her partie greatly is empeired
And in this wise the Grekes despeired,
Dempte plainly by tokens evident,
This cace was fal by some Entchantmēt,
By Witchcraft, and by Sozcerie,
Again which may be no remedie,
Trusty defence helpe ne succour.
And when Adrastus herd this clamour,
He bestie was againe this perturbance,
To prouide some maner cheuisance,
And to him calleth soch counsail as he wist,
For life or death that he might trist,
Requiring hem but in wozds fewe,
In this mischief her motion to shewe,
And declare by good auisement,
What to Grekes were most expedient,
To remedien and make no delay,
The vncouth noise, and the great affray,
That Grekes made with clamor importune,
And now, and now, euer in one contune.
And they that were most manly and wise,
Shortly saied it were a cowardise,
The high empzise that they haue vndertake,
For dred of death so sodainly to forsake,
It were to hem a perpetuelly shame,
And after hindring to the Grekes name,
And better it were to euery warreour,
Manly to die with worship and honour,
Than like a coward with the life endure:
For ones shamed, hard is to recure
His name ayein, of what estate he bee,
And sith that Grekes of old antiquitee,
As of knighthood who so list take heed,
Been so famous and so worthy of deed,
I know of new the shining of her fame,
Eclipsed were with any spot of blame,
It were a thing vncouth for to here,
Of whose renoun the beames yet been clere,
Through all the world where that they haue
And be not yet derked ne defaced, (pased,
By no report neither on sea nor lond,
Thing to forsake that they tooke on hond,
And by ensample of our progenitours,
That sometime were so manly conquerours,
To forge that we into Grece wende:
Of thing begonne let vs make an end,
And part not nor seuere from this toun,
Till it be brought to destruction,
Walles, toures, and crestes enbattailed,
And for warre strongly apparailed,
Be first doune beate, that no thing be sein,
But all togider with the yearth plein,
Be low laied er that we resort,
That afterward men may of vs report,
That we began, we knightly haue acheued,
Upon our foue, with worship vnrepreued.
This was the counsail shortly and thawise,
Of the Grekes that manly were and wise,
That neuer afore marked were with blame,
And specially such as dred shame,
And fully cast, what fortune euer tide,
On her purpose to the end abide,
That on no part her honour not appall:
And to this counsail Grekes one and all,
Be condescended and after best redde,
In stede of him that was so late dedde,
Amphiorax, buried deepe in hell,
That coud whilom to the Grekes tell,
Of things hid, how it should fine afore,
Instead of whom now they haue him lorne,
They casten hem wisely to purchace
Some prudent man to occupy his place,
That in soch thing might hem most auaue,
Through mistery of his diuinaile,
By craft of sorte, or of Prophecie,
If any such they couden out espie:
Emong hem all her purpose to attaine,
As I find they haue chosen twaine,

How the Greekes chosen a new Diuinour in steed of Amphiorax.

Most renowned of hem euerychone,
And Menalippus called was that one,
And Tredimus eke that other hight,
And for he had most fauour in her sight,
This Tredimus was chosen and preferred,
And in her choice Grekes haue not erred,
For whylome he learned his empzise
Of his Maister, Amphiorax the wise,
And was disciple vnder his doctrine,
And of entent that he shall termine
Unto Grekes things that shall fall,
As a Bishop mitred in his stall,
They doen for him many an vncouth wike
In the temple, to Gods Sacrifice:
And thus confirmed and stabled in his See,
A few daies stood in his degree,
After her Maister with full great honour,
Of Grekes chose to be successour.
And all this time in story as it is told,
Full great mischief, of hunger, thurst, & cold,
And of Thebans as they issue out,
Lay many one slaine in the rout,
On either part of fortune as they mette,
Her mortall swerds were so sharpe whette,
And Tideus emong hem of the toun,
From day to day plaieth the Lion,
So cruelly, where so that he rode,
That Theban non, afore his face abode,
He made of hem through his high renoun,
So great slaughter and occisioun,

That

That as the death from his swerd they fled,
For who came next laied his life to wedde,
He quit himself so like a manly knight,
That where he went he put hem to the flight,
And maugre hem, in his cruelte,
He drouc hem home into her citee,
Hem pursuyng proudly to the gate,
That vnto him they beare so dedly hate,
That they hem cast by sleight or some engine,
To bring him vnwarely vnto his fine,
And lay awaite for him day and night:
But alas this noble manly knight,

How pitiously this worthy Tideus was slaine with a quarell.

Upon a day as he gan hem chace,
And mortally made hem lese her place,
And sued hem almost to the toun,
That cause was of his destructioun:
For one alas that on the walles stood,
Which all that day vpon him abode,
With a quarell sharpe heded for his sake,
Marked him with a bow of brake,
So cruelly making none a rest,
Till it was passed both backe and brest,
Wherthrough alas ther was none other rede
Ne Lechcraft that he mote be dede,
There may thereof be maked no delaies,
And yet he was holden in his dayes,
The best knight and most manly man,
As mine auctbour well rehearse can,
But for all that was there no defence,
Ayenst the stroke of deaths violence.
But Dares wrote ere he were fully dedde,
He was by Greekes presented with the hedd
Of him that gaue his last fatall wound,
And he was called like as it is found,
Menalippus, I can none other tell,
But thilke day Thebans ware so fell,
Upon Greekes, that vnder her citee,
The manly king Parthonope,
Islaine was euene afore the gates,
And there also armed bright in plates,
The famous king called Ipomedon,
The same day as made is mencion,
On horsebacke manly as he raught,
At bridge, euen vpon the draught,
Beset with preace, casuelly was drounced:
And thus fortune hath on Greekes frowned,
On euery side thilke vnhappy day,
But all the manere tellen I ne may,
Of her fighting nor her slaughter in soth,
More to declare than mine auctbour doth.
But thilke day, I find as ye maylene,
When Phebus was passed Meridene,
And frō the South, Westward can him draw,
His guilt tresses to bathen in the wawe,
The Theban king fell Ethiocles,
Roote and vnrest and causer of vnpees,
The slaughter of Grekes, when ỹ he beheld,
Armed in stele he came out into the feld,
Full desirous in that sodain heate,
Polimite in the field to mete,
Singulerly with him to haue a do,
For in this world he hated no man so,
He sat so nigh printed in his harte,
Whose cōming out his brother gan aduerte,
Upon his steed in the opposite,
And had againward also great delite,
To meten him if fortune will assent,
Thenuious fire so her harts brent,
Which hate was cancred of vnkind blood,
And like two Tigres in her rage wood,
With speres sharp ground for the nones,
So as they ran and met both at ones,
Polimite through plate, maile, and shield,
Rofe him throughout & smote him into ỹ field,
But when he saw the stremes of his blood,
Raile about in manere of a flood,
All sodainly of compassioun,
From his coursour he light adoune.

How each of the Theban brethren slough other, euen tofore the Citee.

And brotherly with a pitous face,
To saue his life gan him to vnbrace,
And from his wound of new affection,
Full beste was to pull out the trunchon,
Of loue onely handling him right soft:
But out alas, while he lay aloft,
Full iriously Ethiocles the fell,
Of all this sorow very cours and well,
With a dagger, in all his peines smart,
His brother rofe vnwarely to the hart,
Which all her life had be so wroth,
And thus the Thebans were islaw both,
At entree euen afore the toun
But Grekes tho been a vailed doun,
In the field the worthy knights all,
In Thebes land as such thing shall,
The crie arose when her king was dedde,
And to the gates, armed foot and hedde,
Out of ỹ toun came many a proude Theban,
And some of hem vpon the walles ran,
And gan to shoute that pitee was to here,
And they without of her life in werre,
Without comfort or consolatioun,
Dispeired ronne home to the toun,

And Greekes followen after at backe,
That many one, that day goeth to wracke,
And as her fomen proudly hem assaile,
Ful many Grekes, both throgh plate & maile,
Was thette throughout preasing at wals,
And beaten off with great round bals,
That here lay one, and another ponder,
And the noise more hideus than thonder,
Of gunnesshot, and of Arblates eke,
So loud out rong, ỳ many a worthy Greke
There lost his life they were on hem so fell,
And at gates shortly for to tell,
Greekes preasen to enter the citie,
They of Thebes in her cruelties
With hem mette, full furious and wood,
And mortally, as they againe hem stood,
Men might see speres shiuer asonder,
That to behold it was a very wonder,
How they foine with daggers & with swerds,
Through the viser ayming at berds,
Persing also throgh the round mailes,
Rent out peeces of her auentailes,
That nought auaileth, the mighty Sefferan,
Through neck and breast, that the speres ran,
Her weapons were so sharpe ground & whet
In their armour, that they were not let,
For there lay one troden vnder foot,
And ponder one perced to the heart root,
Here lieth one dead, and there another lame,
This was the play and the mortall game
Atweene Thebans and the Greekes proud,
That the swoughs and the cries loud
Of hem that lay and polden vp the ghost,
Was heard full ferre about in many a cost.

How all the royall blood both of Grekes side and on the citie side, islaine were vpon o day.

And at gates and saillyng of the wall
Islaine was all the blood royall,
Both of the toune, and of the Greekes land,
And all the worthy knights of her hand,
And of Lords, if I shall not feine,
On Greekes side aliue were but tweine,
King Adrastus, and Campaneus,
That day to hem was so vngracious.
And for Titan Westred was so low,
That no man might vneths other know,
Of the towne they shitte her gates fast,
With barrers round ymade for to last,
In which no wight kerue mayne hew,
And Adrastus with a Greekes few
Repeired is home to his tent,
And all that night he wasted hath and spent
For his vnhap in sorrow complayning,
And they in Thebes the next day suing
Her deuoire did, and her busie cure,
To ordeine and make a sepulture
For her king, yslaine in the field,
And offer vp his banner and his shield,
His helme, his swerde, and also his penon,
Therein of gold ybeaten a Dragon,
High in the temple, that men might seene,
And Iocasta the infortunate Queene
Her sonnes death sore gan complaine:
And also eke her young doughters tweine,
Both Imeine and Antigone
Crien and weepe, that pitie was to see,
But to her sorrowes there was no refute,
And thus the citie bare and destitute,
Hauing no wight to gouerne hem ne gute,
For dead and slaine was all her cheualrie,
And no wight left almost in the toun,
To reigne on hem by succession:
But for they saw, and tooken hede,
Without this, that they had an head,
In the citie they may not dure long:
For though it so be, that commons be strong
With multitude, and haue no gouernaile
Of an head, full lite it may auaile,
Therefore they haue vnto her succour
Ichosen hem a new gouernour,

How Creon the old tyrant ychosen was to be King of Thebes.

An old tyrant, that called was Creon,
Full acceptable to hem euerychon,
And crowned him, without more letting,
To reigne in Thebes, and to been her king,
Although he had no title by descent,
But by free choise made in Parlement,
And thereto him like, as it is found,
By her ligeaunce of new they were bound
For to be true while the citie stood
To him only, with body and with good,
Thus they were sworn, and sured euerichone,
And he againward to saue hem fro her fone,
And hem defend with all his full might,
And mainteine him in all manner right:
This was the accord, as in sentement.
And in this while hath Adrastus sent
From the siege of Thebes the citie
A wounded knight home to his countrie,
Through all Greece plainly to declare
All the slaughter and the cuill fare
Of which Greekes, right as it is fall,
And how that he hath lost his Lords all,
At more mischeefe, than any man can mouth:
And when this thing was in Greece couth,
First to Argiue, and to Delphile,

And

And to the Ladies ese in the countre,
And of Prouinces abouten adiacent,
They came downe all by one assent,
Worthy Quenes, and with hem Duchesses,
And other ese, that called were Countesses.

How all the ladies of Greece arraied hem toward Thebes.

And all the ladies and women of degree
Been assembled in Argе the citee,
Like as I rede, and all in clothes blake,
That to behold the sorrow that they make,
It were a death to any man aliue:
And if I should by and by discriue
Her tender weeping, and her wofull soune,
Her complaints and lamentatioune,
Her oft swouning, with faces dead and pale,
Thereof I might make a new tale,
Almost a day you to occupie,
And as mine authour doth clerely certifie,
Throughout all Greece, from all regioune,
Out of cities and royall toune
Came all the ladies and women of estate,
Full heauy cheared, and disconsolate
To this assemble, to sorne as I you told,
In purpose fully her iourney for to hold
Toward Thebes, they sorrowfull creatures,
There to bewaile her wofull auentures,
Tacquite hemselfe of trouth and womanhead
To her Lords, which in field lay dead,
And as the story liketh to declare,
All this iourney they went on foot bare,
Like as they had gone on pilgrimage,
In token of mourning, barbed the visage,
Wimpled echone in burnet weeds,
Not in chaires, drawne forth with steeds,
Nor on palfreies, blacke neither white,
Like as mine author liketh to endite,
To holden her way, but barefoot forth they
So faithfully euerychone they ment, (went,
Through heauinesse, defaced of her hue,
And as I find, they weren all true,
Now was not that a wonder for to see
So many true out of o countree,
At ones gadered in a companie,
And faithfull all, bookes cannot lie,
Both in her port, and inward in mening,
Unto my dome it was an vncouth thing,
Emong a thousand women, or tweine,
Not to find one that coud in heart feine,
It was a meruaile, not oft seene tosorne,
For selde in fields groweth any corne,
But if some weed spring vp there emong,
Wen allay wines when they be too strong,
But her trouth was meint with none allaies,
They were so true found at all assaies,
And they ne stint vpon her iourney,
Till that they come there they would be,
Where Adrastus, written as I find,
Lay in his tent, all of colour Inde,
And greatly meruailed, when that he beheld
The number of hem, spred through al the field,
Clad all in blacke, and barefoot euerychone,
Out of his tent he dressed him anone,
Upon his hand the King Campaneus,
Full trist in heart, and face right pitous,
Againe the woman forth they went in fere,
And to behold the wofull heauy chere,
The dolefull cries also when they met,
The sorrowfull sighes in her breasts shet,
The teares new distilling on her faces,
And so swouning in many sundry places,
When they her Lords aliue not ne found,
But in ỹ field, through girt with many a wound
Lay straught vpright, plainely to endite,
With deadly eyen tourned vp the white,
Who made sorrow, or felt her heart riue
For her Lord, but the faire Argiue,
Who can now weepe, but Deiphilee,
Tideus for she ne might see,
Whose constreints were so fell and kene,
That Adrastus might not susteine,
To behold the Ladies so compleine,
Wishing his heart couen were in tweine.

How the old cursed Creon will not suffer the bodies neyther to be brent ne yburied.

And yet alas both euen and morow,
Nothing there was that doubled al her sorow
That old Creon fader of fellony,
Ne would suffer through his tiranny,
The dead bodies be buried neither brent,
But with beasts and hounds to be rent,
He made hem all vpon an heape be laid,
Whereof the women thrist and euill apaid,
For very dole as it was no wonder,
Her harts felt almost riue asunder,
And as my master Chaucer list to endite,
All clad in blacke with her wimples white,
With great honour, and due reuerence,
In the Temple of the goddesse Clemence,
They bode the space of a fourthnight,
Till Theseus the noble worthy knight,
Duke of Athenes, with his chevalrie,
Repeired home out of Feminie,
And with him led, full faire vpon to seene,
Through his manhood Ipolita the Queene,
And her sister called Emelie:
And when these women first gan espie

The worthy Duke, as he came riding,
King Adrastus hem all conueying,
The women brought vnto his presence,
Which him besought to yeue him audience,
And all at ones swouning in the place,
Full humbly besoughten him of grace,
To rew on hem, her harmes to redresse:
But if ye list to see the gentillesse
Of Theseus, and how he hath him borne,
If ye remember, as ye haue heard toforne
Well rehearsed, at Depford in the vale,
In the beginning of the Knights tale.

How the finall destruction of Thebes is compendiously rehearsed in the Knights tale.

First how that he when he herd hem speke,
For very routh he felt his heart breke,
And her sorrowes when he gan aduart,
From his courser downe anone he start,
Hem comforting in full good entent,
And in his armes he hem all vp hent,
The Knights tale rehearsen euerydele,
From point to point, if ye looke it wele,
And how this Duke, without more abode,
The same day toward Thebes rode,
Full like in sooth a worthy conquerour,
And in his coast of chevalrie the flour:
And finally to speaken of this thing,
With old Creon, that was of Thebes King,
How ỳ he faught, & slough him like a knight,
And all his hoast put vnto the flight,
Yet as some authors make mentioun,
Or Theseus entred into the toun,
The women first with pekois & with malles,
With great labour beat downe the walles,
And in her writing, also as they saine,
Companeus was in the wals slaine,
With cast of stones he was so ouerlade,
For whom Adrastus such a sorrow made,
That no man may release him of his paine,
And Iocasta, with her doughters twaine,
Full wilfully oppressed of her cheres,
To Athenes were sent as prisoners,
What fell of hem, more can I not saine,
But Theseus, mine author write certaine,
Out of the field, ere he from Thebes went,
He beat it downe, and the houses brent,
The people slough, for all her crying loud,
He made her wals and her toures proud,
Round about, euen vpon a row,
With the soile to be laied full low,
That nought was left but the soile bare,
And to the women, in release of her care,

How that Duke Theseus delivered to the Ladies the bodies of her Lords.

The bodies of her Lords that were slaine,
This worthy Duke restored hath againe,
But what should I any lenger dwell,
The old rites by and by to tell,
Nor the obsequies in order to deuise,
Nor declare the manner and the guise,
How the bodies were to ashes brent,
Nor of the gommes in the flaume spent,
To make the aire sweeter of reles,
Of Frankencence, Mirre, and Aloes,
Nor how the women round about stood,
Some with milke, and some also with blood,
And some of hem with vrnes made of gold,
When the ashes fully were made cold,
To enclose hem of great affection,
And beare hem home vnto her region,
And how that other, full deadly of her looke,
For loue onely, of the bones tooke,
Hem to keepe for a remembraunce,
That to rehearse euery obseruaunce
That was doen in the fires bright,
The wake plaies during all the night,
Nor of the wrastling, telling point by point,
Of hem that were naked and annoint,
How eueriche other lugge can and shake,
Ne how the women haue her leaue take
Of Theseus, with full great humblesse,
Thanking him of his high worthinesse,
That him list vpon her wo to rew,
And how that he, his freedome to renew,
With the women of his high largesse
Iparted hath eke, of his richesse,
And how this Duke Theseus hem forsooke,
And to Athenes the right way tooke,
With Laurer crowned in signe of victorie,
And the palme of conquest and of glorie,
Did his honour duly vnto Marte,
And how the women wept when they parte

How King Adrastus, with the ladies, repeired home ayen to Arge.

With King Adrastus, home ayein to Arge,
To tellen all, it were too great a charge:
And eke also, as ye shall vnderstand,
At ginning I tooke no more on hand,
By my promise, in conclusion,
But to rehearse the destruction
Of mightie Thebes, and no more,
And thus Adrastus with his lockes hore,
Still abode in Arge his citee

Unto

Unto his end, ye get no more of me,
Sauf as mine authour liketh to compile,
After that he liued but a while,
For he was old ere the siege began,
And thought and sorrow so vpon him ran,
The which in sooth shorted hath his daies,
And time set, Death maketh no delaies,
And all his ioy passed was and gone,
For of his lords aliue was not one,
But slaine at Thebes, ye known all the caas.
And when this King in Arge buried was
Full royally, with great solemnitee,
It was accounted in bookes ye may see,

Foure hundred yeare tofore the foundation of Rome, was the Citie of Thebes destroyed.

CCCC. yeare, as made is mention,
Tofore the building and foundation
Of great Rome, so royall and so large,
When the Ladies departed from Arge
To her countries, full trist and desolate.
Lo here the fine of conteke and debate,
Lo here the might of Marsy froward sterre,
Lo what it is to beginne a werre,
How it concludeth, ensample ye may see
First of the Grekes, & sith of the Thebans cite
For eyther part hath matter to complaine,
And in her strife ye may see things twaine.

How all the worthie blood of Greece destroied was at siege, and the citie brought to nought, to finall losse of both parties.

The worthie blood of all Greece spilt,
And Thebes eke of Amphion first built,
Without recure brought to ruine,
And with the soile made plaine as any line,
To wildernesse tourned, and deserte,
And Greekes eke fall into pouerte,
Both of her men, and also of her good,
For finally all the gentill blood
Was shed out there, her wounds wer so wide,
To losse finall vnto either side,
For in the warre is none exception
Of high estate, ne low condition,
But as fate and fortune both in fere,
List to dispose with her double chere,

Bellona goddesse is of battaile.

And Bellona the goddesse in her chare
Aforn prouideth: Wherfore euery mã beware
Unaused warre to beginne,
For no man wote who shall lese or winne,
And hard it is when either part leseth,
And doubtlesse neither of hem cheseth,
That they must in all such mortall rage,
Muugre her lust, feelen great damage,
It may not be by mannes might refreined,
And warre in sooth was neuer ordeined,
But for sinfull folkes to chastise,
And as the Bible truly can deuise,

How that warre first began in heauen, by the high pride and surquedie of Lucifer.

High in heauen, of pride and surquedie,
Lucifer fader of Enuie,
The old Serpent he Leuiathan,
Was the first that euer warre began,
When Michael, the heauenly champion,
With his feres venquished the Dragon,
And to hell cast him downe full low,
The which Serpent hath the Corcle sow,
Through all earth, of enuy and debate,
That vnneths is there none estate,
Without strife can liue in charitee,
For euery man of high and low degree,
Enuieth now that other should thriue:
And ground & cause, why that men so striue,
Is couetise, and false Ambition,
That eueriche would haue domination
Ouer other, and trede him vnder foot,
Which of all sorrow ginning is and root,
And Christ recordeth, rede, looke, & ye may see,
For lacke of loue what mischeef there shal be:

Surget gens contra gentem. Luce xxj.

For o people, as he doeth deuise,
Ayenst another of hate shall arise:
And after telleth what diuisions
There shall be betweene regions,
Eueriche buste other to oppresse,
And all such strife, as he beareth witnesse,
Kalends been, I take his word to borrow,
And a ginning of mischeefe and of sorrow,
Men haue it found by experience:
But the venim and the violence
Of strife, of warre, of conteke and of debate,
That maketh londs bare and desolate,
Shall be proscript, and voided out of place,
And Martes swerdes shall no more manace,
Nor his sphere, greeuous to sustene,
Shall now no more whetted be so kene,

For

For he no more shall his hauberke shake,
But loue and peace shall in hearts awake,
And Charitie, both in length and bread,
Of new shall her bright beames spread
Through grace onely in diuers nations,
For to reforme atweene Regions
Peace and quiete, concord, and vnitee,
And that is both one, two, and three,
Eeke three in one, and soueraine lord of pees,
Which in this exile, for our sake chees
For loue onely our troubles to termine,
For to be borne of a pure virgine,
And let vs pray to him that is most good,
That for mankind shadde his heart blood,
Through beseeching of that heauenly quene,
Wife and moder, and maiden clene,
To send vs peace in this life here present,
And of our sinnes parfite amendement,
And ioy eternall, when we hence wend,
And of my tale thus I make an end.

Here now endeth, as ye may see,
The destruction of Thebes the Citee.

A Catalogue of translations and Poeticall deuiſes, in Engliſh metre or verſe, done by Iohn Lidgate, Monke of Bury: whereof ſome are extant in Print, the reſidue in the cuſtodie of him that firſt cauſed this *Siege of Thebes* to be added to theſe workes of *G. Chaucer.*

BOcchas vpon the fall of Princes: at the commandement of Humfrey, Duke of Gloceſter.
The hiſtory, ſiege, and deſtruction of Troy, at commandement of K. Henry the fift, 1412.
Pilgrimage of the world, by commaundement of the Earle of Salisburie, 1426.
The ſecrets of Ariſtotle to King Alexander.
Play at the Cheſſe betweene Reaſon and Senſualitie.
Banket of gods and goddeſſes, with a diſcourſe of Reaſon and Senſualitie.
The Court of Sapience in heauen for redemption of mankind.
The Kalender of the whole yeare, made in ballade as a prayer.
Petigree of the Emperours, from Iulius Cæſar to Dacian the 28 Emperour.
Kings of England ſince the conqueſt to Edward the fourth.
Daunce of Machabray, Daunce of death, or Dance of Poules.
Meditation of Chriſts paſsion.
Pſalmes of the paſsion.
Of Chriſts paſsion.
Of the mercies of God eternally to ſing.
Magnificence of the Church.
Verſes of the Pſalter in Mitre for H. the 5. to be by him vſed in his chappell.
The Pater noſter in Engliſh mitre.
The Auemarie in Engliſh mitre.
Gaudete juſto in domino, Engliſh mitre.
Ab inimicis noſtris defende nos Chriſte.
Conditor alme ſiderum.
Glorioſa dicta ſunt de te, for the B. of Exceſter.
Deprofundis, in mitre.
Deus in nomine tuo, in mitre.
Letabundus, in mitre.
The name of Ieſus, and bowing of the knee.
Bene anima mea domino.
Epiſtle of King Amaſias to King Iohas.
Fifteene Oes to Ieſu in mitre.
Magnificat in mitre.
Aue Ieſſe virgula.
Fifteene joyes and xv. ſorrowes of our Ladie.
The life of our Ladie.
The life of S. Anne.
The Ladie of pitie, and Chriſts paſsion.
The image of our Ladie.
The life and paſsion of S. Albone, and of Amphabli his inſtructor.
How the plague was ceaſed in Rome.
The life of S. Margaret, for the Counteſſe of Huntington, the 8. of H. the 6.
The life of S. Denis.
The life of S. Barbara.
The life of S. Sithe.
The life of S. George, for the Armorers of London.
Exhortation to put away the 7. deadly ſinnes.
A praier to bedward, and another at thine vpriſing.
The ſeuen graces for ſeuen eſtates.
Offices of all eſtates.
The ſeuen parts of wiſedome.
Founders of the ſeuen Sciences Artificiall.
Seuen Sciences called Liberall.
Authours of the ſeuen Sciences.
Diſpoſition of the ſeuen Planets.
Diſpoſition of the twelue Signes.
Diſpoſition of the foure Elements.
Diſpoſition of the foure complections.
Diſpoſition of the foure ſeaſons of the yeare.
Diſpoſition of the world.
Mercy and truth, righteouſneſſe and peace.
A diatorie of health.
Man in vertue to be ſtable as a ſtone.
A proceſsion of Pageants from the creation.
A Ballade Royall againſt lecherie.
A ſaying of the Nightingale, ſignifying Chriſt.
Coronation of Henry the ſixt.
Tragedie of Rome come vnto ruine.
How all things muſt be done by iuſt meaſure.
All is right as a Rams horne.
Properties of wine, nine in number.
Amor vincit omnia, mentiris quod pecunia.
That now is hay, ſometime was graſſe: for Queene Katherine.
Foure things maketh a man a foole.
A wicked tongue will alway deme amiſſe.
This world is a through fare full of woe.
All ſtant on change like a Midſomer roſe.
The diſpoſition of women.
The order of Fooles.
What maketh the world ſo variable.
How euery thing draweth his ſemblable.
Complaint of the Duke of Gloceſter, for lacke of coinage.
Epitaph on Humfrey Duke of Gloceſter.
Stella cœli extranauit.
Like to thine audience, ſo vtter thy language.
Againſt the high attire of womens heads.
Exhortation to auoid haſt, and to worke by good aduiſement.
Epiſtle of vertuous buſineſſe, eſchewing idleneſſe.

A Ballade to the Sheriffes and Aldermen of London on a May morning.
A diſguiſing before the Mayor of London by the Mercers.
A diſguiſing before the Mayor by the Goldſmiths.
A mumming before the King at Eltham.
A diſguiſing before the King in the caſtle of Hartford.
A diſguiſing before the great eſtates of the land.
A mumming before the King at Windſore.
A Ballade giuen to Hen. the 6. and his mother, on Newyeares day, at Hartford.
All things are right, ſo as the Crab goeth forward.
Chuſing loues on S. Valentines day.
Of an Eſquire that ſerued in Loues court.
Of a gentlewoman that loued a man of great eſtate.
Of the ladie of Holland, and Duke of Glocester, before their marriage.
Of Iacke Wat that could plucke the lining out of a blacke boll.
Gallaunts, England may waile that euer they came here.
Æſopes Fables moralized in mitre.
The churle and the bird.
The horſe, ſheepe, and gooſe.
Gwy Earle of Warwicke, and Colbrond the Dane.
Prouerbes of Lidgate.
Complaint for departing of T. Chaucer into France Embaſſadour.
Of two monſtrous beaſts, Bicome, and Chichefache.
The ſerpent of diuiſion.
The temple of Glaſſe.
The life and martyrdome of S. Edmond, King of the Eaſt Angles.
The roiall receiuing of Hen. the 6. into his noble citie of London, after his returne out of France, Iohn Wells being Maior.
Lidgates Teſtament.

The old and obſcure words in Chaucer explaned, whereof either by nature, or deriuation,

Some are Arabicke, Some Greeke, Some Latine, Some Italian, Some French, Some Dutch, } Noted with { *a.* *g.* *l.* *i.* *f.* *d.* } { Some Dialects within this our Country of Brittain, and many of them deriued from the Saxon tongue, } Noted with *b.*

The reſt are explaned by way of Analogie.

Annotations alſo vpon ſome words and places, with direction to the Folio and Page.

A Bandon, *f.* libertie.
abandon, *f.* giue ouer.
abandoning, *f.* reiectment.
abawed, *b.* daunted, abaſhed.
abet, *b.* ſetting on.
abedge, *b.* abye.
abying, *b.* ſtate.
abit, *b.* abideth, dwelleth.
abidſt, *b.* ſuffred.
abode, receiued.
abode, *l.* tarrying.
abrayde, *b.* aroſe recouered.
abrayde, *b.* brake of, vpſtart.
abreding, vbraiding.
abluſions, *l.* clenſings.
abyme, *l.* from below.
acale, *d.* cold.
acceſſe, *b.* ague.
accidie, *l.* wanhope.
accoy, *f.* aſſuage.
acoyed, *f.* pampered, made quiet.
acheckked, *b.* ſtayed.
acheked, *b.* choked.
ackele, *b.* coole.
acloyeth, *b.* ouercharged.
acroke, *b.* awrie.
acquite, *f.* match, tedispatch.
adaſſed, *b.* abaſhed.
adawed, *b.* awaked.
adiacent, *l.* adjoyning.
aduertence, *l.* audience: alſo mind, or thought.
aduert, *l.* marke.
aduentaile, *f.* coat of Armour.
afare, *f.* a noyſe, a buſineſſe.
afyne, *f.* fined.
affi, *f.* haue truſt.
affray, *b.* feare, ſtirre, aſſault.
affrey, *f.* ſturdineſſe, alſo feare.
agaſteth, *b.* skarreth.
agiler, *f.* a marker of men.
agilted, *b.* offended.
agilt, *b.* committed, offended.
agre, to pleaſe, to conſent.
agredge, *f.* aggrauate, to gather together.
agriſe, *b.* afraid.
agriſen, *b.* afeard.
agriſe, *b.* faint, terrifie, greeue.
agriſith, *b.* beginneth to quake.
agramed, *d.* greeued.
agroſe, *b.* was greeued, daunted.
agroted, *d.* cloyed, made bigge, ſwelled.
agtutched, abridged.
aiuſt, *b.* remooue.
alayes, *b.* wayes: alſo temperance.
(**Alnath**, fol. 50. page. 1.) Alnath is a fixed ſtarre in the hornes of Aries, from whence the firſt manſion of the Moon taketh his name, and is called Alnath.
alledgement, *i.* eaſe.
alledged, *i.* diminiſhed.
Alderan, *a.* a ſtarre in the neck of the Lion.
algate, *b.* notwithſtanding, euer, forſooth, euen now, altogether.
alcali, *a.* Nightſhade, ſalt wort.
(**Algezer**) Algezira, a Cittie in Spaine, neere the ſtreights of Gibralter.
als, *d.* alſo: as well.
alestake, *d.* Maypole.
Almagiſt, *a.* a worke of Aſtronomie, written by Ptolomie.
alembic, *a.* a ſtillitorie.
alures, *f.* walkes, alleyes.
algomiſa, *a.* (*Canis minor*) the leſſe dog ſtarre.
alder, *b.* all alone, onely, cheefe.
alhaboz, *a.* (*Canis maior*) the greater dog ſtarre.
alſwa, *d.* alſo.
ally, *f. b.* kin.
alien, *f.* allie.
(**Aliſandze**) Alexandria in Ægypt; now called Scanderia.
almurie, *a.* the denticle of Capricorne.
algrim, *a.* (*algebra.*) The art of figurate numbers.
alterate, *l.* chaunged.

Almicanteras, *a.* the name of the circles, which are imagined to passe thorow euery degre of the Meridian paralel to the Horison, vp to the Zenith.

alose, *l.* commend.

aldebaran, *a.* (*oculus Tauri*) the Bulseye.

aledge, *i.* ease.

almanake, *a. g.* a moneth, a Kalender.

all a boone, *b.* made request.

allegeance, *i.* ease.

Alliatha, *a.* the Index of the Astrolabe.

allaundes, *f.* greyhounds.

Amadriades, *g.* Nymphs, that liue and die with the Trees.

Amalgamyng, vsing a mixture of quicksiluer and mettals.

amate, *d.* daunted.

amettised, *f.* quenched.

amenused, *f.* diminished.

amorets, louers fauours.

amortised, *l.* killed.

Amphibologies, *g.* formes of speaking, wherin one sentence hath contrarie sences.

ancelle, *l.* an handmaid.

anigate, occasion.

anhowue, *b.* hoouer.

(**Anelace**, Prolog.) A falchon or woodknife. Which I gather out of Mathew Paris, page, 535, where hee writeth thus: *Quorum vnus videns occidua[m] partem dorsi* (of Richard Earle Marshall, then fighting for his life in Ireland) *minus armis communitam, percussit eum in posteriora* (*loricam subleuando*) *cum quodam genere cultelli, quod vulgariter Analacitus nuncupatur, & letaliter vulnerabat eum cultellum vsque ad manubrium immergendo*: which Anelace was worn about the girdlesteed of the bodie, as was the pouch or purse: For thus, page, 542. writeth the same Mathew Paris: *Inter quos Petrus de Rivalis primus in causam vocatus apparuit coram regem habitu clericali, cum tonsura, & lata corona, analaceo tamen alumbali dependente, &c.*

annoy, *b.* annoy.

annuciler, *f.* secular.

anoy, forethinke.

antiphoner, *g.* a certain seruice booke.

anhowue, to hoouer.

anticlaudianus, a certain book written by one *Alanus de Insulis*.

antem *g.* a song.

appale, *b.* decay.

appayre, *b.* decay.

apparell, *f.* prepare.

apaled, vnpleasant.

appeteth, *l.* desireth.

append, *l.* belong.

apoplexie, *g.* dead palsey.

appose, *i.* demaund, object.

aprentise, *f.* skill.

aprise, *b.* aduenture, or shew.

aquiler, *f.* needle case.

arace, *f.* to deface.

arblasters, *f.* Crossebowes.

arrest, *f.* durance, quietnesse, stay, an assault: also he that tarieth still.

aretteth, **aret**, impute, layeth blame.

areest, *f.* quietnesse.

arrest, *f.* standers, remainers.

aretted, *b.* accounted.

arere, *f.* behind.

Argonauticon, *g.* A booke written by *Apollonius Rhodius Alexandrinus*, wherein hee speaketh of *Iason*, and of them which went with him to Colchos to fetch the golden fleece.

argoile, *f.* clay.

arret, *i.* to charge.

aries, the signe Aries.

arite, arest, stay.

arist, *b.* arose.

arke diurne, *l.* day.

arke, *f.* compasse, bow.

armipotent, *l.* mightie in armes.

armonie, *g.* musicke.

arsnecke, *i.* Zanderacha: Orpin made of red Cerusse burned.

arten, *l.* restraine.

arted, *l.* forced.

arted, *l.* constrained.

ascaunces, as who should say, as though.

asterte, let passe.

assise, *f.* order.

askes, *d.* ashes.

astert, *b.* scaped, passed.

aspect, *l.* face, or looke.

Asterlagour, *g.* an Astrolabe.

(**Astronomie**, Prolog.) He that will be a Physician according to *Homers* prescription, ἰητὴρ ἀνὴρ πολλῶν ἀντάξιος ἄλλων, that is, equiualent to any, ought to be skilfull in Astronomie, and Magicke naturall. For if by Astronomie he be not able to judge in what state the Heauens stood, and what their Aspects were, when his patient sickened: and by Magicke naturall to calculate his natiuity, thereby to know which of the heauenly bodies ruled most in his birth, hee shall hardly, or but by chaunce, conjecture to what end his sicknesse will sort.

aswith, *b.* forthwith.

asure, *f.* blew.

aschance, *b.* as if, aside.

asshate, *f.* buying.

assid, sure.

asseth, assent.

aswelled, *b.* amased.

asterten, *b.* escape.

assoile, *b.* answere, declare.

as, how.

aswis, *b.* as verely.

attaint, *f.* tried.

atamed, *b.* set on brooch.

atterly, *b.* earnestly.

attoure, *b.* towards, also attire.

attoure, *f.* attire for women.

aterst, *b.* in earnest.

Athalanta, (fol. 234. page 2.) was daughter to *Geneus*, who contending in running with them which did woe her, was at the last ouercome by *Hippomenes*, who cast three golden apples in her way, which stayed her in taking of them vp, and so she was ouercome.

athoted, *d.* choked.

atwin, *b.* asunder.

atempre, *f.* moderate.

atenes, *b.* at ones.

atwite, *b.* to make blame worthy, to vpbraid.

(**Athalus**, 230.) That *Athalus Asiaticus* was the first inuentor of

of the Cheſſe, *Ioannes Sarisberienſis* in his Policraticon, *lib.*1.*cap.*5. doth witneſſe, from whence (no doubt) Chaucer had it, as he had many things els, being a worke full of varietie and skill, and therefore juſtly commended by *I. Lipſius*. There it may appear, that *Athalus* inuented the game called *Abacus*, the which word as it hath diuers ſignifications ſo it is taken for *Latrunculorum luſus*, that is, the Cheſſe play, as out of *Macrobius* & others may be proued.

aureat, *l.* golden.
aumener, *b.* cubbard.
auroze, *l.* morning.
augrim ſtones, *s.* pibbles to caſt account withall.
auntreth, *b.* maketh aduenture.
auſtrine, *l.* froward.
autentike, *f.* of authoritie.
aumer, Amber.
autremite, *f.* another attire.
auale, *f.* goe downe.
auailed, aſſaulted.
auaile, *f.* ſend downe.
auaunt, *f.* a bragge, forward, apace, ſet forward.
auaunt, *f.* forward, apace.
auenant, *f.* agreeable, comely.
auer, *i.* briberie, richeſſe.
awayte, watch, circumſpection.
awayte, *d.* watch by way.
awayts, (*inſidiæ*) *b.* ambuſhments.
awayte, *b.* tarying, watching, pending, ſecrecie.
awarde, *b.* judgement.
awhaped, *b.* amaſed, daunted.
awhere, deſire.
awzeeketh, *b.* reuengeth.
axes, *b.* the ague.
ay, egge.
ayle, *b.* euer.
Azimutes, *a.* great circles meeting in the Zenith, and paſſing all the degrees of the Horiſon.

B

Bandon, *d.* companie, ſect, cuſtodie.
bargenet, A ſong or ſonnet.
bargaret, A kind of daunce.
barme, *b.* lappe.
bawſin, bigge: ſome ſay it is a Badger or Graye.
baggingly, (*tumide*) diſdainefully.
baronage, *f.* lords.
baſe, *g.* the foundation or ground of any thing.
balais of entayle, *f.* precious ſtones engraued.
baudzie, *b.* brauerie.
barmecloth, (*limas*) *b.* an Apron or ſafegard.
bath, *b.* both.
bale, *b.* ſorrow.
barbicans, *b.* watch toures, in the Saxon tongue, borough kennings.
baudzicke, *f.* furniture: a ſword girdle.
barkefat, *b.* Tanners tub.
baſelards, (*ſica*) ſwords, daggers.
balke, *d.* ſcape, fault.
baude, *d.* braue, bold, luſtie.
barbe, *f.* a maske or viſard.
battelled, made with battlements.
bay, *b.* ſtake.
balefull, *b.* ſorrowfull.
babeuries, *f.* Antiquets.
bane, *b.* deſtruction.
bandon, *i.* company, ſect.
baggingli, (*tumide*) *b.* ſwellingly, diſdainefully.
bailli, *f.* gouernment.
baggeth, diſdaineth.
bayne, *f.* a bath.
beauſir, *f.* faire ſir.
belchier, *f.* good countenance.
beed, continued.
bearing, *b.* behauior.
bemes, Trumpets.
bete, *b.* make: alſo abate, placed: alſo to helpe.
beten, *b.* made.
bedeth, *b.* offereth.
behote, *b.* promiſe.
belbet, *d.* ſhut vp.
benimmeth, *d.* bereaueth.
beknew, learned out.
behight, *b.* promiſed.
belchoſe, *f.* faire choiſe.
berne, *b.* beare, conuey.
bede, *b.* put, offer.
beſiegeden, *d.* beſieged.
bete, *b.* helpe.
behoteth, promiſeth.
bede, dwelled continued.
bewared, *b.* ſpent.
bewzien, *b.* to bewray.
belle, *f.* good.
beeſt, *f.* a beaſt.
bell Iſaude, *f.* well ſpoken.
behete, behight, *b.* promiſed.
benſon, *f. b.* bleſſing.
bendes, *f.* bands.
bey, *b.* obay.
bent, *b.* a ſteepe place.
betreſſed, deceiued.
berowned, *b.* ſpoken in the eare.
beſien, *b.* trouble.
bewzi, *b.* declare.
bend, *b.* a muffler, or cale.
beten, *f.* to make a band, to kindle.
belliue, *b.* anone.
beſey, *b.* become.
bereth, *b.* behaueth.
belamie, *f.* faire or good friend.
bey, *b.* buy.
behete, *b.* promiſe.
(**Belmari**) Taken to bee that countrey in Barbarie, called by *Vaſſens*, Benamarin.
Beſant, *g.* A Greekiſh coyne called Bizantium, as *William Malmesburi* ſayth, becauſe it was the coyne of Conſtantinople, ſometime called Bizantium.
berne, *b.* to carrie.
beſet, ſet packing.
bewzecke, *b.* reuenged.
behew, *b.* guilted.
becke, *f. b.* bill, beake.
belt, *b.* girdle.
betrent, *b.* ſprinckled: alſo winding about.
betraſſed, *b.* deceiued, betrayed.
bete, abate.
bette, *d.* better, quickely.
benes, *b.* bones.
bemeint, *b.* lamented, bemoned.
beyet, *b.* begotten.
biſmar, *f.* (*bizarre*) fantaſticall ſtrangeneſſe.

birell, *i.* fine glasse, also a kind of precious stone.
Bialacoile, *f.* faire welcomming.
bid, *d.* pray.
bit, *b.* bad, commaunded.
bineme, *d.* bereaue.
bint, *b.* bound.
bigin, bigot, *f.* superstitious hypocrite, or hypocriticall woman.
bittor, *b.* a certaine water-foule.
bidding, abiding.
biker, *b.* a fray.
bigami, *g.* twise married.
blankemanger, *f.* custard.
blew Buage, (*cyaneus*) of blew colour.
blith, *d.* merry.
blive, *b.* quickly, gladly.
blin, *b.* cease.
blasons, *f.* praises.
blanch, *f.* white.
blandish, *l.* sooth vp.
blande, *l.* flattering.
blankers, *f.* white.
blackeburied, Hell.
bleine, *b.* a bile.
bient, *d.* stayed, turned backe, also blind.
blee, *b.* sight, hewe, fauour, looke.
blend, *b.* blind, to make blind.
bleue, bleuen, tarry, abide.
blinke, *b.* looking aside.
blo, *b.* blew.
blondzen, *d.* toile, bluster.
bode, *b.* message or newes.
bode, *d.* tidings: also, could, was able.
bodeth, *b.* sheweth.
boistous, *f.* halting: also plaine, rude, great.
bountie *f.* goodnesse.
boscht, *l.* a bush.
boure, *b.* house.
boune, *f. b.* good.
bozne, to burnish.
bolne, *b.* to swell.
bottome, *f.* budde.
boun, *b.* readie.
boote, *b.* helpe.
bourd, *d.* trencher, *b.* a table.
bozdels, *f.* brothelhouses.
boote of bale, *b.* ease of sorrow.
bozd, bourd, *b.* jeast.
bozace, *i.* soldar.
bowne, *b.* readie.
bolne, *b.* swelled.
bole, a Bull.
bozrow, a pledge, a suretie.
bozrell, *d.* plaine, rude.
bout, *b.* without.
bote, *b.* did bite.
bozrell, *f.* attire on the head.
bowke, *b.* the body, or belly, or the stomacke
bone, *b.* request.

(**Bourd begon**, Prologues.) This Knight beeing often among the Knights of the Dutch order, called *Ordo Teutonicus*, in Prussia, was for his worthinesse placed by them at the table, before any of what nation soeuer. If any desire to know the profession of these Knights called Teutonici, it was thus: They having their dwelling at Ierusalem, were bound to entertain Pilgrims, and at occasions to serue in warre against the Saracenes. They were appartailed in white, and vpon their vppermost garment did weare a blacke crosse. And for that this order was first begun by a certaine rich Almaigne, none were receiued into the same, saue onely Gentlemen of the Dutch nation. After Ierusalem was last taken by the Saracenes, Anno 1184. these Knights retired to Tolemaida: and that being taken, into Germanie their owne countrey. And when as there also the people of Prussia vsed incursions vpon their confines, they went vnto *Frederick* the second, then Emperour, Anno. 1220. who graunted them leaue to make warres vpon them, and to turne the spoile to the maintenaunce of their Order. After this conquest of Prussia, these Knights grew rich, and builded there many temples, and places of residence for Bishops, who also were enjoyned to weare the habite of the Order. Chaucer will haue his Knight of such fame, that hee was both knowne and honoured of this Order.

brauzt, *b.* grauen worke.
brayng, *f. b.* sounding.
brawnes, *b.* sinewes, muskles.
brake, steele.
braket, *b.* a drinke made of water and honey.
braui, *l.* reward.
brat, *b.* a ragge.
braide, *b.* arose, awaked, tooke, breake out.
brast, *b.* breake.
brayde, *b.* a brunt, straunge fare.
brede, *b.* breadth.
brede, a bride.
bredgen, *b.* abridge.
bren, *b.* branne.
brede, abroad.
breche, (*ruptura*) *d.* a bruse, a breach.
breme, *b.* (*ferociter*) fiercely.
bretfull, *b.* top full.
brige, breach.
brike, *b.* astraite, or narrow.
bronde, *d.* furie, fire.
broke, *b.* enjoy, to like.
broken, *b.* brooke.
brocking, *b.* throbbing.
brotell, *b.* brickle.
brocage, *b.* meanes, spokesmen.
browded, *b.* embroidred.
browke, *b.* to enjoy.
burnets, *f.* hoods, attire for the head.
bugle, *b.* blacke horne.
bumbeth, *b.* soundeth.
but, except.
burled, armed.
burdon, *b.* a deepe base.
burned, *b.* brightly filed, burnished.
burell, *f.* fine glasse, a precious stone.
burdon, *f.* a staffe.
burly brand, *b.* A great sword.
burned, burnished.

burnet, *f.* wollen.
burioning, *f.* budding.
buxum, *b.* dutifull.
buxumneſſe, *b.* lowlineſſe.
byddeth, *d.* prayeth.
byg, *b.* build.
by rew, *b.* in order.
bywoxen, *b.* made ſenceleſſe, ouerwept.

C

(**Cacre Inda**, fol. 48. page. 1.) ſome thinke it ſhould be **Cacre Lud**, that is, the cittie of *Lud*, called London.
calewepes, Calure, as Salmon, or other red fiſh.
canceline, *f.* chamlet.
campſed, *f.* flat noſed.
cankedoꝛt, *.* wofull caſe.
call, *d.* (*pulchrum*) brauerie.
callot, *b.* a leud woman.
cancll, *d.* a Sinnamon tree.
carects, *g.* markes, prints.
cardiacle, *g.* wringing at the heart.
canon, *g.* a rule.
caitiſned, *l.* cheyned.
cadence, *l.* proofe.
caſſidoni, *g.* a ſtone growing in Æthiopia, which ſhineth like fire. *Ex Lib. de Natura Rerum.*
capell, *b.* an horſe.
caroll, *f.* a ſong or daunce.
calſening, *f.* bringing any mettall into pouder.
catapuce, *g.* ſpurge.
camcline, *f.* chamlet.
calked, *l.* caſt.
(**Ceruſe**, fol. 55. pag. 1.) White Lead: the compoſition wherof is thus: *Foſſa fiat in terra: claudatur circumquaque muro paruo: demum accipiantur laminæ plumbeæ oblongæ formæ quadrangulæ, & proijciantur ex circumfuſo ſuper foueam: poſtmodum proijciatur in fouea acetum forte, bullietque proiectum ſuper ſuperficiem terræ, & vapor inde reſolutus inficiet plumbum: poſt ſpacium vero vnius diei vel amplius rade ab illis laminis, quod illis adhæret, & illud deſicca ad ſolem, & erit Ceruſa.*
certres, *i.* vndoubtfull ſignes.
centure, *g.* the point in the middeſt of a circle.
cenſing, *b.* caſting the ſmoake Frankincenſe.
celerer, *d.* butler.
cell, *d.* a ſtudie.
chaſteleine, *f.* a gentlewoman of a great houſe.
chaunters, *f.* ſingers.
chaffer, *d.* goods, wares.
chauntepleure, *f.* that weepeth and ſingeth together.
chapelet, *f.* a garland.
charters, *f.* writings.
chaffare, *d.* buying and ſelling.
chalons, *f.* blankets, couerings.
champartie, *f.* maintaining a quarrell.
chapiter, *b.* cheefe rulers in Abbeies.
charge, hurt harme.
chekelaton, *b.* a ſtuffe of Checkerworke, made of cloth of gold.
cheuiſance, *f.* merchandiſe, deuiſe, a bargaine.
chees, *b.* chuſe.
chebice, *f.* redeeme: alſo to effect.
cheꝛte, *f.* loue, jealouſie, pitie.
cheſt, (*ſubiectum*) receptacle.
cheue, *d.* thriue.
cheſt, (*opprobrium*) ſlaunder.
cheueſayle, *f.* a gorget.
chert, *f.* loue.
cheriſaunce, *b.* comfort.
cherts, *f.* merry folkes.
cheuiſayle, *f.* a gorget.
chike, a chekin.
chincherie, *f.* nigardlineſſe.
chiuer, *b.* to ſhake.
Chriſtopher, *l.* a picture of a man: carrying a child on his ſhoulders ouer a riuer.
chinch, *f.* nigardly.
chirking, *b.* noiſe, making a noiſe.
chirking, (*ſtridens*) craſhing.
chite, *b.* chideth.
chilandꝛi, *f.* a goldfinch.
chiuancie, *f.* chiualrie, riding.
churliche, *b.* plaine, homely.
churle, *b.* ſlaue.
church Reues, *b.* church-wardens.
chymbe, *d.* the vttermoſt part of a barrell.
citrination, perfect digeſtion, or the colour prooving the Philoſophers ſtone.
citrine, *f.* yellow.
citriall, *i.* a gitterne, or doulcimere, called Sambuca.
cierges, *f.* Waxe Candles, Lampes.
clarions, *d.* trumpets.
cleape, *b.* call.
clare, clari, *b.* wine and honey mingled. (*Vinum rubellum*) *d.* red wine.
clepen, *b.* call.
clergion, *g.* a clarke.
clenched, *b.* faſtened.
cleuis, *b.* clifts, rockes.
clergicall, *g.* learned.
clombe, *b.* ſound.
clip, clippeth, *d.* embraceth, kiſſeth.
climate, *g.* a portion of the firmament betweene South and North, varying in one day halfe an houres ſpace.
clicket, *b.* an inſtrument of yron to lift vp a latch.
clotlike, (*perſonata*) *b.* the great Burleafe.
clomben, *d.* aſcended.
clum, a note of ſilence.
cockney, *b.* a wyſard, diſard, foole.
controue, *f.* deuiſe.
controuer, *f.* deuiſer.
(**Conſtellation**, fol. 48. pag. 1.) the motion or inward woorking of the ſtarres or heauenly elements, vpon our earthly bodies.
couercle, *f.* a couer, a lid.
contemplance, *l.* priuat ſtudie.
(**Collect, Expans, years, and Roots**, fol. 50. p. 1.) are terms belonging to the Tolitane tables, and ſo be his Centres, his Arguments, Proportionels, &c. **Face** & **Tearme** be dignities belonging to the Planets.

coſtei, *d.* to walke.
conbaile, recouer.
compere, *f. d.* goſsip.
commenſall, *f.* a table companion.
conbention, *l.* a bargaine.
cozare, *f.* ouercome.
coſtrell, *b.* a wine-pot.
controuer, *f.* deuiſer.
courtepie, *d.* a ſhort gawberdine, or vpper garment.
cozrumpeth, *i.* ſtinketh, putrifieth.
couth, *b* knowne, perfectly.
cogge, a cogbote.
columbine, *l.* doue-like.
cozdewane, *f.* drie leather.
conteke, *f.* ſtrife.
coſtage, *d.* charge, coſt.
cozigeth, *l.* correcteth.
cozben, *d.* taken, carved.
couched, *f.* interlaied, vnderlaied.
covent, *b.* a number of thirteen Friers.
con, *d.* know, be able.
coitu, *l.* copulation.
confecture, *l.* a medicine.
coy, coyen, *f.* to quiet, to flatter: alſo ſecret, daintie, nice.
cop, *d. f.* toppe.
conſance, *f.* knowledge.
cobine, *b.* deceit.
connen, *d.* can.
coagulate, *l.* curdled, joyned.
colfox, *b.* a blacke or fearefull fox.
cozare, *i.* ouercome.
controue, *f.* to faine, to deuiſe.
combuſt, *l.* burnt, ſcorched.
coines *f.* quinches.
coynt, *f.* ſtrange.
counterpleted, *b.* controlled.
cozoſiue, *l.* eating, waſting.
commoning, *l.* part taking.
coupe gozge, *f.* cut throte.
cozbets, *f. d.* places in walles, where Images ſtand.
coznmuſe, *l.* Muſicke on Cornets.
coucnable *f.* convenient.
coulpe, *l.* fault.
coure, *b.* kneele, ſtoupe.
commaunce, *f.* communitie.
coilons, *f.* ſtones.
copſe, *b.* jolineſſe, niceneſſe.
coart, *l.* enforce.
courtine, *f.* fine heart.
compnable, *f.* fit for companie.
cope, *f.* a cloke.
crampiſheth, crampeſh, *d.* gnaweth.
crallit, *b.* engrauen.
creanſeth, *f.* dealeth on credite.
creance, *f.* faith or truſt.
crepuſculis, *l.* crepuſcles, or dawning.
creſſe, *f.* a ruſh.
criſpe, *l.* curled.
Croſſeri, *b.* they for whome Chriſt ſuffered vpon the Croſſe.
crocke, crucke, *f. d.* a cuppe, or ſteane, an earthen pot.
crouched, *b.* bleſſed.
crone, *b.* an olde prating woman.
crop, *f.* toppe,
crouch, *i.* croſſe, bleſſe.
crowdeſt, *d.* thruſteſt.
croſſelet, *f.* a melting pot.
crockes, *d.* lockes of haire.
croupe, *f.* buttocke.
crull, *d.* curled.
curreidew, *b.* curry fauour.
cure bulli, *f.* tanned leather.
cucurbite, *l.* a kind of long necked glaſſe.
(**Curfew**, Prol.) William the Conquerour in the firſt yeare of his raigne, commaunded, That in euery towne and village a bell ſhould bee rung euery night at eight of the clocke, and that all people ſhould then put foorth their fire and candle, and goe to bed. The ringing of this bell was called in the French tongue *Cufew*, that is, Cover fire.
culpons, parts, or ſtreikes: heapes.
culleth, *b.* pulleth, enforceth.

D

(**Dan Burnell**, fol. 83. pag. 1.) *Nigellus Wireker*, Monke of Canterburie, a man of great reading and judgement, as *Leland* writeth of him, was not afraid to write of the faults of Curates, and the miſpending of Church goods; euen to *William Longſhampe*, Biſhop of Eley, and Lord Chancellor of England, a man of all men vnder the Sunne moſt malicious. Hee did write in verſe to the foreſaid *William*, a booke vnder the title of *Brunellus*, called *Speculum ſtultorum*: And this is it which *Chaucer* calleth here, Burnell the Aſſe. Hee liued, Anno 1200. in the dayes of King *Iohn*.
Dawes, *b.* dayes, time.
Daweth, *b.* ſpringeth, beginneth.
Daren, Darreigne, *b.* attempt, challenge.
Daw, *b.* waxe day.
Dare, *b.* ſtare.
Daſſe, *b.* daſterd.
Dagges, (*fractura*) latchets cut of leather.
Dagon, (*fractura*) a peece, or remnaunt.
Dagged, *b.* ſlitted.
Dates, *b.* accounts.
Dapned, *f.* vouchſafed.
Defayted, decayed, ſenceleſſe.
Dert, *b.* hurt, greue.
Deluge, *l.* a flood.
Deviant, *l.* farre off, wandering.
Definiſhed, *l.* proued.
Deſiderie, *l.* luſt.
Debonairely, *f.* meekely.
Deis, *b.* a ſeat.
Debonaire, *f.* gentle, humble.
Deaurat, *l.* ſhining.
Denwere, *b.* doubt.
Deſtrer, *f.* horſe of armes.
De pardeux, *f.* by God.
Debate, *f.* to fight.
Derne, (*dirus*) earneſt, careful, ſecret.
Deintie, deſire.
Decoped, *d.* peaked.
Demeane, *f.* behaue.
Deificate, *l.* deified.
Deiden, died.
Deme, condemne.

Depe lowpe (*transparens*) giuing thorow light.
Deflaut, *d.* lecherous, seruile, beastly.
Dey, dead: also *Artemia*, a deiry woman.
Demaine, *f.* toll, custome, possession: also, to rule.
Demoniake, *g.* possessed of a deuill.
Demin, *b.* Iudge.
Delp, *b.* small.
Deuoire, *f.* labour, endeuor, duty
Dent, *b.* stroke.
Demeane, *f.* complaine, behaue.
Delue, *d.* digge, ditch.
Deignous, *f.* disdainfull.
Deumals, *l.* wysards.
Defended, *d.* forbad, forbidden.
Dequace, *b.* dash.
Dere, a deske.
Defouled, shamed.
Defence, *f.* charge, forbidding.
Determinate, *l.* limited.
Dispaired, *b.* discouraged.
Dissentory, a kind of still.
Digne, *l.* worthy, mete: also lyth, gentle, yelding: also to vouchsafe.
Diuiniſire, *l.* a diuine.
Dike, *b.* ditch.
Diapred, *f.* diuersified.
Diumaile, (*Aenigma.*) *g.* a riddle.
Dight, *b.* made ready, handled, vsed: also to couer.
Distance, *l.* discord, daunger.
Dispended, *l.* wasted.
Dim, *b.* obscure.
Disheuild, *f.* bareheered.
Dite, *b.* a treatise.
Disconsolate, *l.* without comfort.
Dismal, *l.* (*dies malus*) vnlucky.
Dispone, *l.* dispose.
Disparage, *f.* disgrace.
Distreineth, effecteth.
Disceuer, spend.
Distraineth, vexeth.
Diameter, *g.* a line deuiding any figure into two equal parts.
Disease, *b.* vexation.
Dikapered, *l.* vanished.
Discure, *b.* shew.
Diuerseth, *l.* turneth.
Disioint, *b.* ieopardy.
Dissoned, *l.* dissonant.
Docked, *b.* cut of.
Done houres, *b.* doe seruise to God.
Doleth, *l.* greueth.
Douced, a pipe made of box, sounding most sweetly.
Domesman, *b.* Iudge.
Doughtie, *b.* stout.
Dortoure, *f. dormitorium*, a sleeping place.
Domed, *b.* iudged.
Dormant, *l.* vnremoued.
Doced, *f.* a sweet instrument.
Dole, *b.* sorrow.
Doluen, *d.* buried.
Donet, *l.* a booke so called.
Dowtremere, *f.* faire wearing.
Dowle, *b.* deale.
Dow, *b.* giue.
Dretching, delay.
Dreri, *b.* heauy, sorrowfull.
Dretch, to stay, to hinder, to tary, to dreame.
Draftie, *d.* irksome, filthy.
Drerines, *b.* sorrow.
Drenched, *b.* ouercome, drowned.
Drerinesse, *b.* hartgrese.
Drent, *b.* drowned.
Dray, **Drey**, dry.
Dri, **Drien**, *b.* to suffer.
Droui, *d.* filthy.
Drugge, *b.* toyle.
Drurie, modestie, sobrietie, comlinesse.
Drough, *b.* drew.
Drenching, taking in.
Drunkelew, *d.* giuen to drinke, drunken.
(**Dulcarnon**, fol. 161. p. 2.) is a proportion in *Euclide*, *lib.* 1. *Theorem.* 33. *propos.* 47. which was found out by Pythagoras after an whole yeeres study, & much beating of his brayne: In thankfulnes whereof, he sacrificed an Oxe to the gods; which sacrifice he called Dulcarnon. Alexander Neckam an ancient writer in his booke *De Naturis rerum*, compoundeth this word of *Dulia*, and *Caro*, & will haue Dulcarnon to be *quasi sacrificium carnis*. Chaucer aptly applieth it to Creseide in this place: shewing that shee was as much amazed how to answer Troilus, as Pythagoras was wearied to bring his desire to effect.
Duresse, *f.* hardnes.
Dwale, (*solanum soporiferum*) *d.* Nightshad prouoking slepe.
Dwined, *d.* dried, consumed.

E.

Ebracke, Hebrew.
ebracke, Iewes.
ecclesiast, *g.* a churchman.
ecliptike line, *g.* the circumference of the circle, wherin the Sunne finisheth his yearely motion.
echen, **eche**, *b.* encrease, draw out
echeth, *b.* healpeth.
eft, *b.* againe, soone.
effunde, *l.* vtter.
effated, *f.* sotted, defaced.
eftris, **efters**, entries, wayes, galeries.
egment, *b.* procurement.
eigteth mow, *d.* may graunt.
elate, *l.* stout.
elenge, *b.* straunge.
ele, healpe.
eldeth, *b.* maketh old.
elth, **eld**, old age.
eluish, *b.* wicked, froward.
empaired, much greued.
emplede, *f.* sue.
emboise cercle, *g.* the oblique cercle.
emboised, hanged out his tonge with wearines.
emforth, after, according.
emispere, *g.* halfe the compasse of the visible heauen.
emplaster, *f.* set out, paint.
empryse, *f.* interprise: also fashion, order.
enbolned, *b.* swelled.
enchafeth (*flagrat*) burneth.
Eneidos, *g.* a worke written by Virgill, of the trauels of Eaneas.
endyr, *b.* endure.
engined, *d.* racked.
enhansed, *f.* exalted.
enhaunces, lift vp, raise.
engine, *f.* wit, deuise.
engluting, *f.* stopping.
enbibing, *l.* sucking.
enewed, renewed.
enmoised, *f.* comforted.
encontrewayle, *f.* preuent, to meet.
encheson, *f.* cause, occasion.
enchafed, *f.* heated.

enpited, delited.
enlangored, *f.* languishing.
ensise, *b.* qualitie, fashion, order.
entreteden, *d.* handle.
entalenten, *f.* mooue, stirre vp.
entaile, *f.* graued worke.
entremete, *f.* deale, medle.
entermined, *l.* vndermined.
entred, *l.* buried.
entalented, *f.* ingrafted.
enteched, *f.* defiled.
entetched, *f.* qualified, spotted.
entame, touch, handle.
entailed, *f.* carued.
entriketh, *b.* entrappeth.
entriked, deceiued: also, mingled.
enteched, *f.* qualified, or spotted.
entremes, *f.* intermingled.
enuelopt, *f.* wrapped.
enuiron, *f.* round, round about.
equinoctiall, *l.* when the nights and daies be al of one length.
ernes, *b.* promise.
erke, *b.* weary, lothing.
erne, greatly.
ernefull, *b.* sorrowfull.
(**Eros**, fol. 3. p. 1.) *g.* Whereas some copies haue Hereos, some Hernes, and some such like counterfait word, whereof can be giuen no reason; I haue set downe Eros, *i.* Cupid: as most agreing in my opinion with the matter; which I gather thus: *Lucian* in his second Dialogue bringeth in Cupid teaching Iupiter how to become amiable, & in him, how louers may be made acceptable to their ladies; not by weeping, watching, & fasting, nor by furious melancholike fits, but by comely behauiour. The words in the Greeke, are thus much in Latine: *Si voles amabilis esse neq; concutias Aegida, neque fulmen geras: sed suauissimum teipsum exhibe: & vestem sume purpuream, crepidas subliga auratas: ad tibiã & ad Timpana composito gressu incede, & videbis quod plures te sequẽtur, quam Bacchum Mænades.* So that the louers of Eros, that is, Cupids seruaunts, doe cary themselues comely in all their passions, & their maladies are such as shew no open distemperature of body or minde: which mediocritie this Arcite was farre from keeping. And wheras some will haue vs read Heroes, *i.* noble men; I cannot dislike their opinion, for it may fitly stand with the sense of the place.
erre, *f.* way.
erst, *b.* earnest.
escrite, *f.* a writing.
esperance, *f.* hope.
esploit, perfection.
espiritueles, *l.* heauenly.
essoine, *f.* delay.
eth, *b.* easie.
etymologise, *g.* to shew the true interpretation of a word.
euin, *b.* equall.
euin, *b.* vpright.
exiteth, *l.* mooueth.
exorcismes, *g.* adiurations.
expleiten, *f.* make shewe, counterfaite.
eyth, *b.* easie.
ey, an egge.

F.

Fast, wedded.
fare, *f.* gone.
falding, a kind of course cloth.
fare, fayre.
fay, *f.* truth.
fast frets, full fraughteth.
farce, *f.* paint.
fage, a fable.
fare, *b.* cheare.
farden, *b.* fared.
famulers, *l.* helpers.
falsed, *l.* deceiued.
fallas, *l.* deceipt.
fame, defame, slaunder.
fassed, *l.* stuffed.
faitors, *i.* deceiuers, flatterers.
fay, *l.* truly: also fidelitie.
fairy, *b.* a goodly sight: the place where Hobgoblins, and Fairies dwell.
fantom, *f.* fancie, vaine vision.
falke, *b.* people, folke.
faw, *b.* glad, ioyfull.
fare, *f.* to go: also a stirre.
faunes, *g.* rusticall gods.
falsen, *f.* deceiue.
fantom, *f.* vaine vision.
facond, *i.* speech.
fendli, *b.* vglie.
ferne yeare, February.
fetise, *b.* hansom.
ferthing, *b.* a thin scale.
fermerere, an ouersear of cattel.
fele, many: also feling.
ferd, *b.* fared.
fermases, *g.* medecines.
(**Fenne**, fol. 62. p. 2.) Auicen deuideth his Canons into partitions, which he calleth Fennes.
ferth, *b.* the fourth.
fermentation, *l.* giuing life to the Philosophers stone.
feled, knowne.
fers, the queene in Chesplay.
feture, *f.* hansomnes.
fend, *b.* deuill.
ferne, *b.* long time.
feestlych, *d.* pleasant.
fendish, *b.* diuillish.
ferly, *b.* strange.
ferd, *b.* fared.
felloun, *f.* deadly, cruell.
fele, *b.* knowledge.
fethered, *b.* shaked his winges.
feffe, *b.* indue.
feele, finde.
fele homages, *f.* faithfull subiection.
fell, *b.* the skin.
feest, *b.* mirth, ioy.
fere, *b.* a companion.
ferth, *b.* the fourth.
fete, *b.* fine.
fine, *l.* cease.
finance, *f.* end.
flaming, red.
flash of flames, sheafe of Arrowes.
flaw, yellow.
flay, did flie.
flebring, *b.* flattering, slaunder.
fleten, *b.* abound.
flemer, *b.* expeller.
flone, an arrow.
flemed, *b.* daunted.
fleming, conquest.
flid, *b.* flie.
flite, **flight**, *b.* chide.
(**Floreine**, fol. 6. page 2.) A coine of the value of 3. shil. 4. pence, or thereabouts, and such were called *Florenes de Scuto*. Others there were called *Florenes Regales*, contained within the price of 2. sh. x. d. q.

flo,

flo, an arrow.
flode, abounded.
flozeth, *l.* floriſheth.
floting, *f. d.* whiſtling.
fonden, labour.
fonde, make, contend, to labour: alſo to make a foole.
fonge, *b.* take.
fonne, *b.* foole: alſo to be fooliſh
fonnes, deuiſes.
fone, fine, *l.* make an end.
fother, *b.* a wainelode of twenty hundreth weight.
fozſtraught, *b.* daſeled.
foze, gone.
fozſtraught, beſet.
fozrei, *f.* to prouide horſe meate.
fozrage, *f.* fodder, courſe meate.
fozcer, *f.* copher, or cheſt.
fozward, courſe, condition, promiſe.
fozwined, *d.* dried vp.
fozdo, ouerthrowne.
foz thy, *b.* therefore.
fozpined, conſumed.
fozleten, **fozlete**, forſake, broken of.
fozloine, recha'e, termes of hunting.
fozleien, *d.* wander.
fozdo, *b.* kill.
fozleten, fozpetten, let paſſe, neglected, forlorne.
fozruna matoz, *l.* Iupiter.
fozgift, forgiuing.
fozth, theft.
fozwelked (*marcidus*) *d.* dried vp.
fozlaine, forſaken.
fozt, *l.* ſtrong.
fozleteth, giueth ouer.
fozlyth, ſpoileth.
fozſongen, *b.* weary with ſinging.
fozge, *f.* worke.
fozcyne, *b.* a laques.
fozmel, his make.
fozfare, *b.* forlorne.
foze, fared, gone.
fozedio, killed.
fozyede, *b.* ouerwent.
fozdo, vndone, loſt.
fone, *b.* enemies.
foiſon, *f.* plenty.
foiterers, *f.* vagabounds.
foothot, *b.* forthwith.
fowlefaile, *b.* erre greatly.
folili, *f.* raſhly.
fomen, *b.* enemies.
fongeth, taketh, vſe.
fownd, framed.
foiles, *f.* leaues.
frape, *b.* a company, a rable.
frained, reſtrained: alſo asked.
fret, *b.* a circle.
freneth, maketh ſtrange noiſe.
fret, *f.* fraught.
frend, fremd, *b.* ſtrange.
freelti, *b.* frayle.
froy, from you.
franks, *f.* french crownes.
freten, *b.* deuoure.
franchiſe, *f.* freedome.
freel, *b.* fraile.
freteth, *f.* rubbeth, chafeth.
fret, *f.* turne, fraught.
frounceu, *d. f.* wrinckling.
fremed, *b.* wilde, ſtrange.
fret full, ſet full.
frened, *b.* ſtrange.
frounce, *f.* a wrincle.
froiſe, (*frixura*) *f.* a pancake, or Tanſey.
frouncleſſe, *f.* plaine.
fryth, *b.* a wood.
fullich, fully.
fulke, an hollow place.
furiall, *f.* cruell.
fuſible, *l.* that may be molten.
fur, *i.* fury.
fye, defie.
fined, *l.* ended.
fiſh, the ſigne Piſces.
fire leuin, *b.* lightning.

G.

Gabbing, *b.* liyng.
gadling, *b.* ſtragling.
garniſon, *f.* preparation.
(**Garnade**) Granata in Spaine.
garniſon, *f.* a defence.
gable, the fore front of an houſe.
galoch *f.* a kind of ſhoe.
gaytere berries, (*virga ſanguinea*) prickwood.
gaſtnes, *b.* terrour.
gargoning, *f.* ſtrange ſpeaking.
gab, *b.* prate, or lie.
(**Ganilion**, fol. 65. p. 2.) which betraied the army of the Chriſtians, vnder Charlemaine, to the Saracens, and was therefore torne in peeces with foure horſes.
galaxi, (*lactea via*) *g.* a tract of ſterres called Watling ſtreet.
gale, *b.* yawle
gale, *b.* ſloute: alſo chafe.
galpeth, *b.* belcheth.
galiard, *f.* luſty, frollicke.
garniſon, *f.* to defend.
(**Gawyn**, fol. 23. pag. 1.) This Gawyn was ſiſters ſonne to Arthur the great king of the Britaines, a moſt famous man in warre, and in all maner of ciuilitie: As in the Actes of the Brittaines we may read. In the yeare 1082. in a prouince of Wales called Roſe, was his ſepulchre found, and his body affirmed by many, to haue ben of the length of fourtene foot.
galliens, Galens works.
gate, occaſion.
gaudi, *b.* braue.
gawzeth, *b.* ſtareth.
gawze, *b.* ſtare.
gawde, *b.* a trifle.
geri, **gerifull**, mutable: alſo cruell.
gend, *f.* ſeemely.
gere, *b.* jeſt, frenſie.
gergon, *b.* chattering, prating.
geomancie, *g.* coniuration by circles in the earth.
gent, *f. d.* comely, proper.
gelleran, a breſtplate.
gipſere, *f.* a bagge, or pouch.
gippon, a doublet, or light coat.
gigges, *b.* drabbes.
girde, *b.* ſtrike.
gigging, ſounding.
gigges, (*garrulitas*) babling.
gite, a gowne.
giſarme, *gaſa*, a certaine weapon.
gipe, a coate full of pleits.
gigges, bablings.
giglotlyke, *b.* ſtrumpet like.
gladly, commonly.
glapeth, *b.* gliſtereth.
glede, *b.* fire, embers, flame, ſparkles, aſhes.
gle, *b.* melody.
glent, *b.* glaunced, caſt.
gleire, *b.* white.
glaſe, *b.* to gloſe.
gleden, *d.* gone, ſlidden.
gledes, imbers: alſo flames:
gleue, *b.* a ſpeare.
glitteren, *b.* gliſter, ſhine.
glitering, *b.* ſhining.
glode, *b.* aſcended.

glowed,

glowed, *b.* ſtared.
glombe, *b.* frowne.
gloten, couering.
gloſe, perſwade.
gloſe, *b.* flatter: alſo the expoſition of a darke ſpeech.
glede, *b.* puttocke.
glowden, *d.* ſhined.
glitten, *b.* ſhine.
gnarre, *b.* an hard knotte, as in wood: a ſhort thicke grubbe.
gnaſt, gnaſh.
gnew, *b.* gnawed.
gnoffe, *i.* foole, chuffe, miſer.
gods ſonn, *b.* that God ſendeth.
gods half, *b.* on gods ſide.
gorget, *f.* a throte.
goze, (*lacinia*) a pleit or fould.
golyerdies, *f.* rauenouſly mouthed.
gowzeth, *b.* ſtareth.
gonfennon, *f.* a little flagge.
gonge, *b.* Iaques.
goſſomor, *b.* things that flie in the aire in ſommer time like copwebs.
Goodmes, *f.* good time, or moode.
gourde, *b.* a bottell, made of a gourde.
golit, *d.* throte.
gotyſh, *i.* ſottiſh.
goze, an arbour vnder a gourde.
goodlihead, gay ſhew.
grame, *i.* ſorrow, miſhap, *d.* anger.
graythed, deuiſed.
grapenel, an inſtrument with many hookes.
graſpeth, *b.* catcheth faſt.
gratch, *b.* apparell
grauen, *d.* buried.
grant mercy, *f.* I thanke you.
graue, burie.
graieth, *b.* to make trim.
great ſee (*Mar maggiore*) aunciently *Pontus Euxinus*.
grece, *f.* gray, gray amiſe of Ruſſie ſquirrels.
greith, *b.* remooue.
grete, *b.* wepe.
grenched, raſhnes.
gre, *f.* good parte.
grith, *b.* agreement.
greues, *b.* trees, bowes, leaues, graſſe.
gret, *b.* ſaluted.
greyned, made.
grede, *b.* cried.
grint, *b.* grinded.
griſpe, *d.* gripe.
griſely, *b.* abhominably, gaſtly, fearfully.
grill, *b.* could.
groſly, *b.* flat on the ground.
grotne, *b.* a froward looke.
growbed, *b.* digged.
gruffe, } *b.* groueling.
grouke, }
gruell, *b.* pottage.
guerdon, *f.* reward.
guerdonleſſe, *f.* vnrewarded.
guerring, *i.* brawling.
gullet, *d.* a throte.
gye, *b.* guyde.
gyze, *b.* trance.

H.

(Harrolds, fol. 144. whereas in ſome bookes it is, my king of Harrolds ſhalt thou bee; it is now corrected thus (my king of Harlots ſhalt thou bee.) For ſo it is in the French Moralization of Molinet 149. where hee is called *Roides Ribaulds*, which is the king of harlots, or wicked perſons: an office of great account in times paſt, and yet vſed in the court of Fraunce. Of this office ſpeaketh *Iohannes Tillius* in his ſecond booke *De rebus Gallicis*, vnder the title *De Præfecto pretorio Regis*. But more hereof when time ſhall ſerue in M. F. Thins comment.
halſe, *d.* a necke.
haſard, *d.* diſing.
haw, a yeard, blacke, haue
haylſe, *b.* charge.
haire, heare cloth.
hayes, *f.* hedges.
haketõ, *f.* a Iacket without ſleues.
hawberke, *f.* a gorget.
halpe, *b.* healped.
halke, (*angulus*) } *b.* corner, val-
herne, } ley.
haubergion, (*lorica*) *f.* a coat of male.
hate, *b.* benamed.
habite, *l.* plite.
harlotriſe, *b.* bawdry.
halt, *b.* held purpoſe.
hauten, comely.
haried, *b.* pulled.
hayne, *f.* hatred.
hake, lifted.
hace, *b.* hath.
han, *b.* haue.
hawbacke, *b.* returne.
hardely, *b.* ſtoutly: alſo verily.
hackeney, *d.* a trotting horſe.
hameled, *d.* cut off, abated.
halow, hollow.
halſing, *b.* embraſing.
harrow, (*apagesis*) away, away, fie, fie.
happeth, *b.* couereth, embraſeth.
hauſelines, (*famoralia*) breches.
hat, *b.* was called.
hallowes, *b.* Saint.
haulues, *d.* parts.
hawtently, *b.* ſolemnly.
halt, held, holdeth, judgeth.
haunten, *b.* vſe.
haunce, ſet out.
hanceled, cut off.
halt, *b.* performeth, holdeth.
halteth, (*trahit*) draweth.
hauoire, *f.* poſſeſſion.
henten, hent, *b.* catch.
hele, heyle, *b.* health.
hethen, *b.* mockery.
hewen, hewed, *b.* coloured.
hecled, wrapped.
herbigage, *f.* lodging.
held, accompt, accompted.
hereid, *b.* praiſed, honoured.
hewed, *b.* coloured. (bewtie.
hew, hewis, *b.* colours, welfare,
heſtes, *b.* willes, promiſe, commandements.
heyne, *b.* labourer, drudge.
heauen, *b.* to ſhooue, to lift.
hewmond, new made.
healed, *b.* couered, heard.
heroner, a ſpeciall long winged
hent, *b.* catched. (hawke.
herborow, *d.* lodging.
heriyng, *b.* praiſe. (play.
herawdes, *b.* furious partes in a
heere & houne, hare and hownd.
helmed, *b.* defended.
heale, hele, *b.* hold, couer.
here & hace, *b.* hoarſe and harſh.
healed, heard.
helded, *b.* holden downe.
herieth, *b.* praiſeth.
heleſt, did hold.
hend. *b.* gentle.
hernia, *g.* the diſeaſe called burſting.

hote,

hote, hete, heten, *d.* vow, promise.
(**Heisugge**, fol. 236. p. 1.) The Heisugge called *Curruca*, is a little birde in whose nest the Cuckow laieth her egges, and when they bee hatched, and growne to some bignesse, they eate the bird that bred them.
hew, welfare.
herden, did heare.
heuen, *b.* rise vp.
hem, them.
heth, *b.* brabes or such like.
her, their.
hete, *d.* was named.
henters, *b.* catchers.
height, *b.* were named.
heepe, *b.* healpe.
heraud, *d.* proclaime, set forth.
hew, to houer.
henten, *b.* to catch.
hemisphere, *g.* halfe the compasse of the visible heauen.
highest, maketh hast.
hight, *b.* promised.
hierdesse, *b.* herdwoman.
hith, *b.* make hast.
highten, *b.* promise.
hip, *b.* the red berry on the brier.
hidous, *f. b.* great.
hite, hete, hote, *d.* is called.
hild, *b.* powred.
hidiously, *b.* fearfly, fearfully.
holt, holden.
hoten, *b.* called.
horologe, *g.* a clocke.
hote the knot, make fast.
hoppen, *d.* leape.
howten, *b.* hallow.
howgates, how.
hoze, *b.* white.
holoure, *b.* horemunger.
hostei, to lay siege.
homicide, *g.* murderer.
hoten, *b.* make an vnpleasant noise.
hopesteres, (*gubernaculum tenentes*) pilotes.
hozde, *b.* heape.
howselin, *b.* receiue the sacrament.
homager, *f.* subiect.
howuer, an houerer.
hold, withheld.
houed, *b.* taried.
hoker, *b.* stoutnesse, frowardnes.
hozrow, (*squalidus*) beastly, base, slaunderous.
houe, *b.* lifted vp, to houer: also, a shew.
hozoscope, *g.* the ascendent of ones Natiuitie.
hough, how.
hostell, *f.* a towne house.
hote, *b.* promise, bid.
hostilements, necessaries.
hold, beholden.
holtes hoze, *b* woods white.
holt, *d.* a groue.
hoting, *d.* promising.
hurleth, *f.* falleth, maketh a noise.
(**Hugh of Lincolne**, fo. 66. p. 1.) In the 20. yeere of Henry the third, eighteene Iewes were brought to London from Lincolne, and hanged for crucifyng a child of eight yeers old: which was this Hugh, whereof Chaucer speaketh, as may be proued out of Mathew Paris, and Walsingham.
hurleth, (*obstrepit*) *f.* maketh a noise.
hurtell, skirmish.
hurtlest, carrieth, throweth.
hurtlen, *b.* thrust.
hulsted, *b.* hidden.
hurtelen, *b.* prouoke.
humling, *b.* sounding.
hylden, yeldeth.
hyne, *b.* a hyend or husbandman
hyerd, heardman, gouernour.
hyerds, *b*, guydes.

I.

Iape, (prolog.) Iest, a word by abuse growen odious, and therfore by a certain curious gentlewoman scraped out in her Chaucer: whereupon her seruing man writeth thus:

My mistres cannot be content,
To take a iest as Chaucer ment,
But vsing still a womans fashion
Allowes it in the last translation:
She cannot with a word dispence,
Although I know she loues the sence.
For such an vse the world hath got,
That words are sinnes, but deeds are not.

iambeux, *f.* armour for the legs.
iane, halfe pence of Ianua, or galey halfpence.
iapedst, *b.* iested.
iangleresses, *b.* brablers.
ibet, stamped.
ibete, set foorth.
icond, *b.* learned.
ich, *b.* my selfe.
ido, *b.* vndone, spoiled.
idolastre, *g.* idolatour.
iet, *b.* deuise.
iewry, the Iewes streete or synagoge.
iewise, reward by reuenge: also a gibbet.
ifete, *b.* effect.
ifere, *b.* together.
ificched, *f.* fixed.
ifounded, *b.* sunke.
ifretten, *d.* deuoured.
igourd, fly.
igrauen, *d.* buried.
ihight, *b.* called, accompted.
ihired, honoured.
ikend, *b.* knowne.
ilimed, taken.
ilke, *b.* same.
illusion, *l.* deceipt.
imasked, *f.* couered.
iment, *b.* mingled.
imped, *b.* grafted.
impetren, *l.* intreat.
incantations, *i.* charmes.
in a threw, *b.* quickly.
inneresk, *f.* inward.
indulgence, *l.* pardon.
ingot, the masse or wedge of gold after it is molten, as also the trough wherein it is molten.
intermete, *f.* medle.
incubus, *l.* the night mare.
indigence, *l.* want.
intremes, *f.* middle seruise, intermingled.
intresse, lining.
i not, I know not.
intermeting, changing.
inome, *d.* taken.
interual, *l.* distance of time.
iniquitance, *l.* disquiet.
induration, *l.* making hard.
inde, *f.* azure colour.
in hie, in hast.
ithe, *b.* thriue.
itwight, *b.* drawne.
inched, put in.
inomen, *d.* obtained.
inhild, *b.* infuse.
iombre, *b.* ioine, iumble.
iongleric, *d.* iugling.
iordans, *b.* dubble vrinals.
ioleining, *d.* ioyfull.

ioſta, turne.
ioyeux, *f.* ioyfull.
ipʒtued, ſearched.
ipulled, ſmothed.
irapled, couered, ſpred.
iſe, beheld.
iſped, (*expeditus*) diſpatched.
iſhad, *b.* ſcattered.
iſperi, *g.* Orizon.
iſhet, *b.* ſhut.
iſpended, *l.* conſidered.
iſhoue, ſet forth.
iſwent, *b.* ſwinged.
(**Juſtinian**, fol. 138. p. 1.) In the eleuenth booke of the Code, *De mẽdicantibus validis*: wher it is enacted, that if any ſhall begge, hauing no cauſe either by need, or maime, the ſame ſhalbe examined, & ſearched: and who ſo ſhall find him to counterfeit, and proueth the ſame, *Dominium eius conſequetur*: and ſaith Bartoll. He ſhall be puniſhed, *Ad arbitrium iudicis*.
iuuentute, *l.* youth.
iupart, *b.* aduenture.
iubeli, *b.* ioy, gladnes, for fredom.
iub, *b.* bottell.
iudicum, *l.* booke of Iudges.
iwʒi, **iwʒien**, hidden.
iwʒi, couered, hanged.
iwimpled, *d.* mufled, hooded.

K.

Kalender, chiefe, firſt.
kalends, preamble.
keiked, **kiken**, *b.* ſtared.
keinard, micher, hedgecreeper.
kepe, *b.* care.
(**Kenelme**, fol. 82. p. 1.) This *Kenelmus* king of the Mercians was innocently ſlaine by his ſiſter *Quenarida*, wherby he obtained his name of a Martyr. In the ſame place, for *Mercturike* we now read *Mercenricke*, which is the kingdom of Mercia, as the Etymologie of the word doth teach. For Rik in the Saxon tongue ſignifieth a kingdome, and Mercen the marches or bounds of a countrey. So that Mercenrike is *regnum Mercia*, whereof both Kenulph and Kenelme were kings.
kele, *b.* to coole.
kest, *b.* caſt.
kepen, *b.* to care.
kembe, *d.* decke.
kemeling, a bruars veſſell.
kernels, holes or corners in battelments.
kerueth, greueth.
ken, *d.* teach, know.
kers, (*naſturtium*) *d.* water creſſes
keuer, *b.* recouer.
kene, *b.* ſharpe.
kend, *b.* made me know.
(**Kichell**, fol. 39. p. 1.) A cake which Horace calleth *Libum: Vtq; ſacerdotis fugitibus liba recuſo*: and with vs it is called a gods Kichell, becauſe godfathers and godmothers vſed commonly to giue one of them to their godchildren, when they asked bleſſing.
kith, *b.* acquaintance.
kinreſt, quiet reſt.
kithen, *b.* ſhew.
kinds, **kindels**, (*fœtus*) *b.* yong ones.
kirked, *b.* turned vpward.
kith, *b.* make knowne, ſhew, acknowledge.
kid, *b.* knowne, made knowne.
kitheth, *b.* ſheweth.
kin, *b.* kind.
knarri, *b.* ſtubby.
kned, knit.
knittest, ſetleſt.
knocked en, *d.* did knocke.
knopped, *d.* tied, laced.
kon, *b.* can.
koueren, *f.* to hide.

L.

Lake, fine cloth like lawne.
largeſſe, *i.* liberalitie.
lachſſe, *f.* leyſines.
latered, *l.* leyſie, loytring.
laas (*laqueus*) *d.* net or gin.
laude, *l.* praiſe.
langoʒous, *f.* pining.
lacke, diſpraiſe,
laſt, left of, encloſed.
lacke, *d.* offence: alſo lie, to diſpraiſe.
lay, a ſong.
lauen, *b.* draw, emptie.
laudes, *i.* morning ſeruiſe.
languerth, *i.* languiſheth.
latonne, *f.* copper.
lacert, *i.* ſinew.
layuers, (*corrigiæ*) thongs.
lay, *b.* law.
laund, *b.* a plaine between trees.
launder, *i. f.* laundreſſe.
laued, *b.* drew.
lath, *b.* a barne.
lasten, forſooke.
laſſe, leſſe.
lach, *f.* leyſie.
larſon, *f.* robbery.
lacking, diſpraiſing.
lacken, extenuate, diſpraiſe.
(**Lettow**) Lituania, part of Sarmatia, ioyning to Polonia.
(**Lepes**) taken to bee Leuiſſa, vpon the continent not farre from Rhodes.
leſtis, temptations, luſtes, pleaſures.
ley, a ſong.
lees, leaſing: alſo loſt, releaſe.
lewde, *b.* ignorant.
leue, beleue, liue, releeue, graunt, deare.
let, **lete**, *b.* leaue, forſake.
leden, language.
lene, *b.* lend.
leueth, beareth.
leuer, better.
leech, *b.* a ſurgian.
leue, *b.* deare.
lete, *b.* left off, to leaue.
lends (*lumbi*) *d.* loines.
lettrure, *f.* booke learning.
ledge, *d.* lay.
leſſel, (*vmbraculum*) buſh or houell.
lele, right, lawfull.
lite, light.
legends, *l.* tales.
lere, *d.* to teach.
leuer, **leſe**, *d.* wont, deare, willing, rather.
lueth, remaineth.
legiſters, *i.* Lawyers.
leged, reſident.
lete, *b.* deemed, made ſhew, ſhewed.
leaſe, praiſe.
letting, leauing.
leueth, releeueth, alſo taketh leaue.
lemes, *b.* flames, light.
lectorne, a deske.
legging, *d.* lodging.

Ieteſt fare, *b.* makeſt ſhew.
Ieuelſell, a buſhe.
Iere, complexion, colour, skin.
Ietargi, *g.* a drouſie diſeaſe cauſing forgetfulnes.
Ieſt, luſt.
Litarge, (f. 55. p. 1.) *f.* white lead: The compoſition wherof, as I find it in an old written booke, is thus: *Accipitur plumbum, & funditur in olla, & proijciuntur interius teſtæ alterius ollæ, & poſtea moueatur olla fortiori manu, quouſq; commiſceantur teſtæ & plumbum, preterea proijciatur illud totum, & illud eſt litargirum: hoc modo preparatur plumbũ ad plũbaciones ollarum.*
Ligne aloes, a bitter kind of wood out of India and Arabia.
Licand, *b.* in good plite.
limitation, *i.* circuit.
Liard, *b.* nimble.
Lich lech, *b.* like.
Limatle, *i.* duſte that commeth of
light, to make light. (filing.
lith, lieth.
liſſe, *f.* end limit, border.
liſſe, leeſ, releaſe.
liſſe, *b.* eaſe.
ligne, *f.* line.
lith, (*membrum*) a lim.
lifthalfe, *b.* left ſide.
lith, lieth: alſo plaine.
liege, lege, *f.* lawfull, true.
ligneſ, liketh, yeeldeth.
litherly, *b.* ſlouthfull.
liggen, *b.* lie.
liart, *b.* gentle, lithe, ſmooth.
liuen, *b.* beleeue.
lith, lethy, *b.* ſoft, gentle.
liſſed, *f.* bounded.
liſſe, to haue leſſe, to wax leſſe.
lieges, *f.* ſubiects.
lithe, *b.* to eaſe.
lozrell, (*lurco*) deuourer.
lombes, lambs.
loos, loſe, *f.* prayſe: alſo order.
loſſell, *d.* craſty fellow.
louedaies, arbitrements.
loppe, *b.* a ſpider.
lodemanage, skill of nauigation by ſtone and needle.
lollar, *b.* a breaker of faſting daies
louke, a fellow receiuer.
lurco, a deuourer, a gulligut.
Loi, Dillan, Iulian, Runian, and what they were, may be knowne in the Legend, Feſtiual, and Votaries.
louting, *b.* kneeling, honouring.
longen, belong.
loze, *b.* learning, knowledge.
lozne, *b.* loſt.
loſenger, *f.* flatterer or liar.
londles, *b.* runnagates.
loute, *b.* to bow or bend.
lozenge, *f.* ſquare.
loſengeri, *f.* flattery.
lotebp, companion, or loue.
loth, *b.* lothed.
loſenges, *f.* ſquare figures.
loze, *b.* **loſt.**
loode, ledde.
loſenge, *f.* ſquare.
loſtheld, accompted loſt.
lodeſmen, *b.* guides.
loze, (*ratio*) regard, doctrine.
low, fire, flame: alſo to allow, or like.
lozdeth, ruleth.
lucerne, *l.* candell.
lugge, *b.* pull.
luſhbzough, a baſe coine in the daies of Edward the third.

M

Magicke, (Prolog.) He meaneth this Phyſician was skilful in Aſtrologie, and could make his election of fortunat hours, wherein to miniſter his potions to his patient: & likewiſe that hee was practiſed in Magicke naturall, as in making of Sigils or Characters ſtamped in mettall in their due times, fitted to that ſigne that gouerned that part of the bodie, wherein the maladie was: as the ſtampe of Aries for the diſeaſe in the head, & of Leo for the reines, &c. Hereof he ſpeaketh in the third booke of Fame.

And clerkes eke which conne well
All this Magicke naturell,
That craftely doe her entents,
To maken in certaine aſcendents
Images lo, through which Magicke
They make a man be whole and ſicke.

Martes marke, (fol. 34. pag. 1.) A skarre or cut which the children born in his regiment haue, and that in ſome part of their face: but this good wife of Bathe will needs haue two: one for the character of her principall Planet, and the other, &c.
maintenance, threatning.
maſteling, ſhining.
mazeline, a mazer.
manace, *f.* threaten.
maladie, diſeaſe.
make his beard, deceiue him.
malles, *b.* hammers, betils.
maumetri, *b.* worſhip of falſe gods.
martirdom, torment.
maſkewed, fenſed, fortified.
makeles, *b.* matchleſſe.
mate, *d.* daunted, tame, mad, pined, conſumed.
maugre, *f.* diſpite.
marreteth, *i.* dieth.
marke of Adam, mankind.
malſon, *b.* a curſe.
malleable, *b.* abiding the hammer.
matris, *b.* a fen.
mailes, *d.* round rings.
magonell, an inſtrument to caſt ſtones.
malt, *b.* melted.
manſuete, *l.* gentle.
mauuet, mahuinet, *b.* a toye, babie, idoll.
mannish, (*virago*) *b.* ſtout.
mauis, *f.* a buſhell.
make it, hinder it.
maint, mingled.
malt, melted.
matire, *f.* matter.
mani, *g.* madnes.
maſſeap, *b.* holy day.
mapſondew, *f.* an hoſpitall.
maiure, *f.* miſchaunce.
malebouch, *f.* wicked mouth.
Mercury crude, *l.* (fol. 55 p. 1.) Quicke ſiluer: for the killing wherof I read thus: *Argentum viuum extinguitur cum fuerit admixtione ſaliuæ hominis, donec diſpereat, & dico, quod ſi proieceris ſuper ipſum aquam fluentem, ſi redierit ad primam diſpoſitionem, non eſt extinctum: cum vero non redierit, bene eſt extinctum. Ipſum autem argentum viuum terra eſt.*
Meritot, *b.* (fol. 13. p. 2.) A ſport vſed by children by ſwinging themſelues in beſropes or ſuch like till they be giddy. In Latin it is called *Oſcillum*, and is thus deſcribed by an old writer. *Oſcilium eſt genus ludi, ſcilicet cum funis dependitur de trabe, in quo pueri,*

pueri, & puellæ ſedentes impelluntur huc & illuc.

metamorphoſeos, *g.* a worke written by *Ouid* of the Transmutation of things.

merke, *b.* darke.

mete, *b.* be gentle.

mete, mote, *b.* muſt, might.

medes, *b.* to boote.

mede, *b.* reward, helpe.

meſell, *f.* leper or lazerman.

meint, *b.* mingled.

met, dreamed.

meridionall, *l.* of the South.

mede, (*hydromeli*) *d.* hony and water ſodden together.

meſſagri, *f.* diligence in doing a meſſage.

mendicants, *l.* beggars.

meed, *b.* meddowes.

mew, ſecret.

meſt, *b.* moſt.

mete, deale, yeeld.

methe, a kind of ſweet drinke.

metten, dreame.

melite, power.

megre, *f. b.* leane.

Mouereſſe, (fol. 169.) the right reading is mouereſſe, as wee haue now printed it; that is, a ſtirrer of debate: for ſo it is in the French verſes in the oldeſt written copies. *Sembla byen eſtre mouereſſe.*

minſtralcie, any inſtrument of muſicke, or muſicke it ſelfe.

miſcreants, *f.* infidels.

miſqueame, *b.* diſpleaſe.

miſſat, *b.* became not.

miſtaken, miſuſed.

miſſill, miſcaried.

mirrour, *f.* a glaſſe.

miſtere, *f.* occupation, manner, faſhion, ſeruiſe, ſtrange thing: alſo need.

minneth, *l.* threatneth.

mirkthede, darkenes, miſtery.

mitches, *f.* manchets.

miſericorde, *l.* compaſſion.

minge, *b.* mingle.

mine, *b.* to entend: alſo to digge.

miſbode, wrong.

minotaure, *g.* a monſter, halfe a bull, and halfe a man.

Moſes & king Salomon, (fo. 23. p. 2.) Out of *Ioſephus* and *Petrus Comeſtor magiſter hiſtoriarum, qui claruit, An.* 1260.

moyſon, *f.* ripenes.

moneſt, *l.* admoniſh.

mouch, *b.* to take vp all.

mourdãt, *i.* the tong of a buckle.

mokell, mikell, *b.* much.

moztreſſe, a meate made of boiled hennes, crummed bread, yelkes of egges, and ſaffron, all boyled together.

mokell, *d.* ſtature, making, bignes

modeſte, *l.* moderate.

mountaunce, quantitie.

mollock, *b.* earth, dong.

mowen, (*poſſe*) be able.

mozmall, a canker.

moniours, *f.* coiners.

moeble, *f.* houſholdſtuffe.

mow, mon, *b.* might.

moſell, mouth, ſnoute.

mowlen, *b.* wax mould.

moten, *d.* muſt do.

moile, a diſh made of marrow and grated bread.

mozter, *f.* a lampe.

mote, *d.* muſt goe.

molles, kiſtrels.

mombliſhnes, *d.* talke.

muc, mooued.

muet, *f.* ſilent.

muckre, *b.* hoorde vp.

muſard, *f.* lingerer.

mynting, labouring.

N

Nadir, *a.* the point oppoſite to Zenith, or the point vnder the Horiſon right vnder our feet.

nakoners, *i.* (*crotalum*) cimbals.

nas, was not.

nart, art not.

nad, had not.

nale, *b.* the alehowſe.

narcotike, *d.* ſtupefactiue, making ſenſles.

nat wilne, not deſire.

nam, am not.

name, *d.* tooke.

nere, were not.

nede, nedes, *b.* buſines.

neighen, neigh, *b.* touch, to draw neere.

neſt, *b.* next.

neuen, neuin, *b.* name, named.

nerfe, *i.* ſinew, griſtle.

nedely, of neceſſitie.

neſh, *b.* tender.

nere, vntill, were it not.

nempt, *b.* named, name, tell.

nede, needed.

nerthes, herdmen.

nedes coſt, of neceſſitie.

nedders, adders.

nice, nife, *b.* fooliſh.

nicete, folly, curioſitie.

nitrall, ſaltpeter.

nigh, *b.* almoſt.

nighen, draw neere.

niſt, knew not.

nil, will not.

nigon, nigeon, *f.* dolt, niggard.

nigges, *b.* niggards.

nigh, neere, to draw neere.

nightſpell, *b.* a praier againſt the night mare.

nightertale, by night.

nimphes, *g.* maidens of the ſea.

nowell, ſignifieth *Deus nobiſcũ*: and is taken for Chriſtmas, & xx. or xxx. daies next before.

nozture, nurture.

noze, *f.* comforth, noriſhing.

note, a Saint called Neotes.

nones, *b.* condition, purpoſe.

nozi, *i.* nurſe.

noſt, knoweſt.

nome, taken, nummed.

nowth, now.

note, buſines.

O

Obay, abide.

obſeruaunce, *l.* honour.

obſtacles, *l.* lettes.

occiſion, *l.* murther.

occiſier, *l.* murderer.

octogami, *g.* eight times maried.

odible, *l.* hatefull.

offitozie, *l.* a ſong or leſſon in the time of offring.

oftſithes, *b.* ſundry times.

of plat then edge, of eaſe then griefe.

offrend, *f. d.* offring.

onde, (*halitus*) *b.* breath: alſo fury

on hie, apace.

oned, vnited.

onis, once.

on knew, *d.* one knee.

on pꝛeſſe, adowne.

openheed, bareheaded.

ozde, *l.* point.

ozdainoz, *d.* gouernour.

ozatozie, *l.* a Temple, a chappel.

oziſons, *f. b.* praiers.

Ordall, (fol. 162. p. 1.) *Ordalia* is a triall of chaſtity, and other things by going ouer hote burning culters of yron barefooted, as did *Emma*, and *Gunegond* the wife of *Henry* the fifteenth

fiftenth Emperor of Romans, as writeth *Crantius* in his Cronicles of Almaine. This Ordall was vſed among the Saxons, and ſince the conqueſt among the Normans: but in the time of king *Iohn* it was taken away by the Court of Rome: And afterward in England by the authoritie of Henry the third.

Ordred, *b.* hauing taken orders of prieſthood.

(**Ordersfower.**) The foure orders of Friers were theſe:

1 Friers Minors or gray friers, *Franciſcanes.*

2 Friers preachers or blacke friers, *Dominicanes.*

3 Friers *Carmelites*, or white friers.

4 Friers *Auguſtines.*

Orfrayes, (fol.113.p.1.) *Aurifriſium* friſled cloth of gold, made & vſed in England both before & ſince the Conqueſt, worne both by the Cleargie, and the Kings themſelues, as may appeare out of *Mathew Paris*, where he ſpeaketh of the Ornaments ſent by the abbots of England to the Pope: And alſo by a Record in the Tower, where the King commandeth the Templars to deliuer ſuch Iewels, garments, and ornaments as they had of the kings in keeping. Among the which he nameth *Dalmaticum velatum de Orefreis*: that is, a Damaske garment garded with Orfrayes.

Oriſont, *g.* the part of the firmament to vs ſeene.

Orientall, bright, bewtifull.

Orientall, *i.* bright.

Orpiment, the herbe Orpin.

Orloge, *f. g.* a diall.

Ouch, *b.* a boſſe or button of gold: alſo a wedge of gold.

Ouerfret, ſpred.

Ouerthrowing, haſt.

Outrate, depart, run.

Outrance, deſtruction.

Out take, except.

Owhere, any where.

Owndyng, *f.* garding like waues.

Owndy, *f.* wauing.

Owles, *b.* hookes, pinſars.

P

Palmers, (Prolog.) A Pilgrime and a Palmer did differ thus: The Pilgrime had ſome dwelling place, the Palmer had none: the Pilgrime trauailed to ſome certain place, the Palmer to all and not to any one: the Pilgrime might goe at his owne charge, the Palmer muſt profeſſe wilfull pouertie: the Pilgrime might giue ouer his profeſſion, the Palmer muſt be conſtant vntill he had obtayned the Palme; that is, victory ouer his ghoſtly enemies, and life by death.

Pasiphae (fol.323.p.1.) wife of *Minos* king of Creete, who hauing company with a bull, but rather as *Feſtus* ſaith, with a man called *Taurus*, brought foorth *Minotaurus*, who was halfe a man, and half a bull.

Palladium, *g.* the image of Pallas in Troy.

Pale, *f.* a ſpangle: alſo a robe of ſtate.

Palaſtere, *g.* a combate.

Pale, *b.* robe.

Paine maine, *f.* white bread.

Paing, cutting in paines.

Pace, *b.* appeaſe.

(**Palathi**) *Palathia* in *Anatolia.*

Papelard, *f.* hipocrite.

Paukers, *f.* toyles to take deare.

Parage, *f.* parentage.

Paiere, *b.* prate.

Partner, by partes.

Pan, *b.* braine.

Panter, *f.* a pitfall.

Pad, *b.* a bundell.

Parfay, *f.* verely.

Payneim, *b.* heathenniſh.

Paramours, *f.* louers, pleaſures.

Pardieux, *f.* verely.

Paplardi, *f.* hypocriſie.

Paraments, Robes of ſtate, or the place where they are kept.

Par, for.

Pauade, (*pugio*) a daggar or baſſard.

Penon, *f.* a long ſtreamer.

Perſe, *f.* sky colour.

Penneſele, many pence.

Penſell, *d.* a peece.

Perienct, a yong peare tree.

Perry, *f.* pretious ſtones, brauery with pretious ſtones.

Pekois, a pickaxe.

Perturben, *f.* diſturbe.

Pertilozigh, embrodered with pearle.

Permagall, equall.

Peregrine, *f.* ſtrange.

Pert, *d.* a peare tree.

Perpendicular, *l.* downe right.

Peruſe, *f.* (Prolog.) A barre: & here it is vnderſtood of the conference called the *Peruis* amongſt the young Counſellors, Pleaders, Attorneis, or Students of the law, ſuch as at this day might reſemble the courſe in the houſes of Court or Chauncery called mootes, and boltes: wherein the forme of pleading & arguing a caſe is exerciſed: For ſo doth *Forteſcue* in his 51. chapter of his booke, commending thoſe lawes, prooue, when he ſaieth: that after the Iudges were riſen at xj. of the clock from hearing of cauſes at Weſtminſter, *Placitantes tunc ſe diuertũt ad peruiſum, & alibi conſulentes cum ſeruientibus ad legem & aliꝯ conciliarijs ſuis.*

Percell, *f.* partly.

Pert, *l.* manifeſt.

Perre, *f.* a monument erected for remembraunce.

Peraunter, *b.* perchaunce.

Peregall, equall.

Peptre, (*philtrum*) *i. Pharmacum amatorium*, a drinke cauſing loue.

Pel, *d.* houſe, cell.

Peaſe, ſtay.

Penſell, *d.* baner.

Penible, *f.* painefull.

Phyſiologus, *g.* any writer of naturall Philoſophie.

Pine, *d.* pitie, ſorrow, deſire, pain, toyle: alſo a pit.

Pight, *b.* caſt.

Pine, to racke, to paine.

Pinant, a pined creature.

Pined, pained.

Piment, (*pigmentum*,) a drinke of wine and hony.

Pilloure, *f.* a piller, (*columna.*)

Pike, *b.* peepe.

Pight, *b.* propped, ſtrucke, ſettled.

pirate, a drinke made of peares.
pithonesse, *g.* a witch.
plumtuous, fruitfull.
plumage, *f.* feathers.
plat, *b.* flat.
plagues, *l.* partes.
plaine, *b.* to play, or sport.
plenere, *l.* fully.
plat then edge, ease then sorrow.
platly, *f.* plainly.
plight, *f.* turned, catched.
pounced, cut: also pressed.
porphiri, *f.* a marble mingled with red.
posted, *b.* tossed.
potent, *f.* a staffe.
portray, *f.* draw.
popere, a bodkin.
possede, *l.* succede.
poste, *i.* power.
pomell, *f.* rownde.
poluue, *f.* a pulley.
posteme, (*struma*) *f.* botch or wenne.
porthose, a seruise booke so called.
pointell, *f.* a writing pin.
powre, *b.* stare, looke.
powre, *d.* poore estate.
powdred, embroidered.
powder merchant, *Alephanginæ species*: powders whereof ginger bread is made.
poked, *b.* iogged.
pole artike, *g.* a starre called the North pole.
poinant, *f.* sharpe.
popelot, *d.* puppet or yongwench.
porraile, base, beggarly.
pomely grise, *f.* dapple gray.
polite, *l.* eloquent.
pose, suppose.
preueth, reproueth.
pregnant, *i.* full, thicke.
prime, *l.* nine of the clocke.
precious, *i.* fine, curious, of account.
preuid, *f.* hardy.
presse, *d.* subiection.
prefect, *l.* a magistrate.
prefer, *l.* excell.
preue, a proofe.
presen, tread on.
pull and pointen, goore and strike.
prickesoure, a ranke rider.
pray, request.
pry, *f.* pray.
priket, a small wax candle.
prien, *b.* looke.
probatine piscant, *l.g.* the sheps poole.
processions, *l.* perambulations about the fields in the gang weeke.
pronosticke, *g.* foretelling.
predication, *l.* preaching.
probleme, *g.* an hard question or riddle.
prow, *f.* profit, power, honour.
proheme, *g.* a preface.
Pruce, Prussia, a countrey by Almaine and Russie.
pruce, of Prussia.
Puella & Rubeus, (fol. 6. p. 1.) The names of two figures in Geomancie, representing two constellations in heauen. *Puella* signifieth Mars retrograde, and *Rubeus* Mars direct.
pugnant, *l.* pricking.
purueiance, *f.* prouidence.
purfled, garded, fringed.
pullayle, *f.* wildfowle, poultry.
purfill, gard, or fringe.
puruay, *f.* prouide.
purprise, *f.* enclosure, deuise.
pusell, *f.* damsell.
pulchritude, *l.* bewtie.
putre, *i.* whoredome.

Q

Quacke, *b.* daunt.
quappe, *b.* quaile, shake, stir.
quaint gyres, *b.* strange fits.
qualme, *b.* calmenesse.
qualme, *b.* griefe.
quad, *d.* bad.
quarrels, arrowheads.
queme, quemen, *b.* please.
quent, *b.* quenched, strange.
querele, *i.* quarrell, complaint.
quell, *d.* destroy, dash.
quentise, curiositie.
querrour, *f.* stonedigger.
quintible, a treble.
quistron, *f.* beggar.

R

Raa, *b.* a Roe.
rakestele, *b.* the rake handell.
rabiat, *i.* mad.
rade boure, tapestry, lomeworke.
rackell, *d.* hasty, to be hasty.
racine, *f.* roote.
ranke, *b.* hoarse.
rath, *b.* quickly.
raught, went, reached. (tied.
rauished, *f.* taken, ouercom, ca-
raffles, *f.* rifeling.
rathest, *b.* soonest.
rape, *d.* hast.
ramagious, *f.* wilde.
rape, *f.* quickly: also hast.
ramage, *f.* wilde.
rauishing, *f.* a swift sway.
raft, *b.* rent. (stone.
ragounces, a kind of pretious
raskayle, *b.* trash.
rauish, *f.* to rob.
rauenish, blacke.
rayled, *b.* ran.
rayes, songs, rondels.
recreant, *f.* out of hope, vntrusty
redowbting, praising, setting forth.
renomie, *f.* good name, fame.
rest, roose.
reight, *b.* reached. (ward.
retrograde, *l.* that goeth back-
renouelences, *f.* renewings.
reniant, *f.* reuolter.
redeth, *b.* aduiseth.
red, *b.* the meaning.
reuesten, *f.* to apparell.
remuable, *f.* mutable, ready.
reue, *f.* spoile, robbe.
renegate, a Christian turned Turke.
renkes, *b.* rankes.
relagor, rats bane.
rekelnesse, *d.* rashnes.
reines, fine cloth, of the place where it is made.
redelesse, *b.* helplesse.
renouell, *f.* renew.
rehete, *b.* promise.
recketh, *b.* careth.
refreide, *f.* refraine.
renable, (*mobilis*) *b.* ready quicke.
rescous of our lay, defence of our Law.
reare, (*rarus*) deuided.
regrate, *f.* lamentation, sorrowfull sute.
rew, *b.* take pitie.
rebecke, an old trot.
reme, take away, denie.
rethe, *l.* a net.
rede, *b.* to aduise.
replication, *l.* reply, gainsaying.
renouelen, *f.* newly returne.
reue, *b.* pull away.
reuell, *b.* sport.

recke, *b. d.* care.
reuerſe, *f.* contrary.
refrete, *f.* full.
redouting, ſetting forth.
reioice, enioy.
renged, *f.* compaſſed.
recreance, *i.* comfort.
regalt, *i.* princely power.
repaire, iſſue, conſequent.
recure, *b.* recouer.
refraine, a ſtop.
ratgne, *i.* kingdom.
remord, *f.* giue remorſe.
rede, *d.* helpe, aduiſe, ſpeech, art: alſo to aduiſe.
refroiden, *f.* coole, ceaſe.
relayes & lymers, *f.* ſtanders at aduantage with darts to kill the deare.
realte, *i.* roialty.
recreãdiſe, *f.* infidelity, wanhope.
ren, *b.* pull, get.
recreance, *f.* beyond credit.
refuit, *i.* healpe.
reigne, *l.* kingdom.
remew, *f.* remoue.
redowze, *f.* turning, doubling.
reketh, *b.* ſmoketh.
retch, *b.* care.
reuerberation, *l.* a ſtriking backe
ribaude, (*leno*) *i.* a bawde.
ribyb, *f.* an old bawd.
ribands, *d.* borders.
ribaned, garded.
rife, *d.* rifell.
riddeled, checkred.
ribibbie, rebecke, *f.* a gitterne, or fiddle.
rining, *b.* dropping.
rimpled, (*rugatus*) *d.* wrinckled.
riſe, *f.* bewtie.
riue, *b.* rend.
riuen, *d.* thruſt.
riueling, turning in and out.
reignous, *f.* ruinous.
roket, a linnen garment.
romer, *b.* wider.
romed, *b.* walked.
rone, *b.* rayned.
ronn, ceaſe.
roch, *f.* a rocke.
roile, *b. d.* range.
romant, a brieſe hiſtory.
Roſamond, (fol. 314. p. 1.) This *Roſamond* the faire daughter of *Walter* Lord *Clifford*, was forced to bee concubine vnto *Henry* the ſecond, who builded for her at Woodſtock an houſe with a Labyrinth vnder the ground, much whereof at this day is to be ſeene: as alſo a goodly Bath or Well, called to this day *Roſamonds* well. In the end ſhe was poyſoned by Queen *Elianor*, ſome write; and being dead, was buried at Godſtow in an houſe of Nonnes beſides Oxford. Not long ſince her graue was digged, were ſome of her bones were found, and her teeth ſo white (as the dwellers thereabout report) that the beholders did much wonder at them.
roſary, a booke ſo called.
roſere, *f.* a roſeplat.
routhleſſe, *b.* pitileſſe.
row, *b.* angerly.
roue, *b.* did rend.
roune, *b.* to tell in the eare, to whiſper.
rowme, *b.* walking.
roine, *f.* a skat.
roſtal, *l.* red.
rowned, *b. d.* ſpoken ſoftly.
rowes, *b.* ſtreiks.
roundell, *d.* a kind of ſong.
roggeth, ioggeth.
ronges, *d.* the ſides of a ladder.
rouken, *d.* lie, ſnort.
rowning, *b.* talking ſecretly, ſilence.
roth, ruth, *b.* pitie.
row, *d.* rough.
rowketh, *b.* lieth.
rought, *b.* cared.
rote, *d.* courſe.
row, *d.* vgly, blodily.
rote, an inſtrument of Muſicke vſuall in Wales. (Iade.
rownſy, rowncuall, *f.* a great
Rubrich, (fol. 32. p. 2.) In the Canon law the Arguments of euery chapter was written with redde letters, which was called the Rubricke, and the text with blacke.
rubicunde, *l.* redde.
rubifying, *d.* making redde.
rucking, *d.* lying, ſnorting.
rud, *b.* complexion.
ruell bone, *f.* of the French word *Riole*, that is, diuerſly coloured: an *Antiſtæchon* in many wordes deriued from an other language; as, in Law from *Loy*: and *Roi*, from *Rex*.
ru, *b.* lament.
ruſe, *b.* prayſe.

S

Sarge, *f.* faycloth.
ſalew, *f.* honour.
ſand, ſending.
ſaylors, *f.* daunſers.
ſat me ſore, touched me neare.
ſaturnade, ſwart, blacke.
ſaw, *b.* ſpeach.
ſat, became.
ſalow, *b.* white.
ſawſefleame, red faced.
ſare, *b.* ſore.
ſarliniſh, a kind of ſilke like Sarcenet.
ſawes, *b.* ſayings, words.
(Satali) A cittie in Anatolia, called ſometime Atalia.
ſanguine, *i.* redde.
ſalcweth, *f.* ſaluteth.
ſamet, *f.* Sattin.
ſabatons, ſoldiers boots.
ſance, *f.* without.
ſaue, *d.* ſage.
ſautri, *g.* an inſtrument like to an harpe but far more pleaſant.
ſarpleſis, ſachels, packes, or fardels.
S. Iohn to borrow, with good
ſaine alſe, ſeene alſo. (ſpeed,
ſanatine, *l.* healing.
ſaut, *b.* aſſault.
ſange, *d.* a ſonge. (place.
ſaintwarie, (*Aſylū*) a priuiledge
Scholliers hall, (fol. 14. p. 2.) or Vniuerſitie hall, founded by the Chauncellor, & Maiſters of the Vniuerſitie, *Ann.* 1326. but ſince vnited to the foundation of the Lady *Elizabeth de Burgo*, counteſſe of Clare, and called Clare hall.
ſchall, ſhall.
ſcathlike, *b.* harmfull.
ſcrippe, a wallet.
ſchoolclay, exhibition.
ſcriueniſh, ſubtelly.
ſcantilone, a meaſure.
ſcarceheed, want.
ſciled, cloſed.
ſcorning, changing.
ſees, *b.* ſeates.
ſettels, grafts.

ſetrone, bright, cleare.
ſey, law, ſene.
ſewis, *b.* follow.
ſeculer, *l.* a layman, worldly.
ſeuge, *d.* burne.
ſeker, *d.* in like ſort.
ſeere, *f.* ſecret.
ſeld, *b.* ſeldom.
ſeinde, *b.* ſcorch.
ſele, *f.* ſeale.
ſey, ſene.
ſeptentrion, *l.* the North.
ſegge, *d.* ſay.
ſemicope, *l.* a ſhort cloke.
ſere, *b.* diuers.
ſeptẽtrional, *l.* belonging to the
ſeignozy, *f.* power. (North.
ſenten, ſent.
ſendall, a thin ſtuffe like cipreſſe.
ſelineſſe, felicitie.
ſew, ſowne.
ſempt, *b.* ſeemed.
ſeint, *f.* a girdle.
ſemblable, *b.* like.
ſewing, placed.
ſerment, *f.* an othe.
ſewen, ſowe.
ſentement, *f. l.* ones owne deuiſe: alſo ſenſe, feeling.
ſet, *f.* becommeth.
ſew, *b.* follow.
ſequedzi, *i.* preſumption.
ſenged, *b.* ſcorched.
ſementing, faſtening togither.
ſemed, thought.
ſewes, *b.* brothes.
ſete, did ſit.
ſered, pockets, burned cloutes.
ſely, happy, alſo wonderfull.
ſeker, verely.
ſey, ſene, ſaw.

Shildes, (prolog.) Shields in French called *eſcus*, are french crownes, wherin this Merchant did deale by returne.

ſhene, ſhining bright.
ſhulien, *b.* ſhall. (marre.
ſhenden, *d.* blame, to ſpoile, to
ſhede, depart.
ſhewres, *b.* brunts.
ſherife, Reue, or gouernor of the
ſhendeth, *b.* hurteth. (ſhire.
ſhaw, a ſhadow, a tufte of trees.
ſhepen, *b.* ſimple, fearfull.
ſherten, *b.* cloſed.
ſhond, *b.* harme.
ſhild, *b.* defend.
ſhode, *d.* head, buſh of heare.
ſhoder, *d.* ſhoulder.
ſhemering, *d.* glimering.
ſhoue, put.
ſhete, *b.* ſhoote.
ſhepens, ſhepecoots.
ſhoze, *d.* a cleſte.
ſhift, beſtow.
ſhad, fell.
ſhent, *d.* harmed, troubled.
ſhzight, *b.* crying out.
ſhent, *b. d.* infected.
ſhowſe, *b.* put off.
ſib, *b. d.* a kin.
ſith, *b.* by and by: alſo time.
ſitole, the ſweete muſicke of the Doulcimer called *Sambuca*.

Signe of the Lion, (fol. 8. p. 1.) For then is Saturne in his detriment, and in oppoſition to his owne houſe.

ſie, ſighe, ſeigh, *b.* ſaw.
ſike, ſigh, alſo ſicke.
ſie, *b.* to ſee, to fall ſideling.
ſigh, ſaugh, *b.* ſaw.
ſikerer, *b.* certainer, truer.
ſit well, is mete.
ſithneſſe, ſeing that.
ſimphony, *g.* muſicke.
ſikerly, *b.* truly.
ſider, a drinke made of appels.
ſike, a ſigh.
ſignals, *l.* tokens.
ſile, baniſhment.
ſin, *b.* ſince.
ſiker, *d.* ſure I.
ſit, *b.* fitteth.
ſith, after.
ſithen, *b.* after.
ſkaffant, an engin of warre.
ſkinketh, powreth out.
ſkils, expoſitions.
ſkath, *b.* harme.
ſkilfull, reaſonable.
ſkleren, couer.
ſkath, *b.* harme.
ſkale, *b.* ſcabbe.
ſkozchlith, ſcorcheth.
ſkarmoch, *d.* skirmiſh.
ſkere, *b.* fray.
ſleite, *b.* ſleight, craft.
ſlough, *b.* ditch.
ſlittered, *b.* cut.
ſlider, (*labilis*) *d.* ſlipry.
ſliding, faint.
ſleutles, *b.* vaine.
ſli, *b.* a ſubtill ſelow, wiſe.
ſlouth, forſlow.
ſlow, *b.* a ſluggard.
ſliuer, *b.* a parcell.
ſlo, *b.* kill.
ſlough, *b.* killed.
ſlite, *b.* rent, tere.
ſligh, *b.* comming.
ſlew, ſleue.
ſlaked, *d.* perſed, looſed.
ſlouthlich, ſloueniſh.
ſmart, quicke.
ſmert, greued.
ſmete, *b.* ſmitten.
ſmoterlich, *d.* ſmoutfaire, or painted.
ſnewed, did ſnow.
ſownen, *b.* ſownd.
ſoken, *b.* trade, dealing.
ſourd, *f.* riſe, ſpring.
ſowned, *b.* ordained.
ſowke, *b.* ſpend, draw out.
ſowled, *b.* inſpired.
ſolein, *l.* onely.
ſonniſh, bright.
ſouple, *f.* gentle, pliable.
ſotell, *d.* ſubtile.
ſoigne, *f.* care, dilligence.
ſoother, *b.* truer.
ſophiſmes, *g.* ſubtilties.
ſonne or weet, dry or wet.
ſooth, *b.* truth.
ſond, ſande.
ſoote, *d.* ſwete.
ſolſtitium, *l.* the ſtay of the ſun, when he can not go either higher, or lower.
ſozy, *d.* eaſie, ſoft, feeble.
ſours, *f.* ſpring.
ſoft, quietly.
ſowne, *b.* ſpeach, ſownde.
ſotour, *f.* dwelling, ſetling.
ſotourne, a iourney, a tariyng: alſo to tarie.
ſowth ſawes, *b.* true ſpeaches.
ſowpen, *b.* ſuppe.
ſowgh, *b.* ſownd.
ſonenelle, *f.* noyſe.
ſound, to heale, to be healed.
ſoukle, *d.* wretched, poore.
ſow and plite, *b.* ſeale and fould.
ſoget, ſubget, ſubiect.
ſonitreſſe, heyre ſhining as the ſunne.
ſond, *b.* will, mind, pleaſure, commandement.
ſozt, *l.* chaunſe.
ſplinge, *i.* ſprinkle, intrude.
ſplendent, *l.* bright.
ſpzay, ſprig, or bow.
ſperis, *b.* asketh.

ſperme,

ſperme, *g.* ſeede.
ſped, handled: alſo haſted.
ſpeces, *l.* partes.
ſpirtueles, *l.* heauenly graces.
ſpedefull, (*efficax*) earneſt.
ſpanew, *b.* very new.
ſperid, *b.* asked.
ſperd, *b.* ſhut vp.
ſplay, to ſpread.
ſpringowlds, *b.* yongmen.
ſperkell, wandring.
ſparth, (*b. pennis*) *d.* a dubble ax.
ſpell, *b.* a tale, worde.
ſphere, *g.* a figure in all parts equally round.
ſpaniſhing, *d.* full breadth.
ſpenſe, *d.* a buttry.
ſpartly, a ſpeare.
ſquames, *i.* ſtales.
ſquire, a carpenters rule.
ſquireth, wayteth.
Stoke, (fol. 235. pag. 1.) This bird breedeth in the chimney tops of houſes, and as it is written of him, if the man or the wife commit adultery he preſently forſaketh the place. And as *Ariſtotle* ſaith, if his female play falſe, he will, if he can, kill her: or elſe vtterly forſake her. Therfore *Chaucer* calleth him the wreker of adultery.
ſtopen, ſtowped.
ſtripe, ſtrene, *l.* kinred.
ſterelich, *d.* earneſtly.
ſtondinealc, a little after, ſmall, little.
ſtad, *b.* combred.
ſteds, *d.* places.
ſtownd, *b.* ſodenly.
ſtole, *i.* a tippet.
ſtenten, *b.* way.
ſtatu, *i.* picture.
ſtout, *d.* ſtood.
ſtound, *b. d.* time, courſe, moment
ſterne, *b.* ſtiffe, ſtowte.
ſtot, a yong horſe.
ſtoure, *b.* skirmiſh.
ſtith, *b.* an aeuill.
ſtere, *b.* make a motion.
ſtele, *d.* an handle.
ſtedſhip, *d.* ſtaiednes.
ſtremeden, *d.* guſhed out.
ſtarke ſtoures, *b.* ſharp aſſaults.
ſtede, *b.* a gelding.
ſtere, ſterne.
ſtre, *b.* a ſtraw.
ſtamin, *l.* hempe.
ſtered, *b.* dealt withall.
ſtere, to make.
ſtighed, *d.* aſcended.
ſtrond, (*tractus*) *d.* banke, a coſte, or region.
ſtaulketh, *b.* walketh, ſtrideth.
ſteuen, *b.* ſound, time, meeting.
ſtew, *b.* a ſmall pond for fiſh.
ſteuen, *b.* ſownd, alſo time.
ſtall, *d.* ſet.
ſtede, *d.* place.
ſtrake, *b.* to paſſe, to ſtride.
ſtemed, *b.* gaue out heat, or rednes.
ſterne, to lay downe.
ſtrepe, rob, ſtrip.
ſtownd ill, bad caſe.
ſtowuds, *b.* ſorrowes, dumpes: alſo courſes.
ſteire, a ſterne.
ſtarke, *b.* ſtiffe.
ſtereles, *b.* without ſterne.
ſtraught, (*extentus*) *b.* ſtretched.
ſturte, ſtrangle, ſcuffle.
ſtames, (*ſubergmen*) *l.* warpe.
ſubalter, and ſept, the ſtreits betwene Spaine and Barbary.
ſued, *f.* followed.
ſurplus, *d.* remnant.
ſurquidri, *f.* preſumption.
ſulpires, *l.* ſighes, ſobbes.
ſuckney, a white attire like a rotcher.
ſuperne, *l.* aboue.
ſulpires, *l.* ſighes.
ſubiuming, *l.* aſcending.
ſuppriſed, *f.* ouercome.
ſurquidous, *l.* preſumptuous.
ſurcote, a gowne with a hood of the ſame.
ſurſanure, (*quaſi ſurſum ſanatum*) a ſore ſeſtred inward, and whole without.
ſubimatory, a kind of ſtill.
ſuperficie, *l.* the ouermoſt part of any thing.
ſupplien, *f.* make entreatie.
ſuppoſaile, vpholder.
ſuperlatife, *l.* hieſt.
ſwyre, *b.* necke.
ſwich, *b.* ſuch.
ſweuen, a dreame.
ſwinker, a labourer.
ſawtry, *f.* daunſing, inſtrumentall muſicke, or the inſtrument.
ſwilke, *b.* ſuch.
ſwolow, *b.* gulfe.
ſwyre, *b.* a necke.
ſwitch, *b.* quickly.
ſwaine, *b.* a ſeruant.
ſwow, a ſleepe.
ſwelt, *b.* ſowned.
ſwert, *d.* ſunburned, blacke.
ſwough, *b.* ſound.
ſwith, *b.* ſwift, ſwiftly.
ſwa, *b.* alſo, ſo.
ſwelwen, *b.* devour.
ſwonken, *b.* laboured.
ſwoll, *b.* ſwelled.
ſwegh, (*impetus*) *b.* force.
ſwelt, *b.* die.
ſykes, ſighes.
ſyker, *b.* aſſurance, ſteddy.
ſykerd, *d.* allied.
ſye, *b.* to fall.
ſyth, *b.* afterward, times.

T

Tabard, *d.* (Prolog.) A Iaquet, or ſleueleſſe coate, worne in times paſt by Noblemen in the warres, but now onely by Heraults, and is called theyre coate of Armes in ſeruice. It is the ſigne of an Inne in Southwarke by London, within the which was the lodging of the Abbot of Hyde by Wincheſter. This was the Hoſtelry where *Chaucer* and the other Pilgrims met together, and with *Henry Baily* their hoſte, accorded about the manner of their iourney to Canterbury. And whereas through time it hath bin much decaied, it is now by Maſter *I. Preſton*, with the abbots houſe thereto adioyned, newly repaired, and with conuenient roomes much encreaſed, for the receipt of many gueſts.
tapinage, *f.* ſecreſie, ſlilines.
tailages, toll, cuſtomes.
tapes, *b.* ſtrings.
Taure, & Mars therein, (fol. 34. pag. 1.) Taurus being properly Venus houſe, vnder the which ſigne this woman was borne, Mars then ruling in the ſame, Prognoſticateth great incontinencie.
tackle, *b.* feather, arrow.
taas, *f. d.* an heape.

tabourc, a drum.
talages, payments.
talagiers, toolegatherers.
tapite, *d.* tapeſtrie.
taling, *d.* telling tales.
tacop, to plucke to, or draw.
tabouren, *d.* ſound.
targe, *l.* a target.
tarch, tetch, *b.* craft.
tatterwags, *b.* ragges, iagges.
tale, tayle.
tane, *b.* take.
talent, *f. i.* deſire.
talled, *b.* taſſelled.
taſſay, to aſſay.
teſtes, certaine deuiſes to try gold and ſiluer.
teſteres, *f.* skuls, ſallets.
tene, *b.* ſorrow.
teſtifie, *f.* wild brained.
teine, an Ingot of metall.
teine, *g.* a text.
termine, *l.* to end.
terreſtre, *f. l.* earthly.
temen, lay, or bind.
temps *f. l.* time.
tell no ſtore, take no regard.
tetch, *b.* a tricke, a ſtayne, frowardnes.
tenhaunce, ſet out.
tewell, *b.* chimney.
tercelet, *d. Falco maſculus.*
textuele, textele, *l.* skilfull in the text.
thrages, buſie matters.
Theophraſt, (fol. 26. p. 1.) In his booke *De Frugalitate*, elſe in his treatiſe *De Loquacitate mulierum.*
therout, without.
threke, thruſt.
thirled, perſed.
thence, catch, find, yet.
thanks, acts, enterpriſes, labour, reward.
thewes, qualities.
thenne, thence.
thilke, ſame.
threpe, *b.* affirme.
thare, there: alſo needeth.
thirled, (*jugulauit*) ſtrangled.
thacked, *b.* bet, ſmote.
thringing, thruſting, cluſtering together.
throw, a ſhort time.
thriueth, *b.* ſpringeth.
tho, thoſe, although.
thaſery, outcry.
thorrube, an heape.
thilled, killed.
thorpe, *d.* a village.
thankeheld, thanke worthy.
theke, ſuch.
throw, anger, haſt.
threſt, oppreſſe.
thre mot, the blaſt of an horne.
then, although.
thonke held, *d.* beſtow labour or liking.
thoppoſite, *l.* oueragainſt.
tholed, *b.* ſuffred.
thauentaile, coate of male.
thringe, *d.* thruſt.
thedom, *b.* thriuing.
theich, plaine, ſmooth.
thore, before.
threte, curſe, threaten.
timbeſters, plaiers on ſounding inſtruments.
tid, *b.* happened, befallen.
tiflers, triflers.
tite, *b.* befalleth.
tilleth, *b.* ploweth.
tiren, teare, rent.
tides, *b.* hapneth.
tiſſu, *f.* a lace.
told, tooke care, made accompt.
tout, *b.* hole.
Tortuous, (fol. 18. p. 1.) Tortuous the ſignes are, which are called *Obliquæ aſcendentia*: that is, al from Capricorn to Cancer. So he calleth the *Aſcendent* vnfortunate, becauſe it is one of thoſe ſigns, and had at the ſame time the lord of that ſigne in his fall, which is in the Signe contrary to his exaltation.
toteth, *b.* looketh.
tone, *b.* clawes.
Tolitane tables (fol. 50. p. 1.) Alphonſus tables to calculat the motion of the Planets for the meridian of Toledo.
towell, tayle.
torcencions, vſing extortion.
toder, *b.* the other.
tombleſters, tumblers.
told no tale, tooke no care.
tole, *f.* clout, toy.
tournet, *f.* a tower.
tort, *i.* extortion.
torrets, rings, or the faſtning of dogges collars.
totti, *b.* dizzie.
totoler, prater.
(**Tramiſſene**,) a cittie in Barbarie, in the Prouince ſometime called Mauritania Tingitana, or Cæſarienſis as hath *Melanghton.*
traue, *b.* a treuis to ſhoo a wild horſe in.
trate, trot, old drabbe.
tranſcend, *l.* paſſe, exceed.
trepeget, an inſtrument to caſt ſtones.
trowen, to truſt.
trice, pull.
triſt, (*meta*) a marke.
treſſed, broyded vp.
trentall, thirty maſſes.
treſſe, (*funiculus*) *d.* the broiding vp of the heire.
tretis, ſtreight.
trauers, *f.* ouerthwart, a curtaine
trip, *b.* a peece.
trew, truce.
tranſmew, *i.* change.
trill, *b. d.* to turne, to droppe.
trenchant, *f.* bending: alſo ſharpe.
traple, *f.* an arbour.
triſt, *l. b.* ſad: alſo to beleeue.
traitrie, *f.* treaſon.
tregetor, a iugler.
troce, *d.* wreath or wyth.
treſſes, heire, braides of heire.
truandiſe, *d.* idlenes.
trete, handle.
trects, ſtreight.
treget, deceit.
trophe, *i.* victory.
tulſurelike, *f.* tilekil-like.
tull, lure, allure.
twittell, *b.* a knife.
twin, *b.* departe: alſo ſeparate.
twiereth, ſingeth.
twy, *d.* two.
twynned, *b.* parted.
twight, *b.* pulled.
twyn, to take away, to depart, to turne.
twifold, *d.* dubble.
twitten, *b.* carued out.
twiſt (*ramus*) *b.* a bow.
twiſt, *b.* pinch, hold.
twy, twap, *d.* two.

V

Valerie and Theophraſt, fol. 34. pa. 1.) Some will haue vs read *Valerie* and his Paraphraſt.

phraſt. This *Valerie* wrote a booke *De non Ducenda vxore*, with a Paraphraſe vpon it, which I haue ſeene in the ſtudie of M. *Allen* of Oxford (a man of as rare learning, as he is ſtored with rare books.) His name was *Gualterus Maape*, Archdeacon of Oxford, in the dayes of King Henry the ſecond, but changed his name becauſe hee would not haue the author knowne, and tearmed it *Valerius ad Ruſinum*. But yet there was one called *Valerius*, who wrote a booke of the ſame argument, printed among S. *Ieromes* workes. And likewiſe one called *Theophraſtus Ereſius*, who among many things did write a book, wherin he reaſoneth, whether it be conuenient for a wiſe man to mary. *Ioannes Sarisberienſis* in his Policraticon hath tranſlated ſome things in this booke out of Greeke and Latine, as may appeare, *lib.* 8. *cap.* 11. *De moleſtijs & oneribus Coniugiorum*: out of which chapter, *Chaucer* hath taken much for this argument, as may be ſeen in the Merchants Tale: but more in the wife of Bathes Prologue, where betweene 30 and 40 verſes are tranſlated from thence. And if the whole worke at this day were by ſome ſufficient ſcholler tranſlated, it would deſerue as much commendation as many bookes, which learned men, not without great commendation, haue heretofore tranſlated.

Valence, *i.* cloth of Valencia in Spaine.

Vapoured, *l.* aſcended.

Vaſſellage, *f.* ſeruice, ſubjection.

Van, *f.* a fanne.

Vauſoure, *f.* a Lord.

Vernacle, (Prolog.) A cloth or napkin, wherin was the figure of Chriſts face.

Vernage, *i.* ſweet wine to bee drunke in Winter.

Vent, forepart.

Verge, *f.* a gardeine.

Vermell, vermayle, *f.* red.

Ventoſing, *f.* cupping.

Veiued, weued, put away.

Verre, *f.* glaſſe.

Vechons, Hedgehogs.

Vecke, *i.* an old woman.

Veneri, *l.* hunting.

Vigils, (Prolog.) It was the manner in times paſt, vpon feaſtiuall euens, called *Vigiliæ*, for pariſhioners to meet in their Church houſes, or Church-yards, and there to haue a drinking fit for the time. Here they vſed to end many quarels between neighbour and neighbour. Hither came the wiues in comely maner, and they which were of the better ſort, had their mantles carried with them, as well for ſhew, as to keepe them from cold at the table. Theſe mantles alſo many did vſe in the Church at morrow maſſes and other times.

Via Appia, *l.* an high way or cauſey from Rome to Campaigne.

Vinari enuermayled, *f.* vineyard made red.

Vitelay, a kind of ſong.

Vite, *l.* a vine.

Vinolent, *l.* drunke, ſmelling of wine.

Viſage it, *f.* face it out.

Viended, *f.* hauing plentie of fleſh meat.

Vmple, *b.* fine lawne.

Vncouth, *b.* ſtrange.

Vnſelines, misfortune.

Vnderneme, excommunicate.

Vnpliten, *b.* make plaine.

Vnwrie, vncouer.

Vnderne, *b.* afternoone.

Vnneth, *b.* ſcarce.

Vnberd, laid open.

Vnwiſt, *b.* vnknowne.

Vnyolden, *b.* not yeelding.

Vndernome, felt.

Vnderſpoze, *b.* put vnder.

Vnſet ſteuen, *b.* vnappointed time.

Vnſounded, vnhealed.

Vndermeles, *b.* afternoones.

Vnſely, vnhappie.

Vnderfonge, take in hand.

Vnſperd, *b.* vnlocked.

Vomes, *f.* foming.

Volunde, *i.* will.

Voluper, a kercher.

Volage, *f.* vnconſtant.

Voundſtone, free ſtone.

Volatili, *i.* wild foule.

Volage, *l.* pleaſure.

Vpſwale (*intumeſcebat*) ſtarted, ſwelled vp.

Vppight, *b.* taken vp.

Vphap, *b.* ouercouer.

Vrne, *l.* an earthen pot.

Vre, *b.* hap, chaunce, vſe.

Vrnes, *l.* pitchers.

Vttrance, *f.* extremitie.

W

Waſtell bread, (*libellus*) fine Cymnell.

Wangs, *b.* (*molares*) great teeth.

Waltring, *b.* wallowing.

Waymenting, *b.* lamenting.

Waren, *d.* afflict.

Waget, watchet colour.

Warri, *d.* to make warre.

Warne, aſſure.

Waiue, *b.* to turne fro.

Waite, *b.* marke.

Wardeorſe, an ouerſeer.

Wones, *d.* dwellings.

Waiued, remoued.

Wanger, *d.* a male, or bouget.

Warren, *d.* grant, defend.

Wades bote, (fol. 27. page 1.) Concerning *Wade* and his bote called Guingelot, as alſo his ſtraunge exploits in the ſame, becauſe the matter is long and fabulous, I paſſe it ouer.

Warriangles, (fol. 37. page 2.) be a kind of birds full of noiſe, and very rauenous, preying vpon others, which when they haue taken, they vſe to hang vpon a thorne or pricke, and teare them in peeces, and deuour them. And the common opinion is, that the thorne, whereupon they thus faſten them and eat them, is afterward poiſonſome. In Staffordſhire & Shropſhire the name is common.

Warned, denied.

Wawes, *b.* waues.

Wate, *b.* know.

Warbles,

warbels, werbles, notes of muſicke.
walthſome, *d.* lothſome.
waped, daunted.
warenſtored, defended.
warneſtore, fortifie.
wantruſt, *b.* miſtruſt.
warith, ſaue, deliuer.
wariſhed, eaſed, deliuered.
ware, *b.* marke thou.
waried, *b.* chaunged, old.
wariſon, reward.
way, to guide.
werds, guides.
well, to ſpring.
wenen wiſely, *b.* thinketh verely.
welken, *b.* the skie.
weyen, wiſh.
welden, to moue.
were, *b.* a doubt, a maſe, alſo a place where fiſhers lay their nets to take fiſh.
wetten, *b.* know.
werth, *b.* worke.
werkes, *b.* aketh.
wenden, *b.* thinke.
weldy, *b.* nimble.
wene, a doubt, alſo wened.
weſterne, to draw weſt.
werre, werry, *b.* curſe, alſo deſtroy.
werne, denie.
wex, encreaſe.
wend, *b.* thoght, think, by gueſſe.
werried, *d.* baniſhed, confounded.
werth, deſeruing.
wilneſt, art willing.
wene, *b.* thought, doubt.
wemleſſe, *b.* blameleſſe.
welneth, *d.* riſeth.
went, (*via*) a way, a walk, a doubt.
weſt, ſet at weſt.
welkneth, *d.* drieth, fainteth.
wede, *b.* apparrell.
welt, *b.* ruled.
welked, *d.* withered.
wed, *d.* pledge, gage.
weſtreth, ſetteth at weſt.
werrieſt, *b.* curſeſt.
wendeſt, *b.* goeſt.
wete, *b.* knoweth.
weld, *b.* hold, gouerne.
weiue, *b.* forſake, reject.
welked wyners, *d.* withered vine branches.
wenden, *b.* thinke, knew.
werne, *b.* forbid, put aſide.
wernings, denials.
welde, *b.* to rule, alſo to find.
welked, *d.* withered.
welefull, *b.* wealthie.
whilke, *b.* which.
whele, round.
Wine Ape, (fol. 84. pag. 1.) *Vinum Apianum*: that maketh one in ſuch taking, that hee cannot with a ſtraw hit a broad fanne: The cauſe is, for that after the drinking thereof vnmeaſurably, one thing ſemeth two to the eyes, as ſayth *Iuvenall*: *Geminis exurgit menſa lucernis*. And *Horace*: *Saltat Milonius, vt ſemel icto acceſsit fervor capiti, numeruſque lucernis.*
wiſt, *b.* knowne.
wiſſe, *b.* ſhew, make known: alſo wiſh, *d.* direct in truth.
wiſſe, know, inſtruct.
wile, *b.* deceit.
witeſt, *b.* blameſt.
wis, *b.* verely.
werred, oppreſſed.
wight, *b.* weight: alſo ſwift.
wiſſhe, *d.* waſhed.
wiſſe, wiſe, to aduiſe: alſo to wiſh.
wight, *b.* ſwift, ſtrong.
wight, *d.* weight.
wilneth, deſireth.
wiſly, verely.
wicke, bad, ſtinking, noyſome: alſo counterfeit.
wiche, an arke or cheſt.
winſing, *b.* ſtirring.
wiſſe, ſaue themſelues.
wit, *b.* know.
wite, *d.* white.
wlate, *d.* loath, hate.
woneden, *d.* dwell.
woſt, *d.* knoweſt.
woned, *b.* wont, vſed: alſo dwelled.
woddeth, *b.* waxeth mad.
wone, won, ſtore, plentie, remedie.
wonning, *d.* dwelling.
worth vp, aſcend.
wone, ſtore.
wodſhaw, woodſide or ſhadow.
wond, turne backe.
wonnen, *b.* conquered.
wood, *b.* mad.
wonneth, *d.* dwelleth.
werker, wicker, *d.* (*vltor*) reuenger.
wonne, remedy, alſo wont.
wound, bended together.
worth, *b.* mounted.
wrien, couered, chaunge.
wrath him, anger him.
wrytheth, caſteth of.
wrenches, *b.* traps.
wrycth, getteth.
wrathed, moued to anger.
wroth, ſorrowfull.
wrale, *b.* beſtow in brauling.
wrecke, ſhipwracke.
wro, greeſe, anger.
wreken, *d.* reuenge.
wrekery, *d.* reuenge.
wroth, diſagreeing.
wrawnes, *b.* frowardneſſe.
wrigh, couered.
wrenie, to compaſſe about.
wrake, *b.* reuenge.
wright, *b.* a carpenter.
wreth, *d.* reuenge, wrath.
wrene, wrine, couer.
wry, to couer, to ſtirre.
wyerds, deſtinies.
wyuer, a kind of ſerpent much like to a dragon.
wythſtit, withſtand.
wyſhen, waſh.
wymple, *d.* a kercher.
wythſay, *b.* denie.
wynt, windeth, draweth.
wynder, *d.* to couer, or trim.
wyte, *b.* blame.
wyntred, wringled.
wynde, go
wynne, *d.* to complaine.

Y

Yalt, *b.* goeth.
yare, *b.* ready.
yate, *b.* gate.
yaue, regarded.
ybet, *b.* made.
yeaſt, left.
yclenched, croſſebarred, couered.
yeozuen, cut.
yeraſed, broken.
ydo, ſtayed.
Yee knowe what I meane, (fol. 32. page. 1.) An *Apoſiopeſis* often vſed by *Chaucer*: as that, which hee is ſaid to haue written with his Diamond ſometime in glaſſe-windowes, expounded

expounded by his man Wat; which was thus:

A married man, and yet, qd. Chaucer.
A merry man, qd. Wat.
He is a knaue that wrote me that, qd. Chaucer.

perne, *b.* quickly, also loud, earnestly.
pede, peden, *b.* went.
pfrounced, *f.* frowning.
pfretten, deuoured.
pfere, *b.* together.
peats, *b.* gates.
pelpe, *b.* prate, talke.
pedding, (*iurgandi*) of brawling, (some say) of gadding vp and down (others) of loud singing.
perning, *b.* profit.
perd, *b.* rod, or plague: also gouernment.
perne, *b.* to desire, also to take greefe, to deserue.
pellow goulds, marigolds.
petten, lay vp, gotten.
pexing, *b.* sobbing.
pfter this, euen as.
phed, on hie.
phold, accounted.
pif, and if.
ple, (*inanis*) *d.* emptie.
pmeint, *b.* mingled.
pnde, blacke.
poue, gaue, giuen.
pode, *b.* went.
polden, *b.* yeelded.
poze, *b.* before, long, long ago.
ppocras, Hipocrates workes.
pquent, *b.* quenched.
pzeken, *b.* raked.
pzen, displeasure, destruction.
pfaine, seene.
pthee, *b.* thriue.
pwzien, *b.* couered.

Z

Zenith, *a.* the point of the firmament directly ouer ones head, whersoeuer he be.
Zephirus, *g.* the West wind.
Zodiake, *g.* a circle in heauen, wherein are the twelue signes.

So much of the Latine in Chaucer translated, as is not by himselfe Englished.

Amor vincit omnia, Loue conquereth al things.
A quæstio iuris, A question of the law.
Alma redemptoris mater, O mother of our Sauiour.
Ad adiuvandum me, To helpe me.
Associat profugum Tideus, &c. The Arguments of the twelue bookes of *Statius*.

The first doth shew, that Tideus and Polimite in friendship are combinde.

In the second Tideus his message is taught, and the trecheries disclosed.

The third doth speake of Harmonia, and of Amphiaraus, who hid himselfe.

The fourth setteth out the battailes of the seuen Kings.

The fift noteth out the outrage of the women of Lemnos, toucheth the Adder, and the death of Archemorus.

In the sixt, the games are declared.

In the seuenth Amphiaraus the wiseman is no more seene.

In the eight Tideus, the stay of the Greekes, is slaine.

Hippomedon and Parthenope in the ninth die.

In the tenth Capaneus in scaling the wals is slain.

In the eleuenth Etteocles and Polynice kill one another.

The twelfth setteth out, Adrastus their hard case bewailing, and Thebes burning.

Benedicite, Praise ye.
Benedictus, Blessed.
Cor meum eructauit, My heart hath belched out.
Consummatum est, It is finished.
Cum iniquis deputatus est, He was reckoned among the wicked.
Consumere me vis? Wilt thou destroy me?
Cur me dereliquisti? Why hast thou forsaken me?
Cæli enarrant, The heauens declare.
Corpus domini, The Lords bodie.
De septem peccatis mortalibus, Of the seuen deadly sinnes.
De invidia, of enuie.
De ira, of anger.
De accidia, Of Accidie.
De avaritia, Of couetousnesse.
De luxuria, Of letcherie.
Dolorum meum, My greefe.
Domine labia, &c. O Lord open my lips.
Domine dominus noster, O lord our God.
Domine est terra, The earth is the Lords.
Dominus regnauit, The Lord is King.

Explicit secunda pars penitentiæ, & sequitur pars tertia.

Here endeth the second part of repentance, and here followeth the third.

Fuerunt mihi lachrimæ meæ in deserto panes die ac nocte, My tears were my bread in the wildernesse day and night.
Faciem tuam abscondis, Doest thou hide thy face.
Iesus Nazarenus, Iesus of Nazareth.
Irascimini & nolite peccare, Be angry, but sinne not.
In nomine Iesu, In the name of Iesus.
In manus tuas, Into thy hands.
Iube domine, Commaund Lord.
Jubilate, Rejoice.

The French and Latine in Chaucer, tranſlated.

Ignotum per ignotius, One obſcuritie, by a more obſcuritie.
Libera me, Saue me.
Laudate, Praiſe ye.
Mulier eſt hominis confuſio, A woman is mans deſtruction.
Non eſt dolor ſicut dolor meus, There is no greeſe like to mine.
Non eſt aliud nomen ſub cælo, &c. There is no other name vnder heauen.
O admirabile, O wonderfull.
O deus, deus, O my God, my God.
Pone me iuxta te, Set me by thee.
Qui gladio percutit, He that ſtriketh with the ſword.
Quia tulerunt dominum meum, Becauſe they haue taken away my Lord.
Quid mali feci tibi, What harme haue I done thee.
Quia non eſt, qui conſoletur me, Becauſe there is none to comfort me.
Quod dilexi multum, Becauſe I loue much.
Quod ſic repente præcipitas me, That thou doeſt ſo ſuddainely caſt me downe.
Radix omnium malorum eſt cupiditas, Couetouſneſſe is the root of all euill.
Remedium contra peccatum acidiæ, An helpe againſt the ſinne of wanhope.
Remedium contra peccatum auaritiæ, An helpe againſt the ſinne of Couetouſneſſe.
Remedium contra peccatum luxuriæ, An help againſt the ſinne of lecherie.
Sanctus deus, Holy God.
Sanctiſſimus, Moſt holy.
Sequitur de gula, Concerning gluttonie.
Sequitur ſecunda pars penitentiæ, Here followeth the ſecond part of repentance.
Suſpenſus in patibulo, Hong vpon the croſſe.
Sed non reſpondes mihi, But thou doſt not anſwer me.
Sagittæ tuæ infixæ ſunt mihi, Thy arrowes haue pierced me ſore.
Solum ſupereſt ſepulchrum, There onely remaineth a graue.
Tanquam cera liqueſcens, Like melting wax.
Tuam animam pertranſibit gladius, The ſword ſhall pearſe thy ſoule.
Trahe me poſt te, Draw me after thee.
Tu autem, And thou.
Te deum amoris, Thee the god of Loue.
Turpe lucrum, Filthie gaine.
Vbi poſuerunt eum, Where haue they laid him.
Velociter exaudi me, Speedily heare me.
Venite, Come ye.

The French in Chaucer, tranſlated.

A Moy, qui voy, To me which ſee.
Bien moneſte, Well admoniſhed.
Bien & loialement, Well and dutifully.
C'eſt ſans dire, &c. It is without ſaying, &c.
Don vient la deſtinie, From whom commeth deſtiny.
En dieu eſt, In God is.
Entierement voſtre, Yours wholly.
Eſtreignes moy de cœur ioyeux, Streine me with a joyfull heart.
Et ie ſcay bien, que ce n'eſt pas mon tort, And I know well that it is not my hurt.
I'ay tout perdu mon temps, & mon labeur. I haue altogether loſt my time and labour.
I'ay en vous toute ma fiance, I repoſe all my truſt in you.
Ie vouldray, I will.
Ie vous dy, I ſay to you.
Ie vous dy ſans doute, I ſay to you without doubt.
La belle dame ſans mercy, The faire Lady without mercy.
L'ardant eſpoir en mon cœur point eſt mort, d'auoir l'amour de celle, que ie deſire, The earneſt hope within my heart is not dead, to haue the loue of her whom I deſire.
Meulx vn, One beſt in heart.
Onques puis leuer, I can neuer riſe.
Or à mon cœur, Now to my heart.
Or à mon cœur ce qui vouloy, Now to my heart that which I would.
Pleures pour moy, s'il vous plaiſt amoreux, Weepe for me if you pleaſe, louely ladie.
Plus ne pourroy, I can doe no more.
Qui eſt la, Who is there.
Qui bien aime, tard oublie, He that loueth well, is ſlow to forget.
Sans oſe ie dire, Without (ſhall I be bold to ſay.
Sans que iamais, &c. Without euer, &c.
Sans oſe ie, ou diray? But dare I, or ſhall I ſay?
Si douce eſt la marguerite, So ſweet is the Daiſie.
Son & mon ioly cœur endormi, Her liuely heart and mine fallen aſleepe.
Soyes aſſeuré, Be ye aſſured.
Sus la feville devers moy, Vpon the leaſe towards me.
Tant que ie puis, As much as I can.
Tant me fait mal departir de ma dame, It greeueth me ſo much to depart from my Lady.
Vn ſans changer, One without chaunging.

The Authors cited by G. Chaucer in his workes, by name declared.

Alhazen, an Arabian, wrote seuen bookes of Perspectiues.

Arnoldus de noua villa, did write the booke called *Rosarium Philosophorum.*

Anselmus, Bishop of Canterburie, a great writer in Diuinitie, 1061.

Agathon, a Philosopher of Samos, did write Hystories.

Augustine, that famous Doctor and Bishop, wrote moe bookes than euer did any in the Church of the Latines.

Avicen, a Physician of Ciuill, wrote a multitude of bookes.

Averroys, a Physician of Corduba *floruit*, 1149.

Albumasar, alias *Iaphar*, a great Astrologian, wrote of sundry things in that Art.

Æsopus, a Philosopher born in Phrygia in the daies of *Cræsus* King of Lydia, to whom he dedicated the Fables which he wrote.

Aristotle, a famous Philosopher, scholler to *Plato*, and master to King *Alexander*. He was 345 years before Christ.

Ambrose, the worthy Bishop of Millaine, in the yeare of our Lord, 373.

Alcaburius, a writer in Astronomie: as of the conjunction of the Planets, &c.

Alanus among other things wrote a book *De Planctu Naturæ.*

B

Bocatius borne at Florence in Italie, set out many things in his owne tongue, *claruit*, 1375.

Bernardus de Gordonio, a Frenchman borne, reader of Physicke at Mount Pelier.

Bernardus Abbas Clarevallensis, a Burgonian and a singular diuine, set forth many things, 1140.

Basilius Magnus, Bishop of Cæsarea, 367.

C

Cato, a learned man among the Romanes, before the incarnation, 182.

Corinna, a Thebane woman, and a Lyrike Poet: she wrote 50 bookes and Epigrams, as *Suidas* and *Pausanias* report.

Claudianus, borne in Alexandria in Ægypt, among many things wrote a booke of the stealing away of *Proserpina.*

Crisippus did write a booke against the pleasure of the bodie.

Constantine the Monke did translate and write many things in Phisicke, and among other, *Lib. de coitu, quibus modis augeatur & diminuatur.*

D

Dantes Aligerus, an Italian, and borne in Florence, liued 1341.

Dares Phrygius did write the Troian war in Greeke, where he himselfe was a souldier.

Ditis Historicus did write a booke of the Troian warre, found in a certaine sepulchre.

Damascenus presbiter did write many things in the Greeke tongue.

Dioscorides, a worshipfull Knight of Egypt, wrote in Greeke, of the natures of diuers hearbes: He liued vnder *Cleopatra* and *Antonius.*

E

Æsculapius did write a booke of the originall, cause, and descriptions of diseases.

F

Franciscus Petrarcha, an Italian born, did write when *Chaucer* was a young man. *floruit*, 1374.

G

Gatisden and *Gilbertin*, Englishmen borne, and writers in Physicke.

Guido de Columna, a Sicilian, did write of the Troian warre, 1287.

Galfride Vinesaufe was a Norman by his parents, but born in England: he did write in his book entituled *de artificio loquēdi*, by way of example of mourning, vnder the Rethorical figure of Apostrophe, a complaint for the death of *Richard* the first, who was slaine with an arrow at the siege of the castle of Chalne in Normandie, and liued in the time of King *Iohn*, *An. Dom.* 1210.

Galenus, a most singular Physician, did write a multitude of bookes, 160.

Gregorius magnus did write much in Diuinitie, *claruit*, *An.* 369.

Galfridus Monumethensis, an Englishman borne, translated into our tongue the hystorie of England, *floruit*, 1152.

H

Homerus, the cheefest of all Poets, wrote in the Greeke tongue two workes, the one called his *Ilias*, and the other his *Odyssea.*

Helowis, *Maximinian*, *Livian*, *Aurora*, *Zansis*, and diuers others alledged by Chaucer, haue none or few of their workes extant.

Hali wrote a book of the composition of medicines.

Hieronimus Stridonensis did write among other things, a defence of virginitie, in two bookes, against *Iouinian.*

Hippocrates

Hippocrates Cous, a most ancient Phisician, & prince of all others, liued in the daies of *Artaxerxes*.

Hermes, an Ægyptian, disciple to Plato, did write of many strange things.

I

Iosephus wrote in Greek the battaile and destruction of the Iews. He was after the incarnation 76 years.

Iohannes Damascenus, a writer in Physicke, 1158.

Innocentius Papa, born in Campanie, wrote a booke of the happie state of mankind.

Iuvenalis, a Poet, which wrote Satyres.

Iustinian, an Emperour of Rome, who caused to be written the bookes of the lawes, called the Digests, Institutions, and the Code, containing the decrees of the Emperours. He was after the incarnation 570 yeares.

L

Lollius, an Italian Historiographer, borne in the citie of Vrbine.

Lucanus, a famous Poet, that wrote the battaile betweene Cæsar and Pompey.

M

Macrobius Aurelius wrote a Commentarie on Scipio his dreame.

Marcus Aurelius Cassiodorus, a Monke, among many things wrote of the state of the soule.

Marcianus Capella did write of the Liberall sciences: and also of the mariage of Philologi & Mercurie.

O

Ovidius, a famous Latine Poet and Orator, aduanced to bee Senatour of Rome: Hee liued when Christ was conuersant on earth.

P

Petrus Alfonsus, a Iew, turned to the faith, before called Moses, was baptised by King Alphonsus, and bare his name: he did write many bookes, 1100.

Pamphilus Presbiter, kinsman to Eusebius, after much paines in writing, suffered martyrdome in Cæsarea, vnder the persecution of Maximinus.

Papinius Statius, a Neapolitane, wrote of the destruction of Thebes. He liued vnder Domitian.

Ptolomeus liued in the time of Anthony the Emperour: he wrote diuers workes, and restored out of darkenesse the Mathematicall sciences.

Pithagoras, an excellent Philosopher of Samos, at whose wisdome Plato did wonder. He was before the incarnation 522 yeares.

Petrus Cassiodorus, an Italian, a Noble man, and learned, did write to the Church of England, and persuaded them to cast off their obedience to the Romane Bishops, and to beware of their tyrannie, 1302.

R

Rasis, an Arabian Physician.

Rufus, a Physician of Ephesus in the time of Trajane the Emperour.

S

Statius, a noble Poet, which wrote twelue bookes of the Thebane warre.

Senior Zadith did write a book of Alchymie, *Gesner*.

Seneca, a Spaniard, borne in Corduba, a singular Philosopher, did write many things: he liued in the time of Nero, by whom he was put to death.

Serapion, an Arabian, did write of the composition of medicines.

Suetonius wrote the liues of the Roman Emperors.

Strode, a man of great learning, fellow of Merton Colledge in Oxford, 1380.

T

Tertullian did write a booke of the attire of women.

Titus Livius, the most excellent writer of the Romanes hystorie.

Tho. Bradwarden was bishop of Canterburie, who did write a booke *De causa Dei contra Pelagianos*, and dedicated it to the Societie of Merton Colledge in Oxford. He did write many other books: One of the Trinitie; one of Predestination; one of all Sciences; one of the principles of Geometrie: Also a book of the reward of them which shal be saued: and another called the Summe of diuinity. He florished in the yeare of grace, 1270.

Trotula set forth a booke of the cure of diseases in and after childbirth.

Theophrastus Eresius, disciple to Aristotle, writing a great number of books, hath one *De frugalitate*.

Tullius, a Senator of Rome, father of eloquence, and pure fountaine of the Latine tongue. He flourished about 40 yeares before Christs incarnation.

V

Valerius Maximus wrote to Tiberius Cæsar a booke of the memorable deeds and sayings of worthie men.

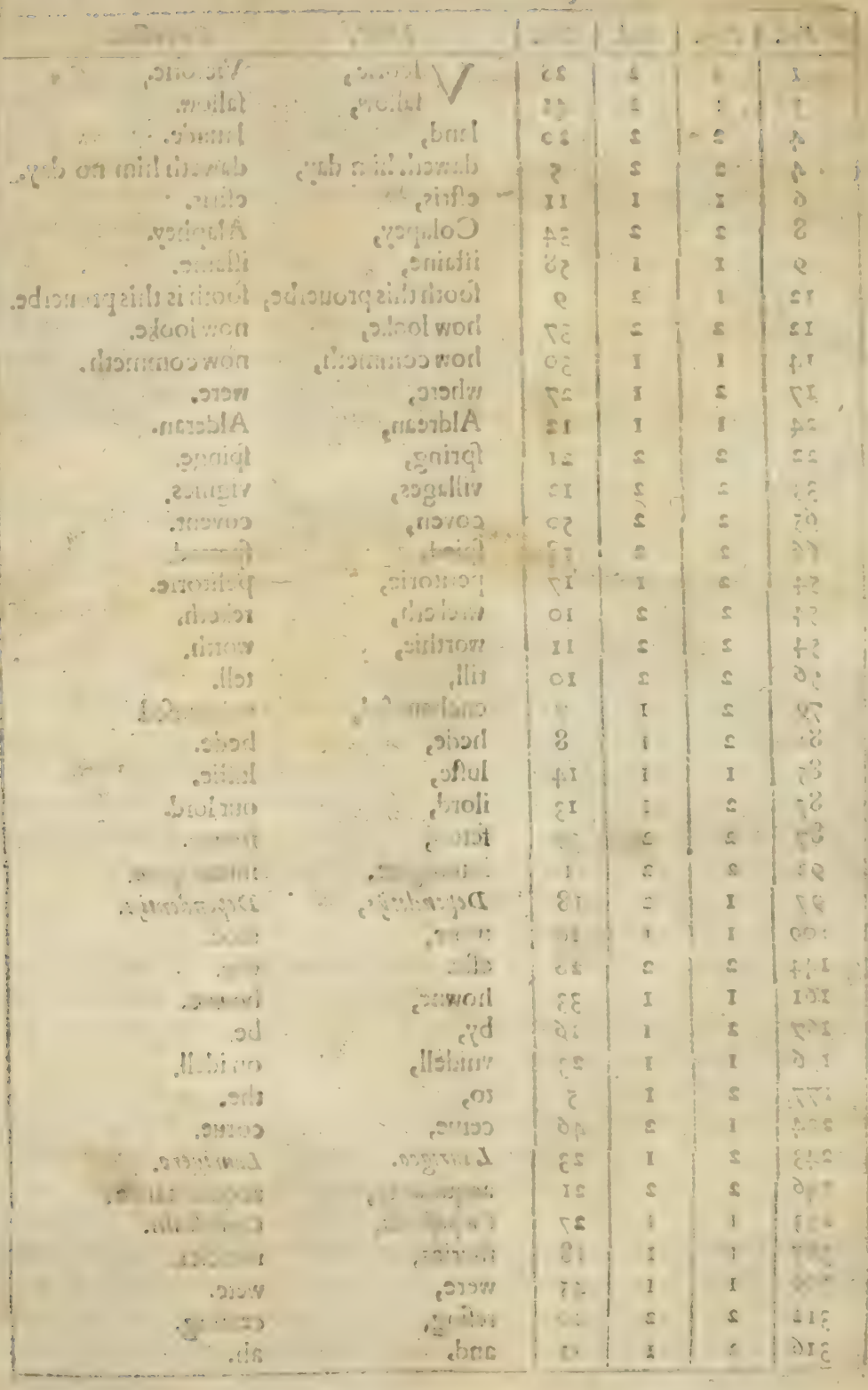
Vergilius, the most famous Poet of Mantua, whose life *Petrus Crinitus* hath set downe at large in *Lib. 3. de Poetis Latinis*.

Vitellio did write ten bookes of Perspectiues.

W

William S. Aymour, a Frenchman, did write a Commentarie on the Apocalypse, much inueighing against the Pope: and was therefore banished, and his bookes burned.

Fol.	Pag.	Col.	Lin.	Errat.	Correctio.
1	1	2	28	VIcorie,	Victorie.
3	1	2	41	fallow,	ſallow.
4	2	2	20	land,	launde.
4	2	2	5	daweth him day,	daweth him no day.
6	1	1	11	eſtris,	eſtris.
8	2	2	34	Colapey,	Alaphey.
9	1	1	58	iſtaine,	iſlaine.
12	1	2	9	ſooth this prouerbe,	ſooth is this prouerbe.
12	2	2	37	how looke,	now looke.
14	1	1	30	how commeth,	now commeth.
17	2	1	27	where,	were.
24	1	1	12	Aldrean,	Alderan.
22	2	2	21	ſpring,	ſpinge.
33	2	2	12	villages,	vigilles.
65	2	2	50	coven,	covent.
66	2	2	18	ſpied,	ſperred.
54	2	1	17	peritorie,	pelitorie.
54	2	2	10	wreketh,	reketh.
54	2	2	11	worthie,	worth.
56	2	2	10	till,	tell.
79	2	1	7	enchaunſed,	enhaunſed.
81	2	1	8	hede,	bede.
85	1	1	14	luſte,	luſtie.
87	2	1	13	ilord,	our lord.
87	2	2	39	fettes,	frettes.
92	2	2	1	interogate,	interrogate.
97	1	2	18	*Dependetijs*,	*Dependentijs*.
109	1	1	10	more,	moe.
144	2	2	28	eſte.	eſte.
161	1	1	33	howne,	howve.
167	2	1	16	by,	be.
176	1	1	23	vnidell,	on idell.
177	2	1	5	to,	the.
234	1	2	46	ceiue,	coiue.
243	2	1	23	*Laurigeo*.	*Laurigero*.
246	2	2	21	acquitance,	acquaintance.
253	1	1	27	*Coepuſculis*,	*Crepuſculis*.
307	1	1	18	meries,	mercies.
309	1	1	45	were,	wete.
312	2	2	10	reſing,	ceaſing.
316	2	1	12	and,	ah.



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